

PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION**

Tuesday, 8 December 2015

(Extract from book 19)

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The Lieutenant-Governor

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION**

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Deputy Speaker:

Mr D. A. NARDELLA

Acting Speakers:

Mr Angus, Mr Blackwood, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Carbines, Mr Crisp, Mr Dixon, Ms Edwards, Ms Halfpenny,
Ms Kilkenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr McGuire, Ms McLeish, Mr Pearson, Ms Ryall, Ms Thomas,
Mr Thompson, Ms Thomson, Ms Ward and Mr Watt.

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The Hon. D. M. ANDREWS

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Labor Party and Deputy Premier:

The Hon. J. A. MERLINO

Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. M. J. GUY

Deputy Leader of the Parliamentary Liberal Party and Deputy Leader of the Opposition:

The Hon. D. J. HODGETT

Leader of The Nationals:

The Hon. P. L. WALSH

Deputy Leader of The Nationals:

Ms S. RYAN

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Council — Clerk of the Legislative Council: Mr A. Young

Parliamentary Services — Secretary: Mr P. Lochert

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FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT — FIRST SESSION

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Andrews, Mr Daniel Michael	Mulgrave	ALP	Merlino, Mr James Anthony	Monbulk	ALP
Angus, Mr Neil Andrew Warwick	Forest Hill	LP	Morris, Mr David Charles	Mornington	LP
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Battin, Mr Bradley William	Gembrook	LP	Napthine, Dr Denis Vincent ³	South-West Coast	LP
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Blandthorn, Ms Elizabeth Anne	Pascoe Vale	ALP	Neville, Ms Lisa Mary	Bellarine	ALP
Britnell, Ms Roma ¹	South-West Coast	LP	Noonan, Mr Wade Matthew	Williamstown	ALP
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Bull, Mr Timothy Owen	Gippsland East	Nats	O'Brien, Mr Michael Anthony	Malvern	LP
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D'Ambrosio, Ms Liliana	Mill Park	ALP	Richardson, Mr Timothy Noel	Mordialloc	ALP
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Lim, Mr Muy Hong	Clarinda	ALP	Williams, Ms Gabrielle	Dandenong	ALP
McCurdy, Mr Timothy Logan	Ovens Valley	Nats	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

¹Elected 31 October 2015

²Resigned 3 September 2015

³Resigned 3 September 2015

⁴Elected 14 March 2015

⁵Elected 31 October 2015

⁶Resigned 2 February 2015

PARTY ABBREVIATIONS

ALP — Labor Party; Greens — The Greens;
Ind — Independent; LP — Liberal Party; Nats — The Nationals.

Legislative Assembly committees

Privileges Committee — Ms Allan, Ms D’Ambrosio, Mr Morris, Ms Neville, Ms Ryan, Ms Sandell, Mr Scott and Mr Wells.

Standing Orders Committee — The Speaker, Ms Allan, Ms Asher, Mr Brooks, Mr Clark, Mr Hibbins, Mr Hodgett, Ms Kairouz, Mr Nardella, Ms Ryan and Ms Sheed.

Joint committees

Accountability and Oversight Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Angus, Mr Gidley, Mr Staikos and Ms Thomson.
(*Council*): Ms Bath, Mr Purcell and Ms Symes.

Dispute Resolution Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Allan, Mr Clark, Mr Merlino, Mr M. O’Brien, Mr Pakula, Ms Richardson and Mr Walsh. (*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Dalidakis, Ms Dunn, Mr Jennings and Ms Wooldridge.

Economic, Education, Jobs and Skills Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Nardella and Ms Ryall.
(*Council*): Mr Bourman, Mr Elasmar and Mr Melhem.

Electoral Matters Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Asher, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dixon, Mr Northe and Ms Spence.
(*Council*): Ms Patten, Mr Somyurek.

Environment, Natural Resources and Regional Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Halfpenny, Mr McCurdy, Mr Richardson, Mr Tilley and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Mr Young.

Family and Community Development Committee — (*Assembly*): Ms Couzens, Mr Edbrooke, Ms Edwards, Ms Kealy, Ms McLeish and Ms Sheed. (*Council*): Mr Finn.

House Committee — (*Assembly*): The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr J. Bull, Mr Crisp, Mrs Fyffe, Mr Staikos, Ms Suleyman and Mr Thompson. (*Council*): The President (*ex officio*), Mr Eideh, Ms Hartland, Ms Lovell, Mr Mulino and Mr Young.

Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Hibbins, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Richardson, Ms Thomson and Mr Wells. (*Council*): Mr Ramsay and Ms Symes.

Law Reform, Road and Community Safety Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Dixon, Mr Howard, Ms Suleyman, Mr Thompson and Mr Tilley. (*Council*): Mr Eideh and Ms Patten.

Public Accounts and Estimates Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr Dimopoulos, Mr Morris, Mr D. O’Brien, Mr Pearson, Mr T. Smith and Ms Ward. (*Council*): Dr Carling-Jenkins, Ms Pennicuik and Ms Shing.

Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee — (*Assembly*): Mr J. Bull, Ms Blandthorn, Mr Dimopoulos, Ms Kilkenny and Mr Pesutto. (*Council*): Ms Bath and Mr Dalla-Riva.

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Tuesday, 8 December 2015

The SPEAKER (Hon. Telmo Languiller) took the chair at 12.05 p.m. and read the prayer.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

**Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy
Union**

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — Speaker, I begin by saying bienvenida to your family and your parents, who are in the gallery today.

The SPEAKER — Gracias.

Mr GUY — We will all be on our best behaviour, particularly the member for Warrandyte!

My question is to the Premier. Given the history of illegal conduct and industrial rorts on major projects under previous Labor governments, such as the desalination plant and the West Gate Bridge upgrade project, I ask: will the Premier guarantee that illegal intimidatory conduct or industrial rorting by the John Setka-led Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) will not cause cost blowouts or delays to the metro rail project or to other major projects?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Warrandyte! I was reminded by the Leader of the Opposition about the member for Warrandyte. Government members will also come to order and will allow the Premier to respond to a substantive question as put by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. True to form, it is full of all sorts of allegations and claims. If he stamps his little foot and says it often enough, it will be true. The level crossing removal program — —

An honourable member interjected.

Mr ANDREWS — Where is Damien Mantach sleeping tonight?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! Members will come to order.

Mr T. Smith interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the member for Kew.

Mr ANDREWS — Three hots and a cot — that is what Damien Mantach has got down there at Her Majesty's pleasure. I will not be taking lectures from those opposite or be listening to their abuse and their unsubstantiated allegations and claims. We will allow the courts to deal with these processes. No matter who it is that is charged, the courts ought to be able to deal with those people — anyone — on the merits of the evidence that is led at trial. I would have thought that was a pretty well established point of law.

In terms of the government's program of building — not talking about it, but building — Melbourne Metro, getting rid of dangerous, deadly congested level crossings or rebuilding TAFE, hospitals and schools, there is a long, long list of important upgrades to the services and the facilities that are important for economic growth, are important for our state's future and, might I say, were the subject of the mandate given to this government last year.

We will deliver in full on all those commitments. At the end of four years, the Victorian people will be able to have a look and make their judgement. It is our hope and our intention, and we will ensure it, that the Victorian people will not look around desperately searching for any work at all, for any progress at all. Those opposite sit on that side of the house because — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Clarinda will come to order, and the member for Warrandyte will allow the manager of opposition business to raise a point of order.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the Premier now has less than 30 seconds remaining in his answer and he has not yet begun to address the question of whether he will give any guarantees about John Setka and the CFMEU and the effects on major projects in Victoria. I ask you to bring him back to answering that question.

The SPEAKER — Order! I do not uphold the point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — I was asked about our government's program of capital works and investing in the things Victorians voted for, the things Victoria needs, the things that will keep us strong and out in front, and we will deliver each and every one of those commitments. We will not spend four years having a

holiday from hard work. We will not spend four years arrogantly telling Victorians they have never had it so good. We have different priorities and will deliver against every one of them.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — I ask the Premier: has he, any minister or any member of his staff had any communications with representatives of the CFMEU about any aspects of its involvement in the metro rail project, such as enterprise bargaining agreement terms and conditions or the coverage of workers and subcontractors?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his supplementary question. I have certainly not had any conversations with the CFMEU about the Melbourne Metro rail project, the biggest public transport project in our nation at the moment and Infrastructure Australia's no. 1 priority. Given that we are doing the planning and the acquisitions and given that expressions of interest for enabling works only went out to the market last week, I think the question from the Leader of the Opposition shows that, as with all matters involving public transport, he is confused.

Mr Guy — On a point of order on relevance, Speaker, speaking of confusion, the question was not just about the Premier, it was around any minister or member of the Premier's staff, and the Premier has not addressed those parts of the question.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — As I have said, I have not had any discussions with any union about a project that we are going to deliver in the interests of this state, creating thousands of jobs and providing the public transport that Victorians voted for — not what was talked about by those opposite and scuttled but in fact what will be delivered by this government.

Ministers statements: automotive transition plan

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I rise to inform the house that yesterday I was very pleased to attend Bosch out in Clayton in the south-eastern suburbs with the local member, the member for Clarinda, and indeed the very hardworking Minister for Industry, to announce a \$46.5 million automotive transition plan. This is all about making sure that no-one is left behind and that no business fails to take advantage of an opportunity. This is about keeping our state strong amid the challenges we face as automotive manufacturing production at

General Motors, Ford and Toyota comes to an end at the end of 2017.

This is all about skills and training, opening up new markets and building capability amongst our automotive supply chain to make new products and to put them into those new markets, It is a new era of prosperity and profitability, just as we saw at Bosch yesterday, which is not only doing well but is also doing the very best work it has perhaps ever done. It is 100 per cent export; 20 per cent of the world's automotive production would stop today if its diode manufacturing, critically important components for alternators, were to cease. Bosch has diversified its business. It has used the best skills and the best minds to produce the best products, and I am confident that with this \$46.5 million so many other companies across Victoria will do exactly the same.

I want to thank the members for Broadmeadows, Thomastown, Geelong, Mordialloc, Bentleigh, Frankston, Dandenong, Carrum, and the list goes on, for their work in the development of these plans. There is real money and new effort for this transition, a transition we can be hopeful and confident about; there is a big place for manufacturing in our state. Those members have stood up for workers in their communities and asked and made sure that this government had a positive policy prescription for automotive transition in our state. I thank them all for their leadership and their hard work.

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — My question is to the Premier. Will the Premier confirm that when he scrapped the Victorian building and construction code and ended the crackdown on illegal conduct and industrial rorting he was simply delivering on the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union's no. 1 demand in exchange for support and money at last year's election?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I thank the member for Box Hill — Baseline Bob — over there for the death stare. The member for Box Hill —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The members for Malvern and Warrandyte will come to order. The Premier to continue and to answer the question.

Mr ANDREWS — As odd as it might seem to those opposite — the oracle from Warrandyte over there and a few others — we made commitments in

relation to the body that the member for Box Hill mentioned with all that theatrical faux anger and the death stare he just gave me. We gave a commitment to abolish that office, and we have.

I would have to say that Victoria Police is not diminished in its powers, it is not diminished in its resources and it is not diminished in its resolve to make sure that any Victorian who does the wrong thing will feel the full force of the law. If the member for Box Hill wants to assert otherwise, he is free to do so, but he is wrong. He is simply wrong.

We made commitments. We have honoured them. I would say to every member opposite — they should understand this really clearly — that Victoria Police has a stronger budget than it has ever had. Victoria Police has a resolve that is second to none in our nation to make sure that any Victorian, whether they be a director of a major political party, a member of Parliament even, a property developer or a union official, no matter who it is, if they have done the wrong thing, Victoria Police will be after them. That is exactly the way it should be.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The members for Malvern, Gembrook and Warrandyte will allow the manager of opposition business to ask a supplementary question of the Premier.

Supplementary question

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — Given the Premier's answer, and given that Labor's then industrial relations spokesperson, the now Minister for Industrial Relations, said on 20 November last year that the building and construction code was not needed as there were other ways to control illegal behaviour by building unions, I ask: since the code has been abolished, what are these ways, and what has the government done to implement them?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I thank the member for Box Hill for his question. For someone who has been on the radio asking me to take action because of two people being charged, he now seems unaware that two people have been charged and that there are proceedings in the Magistrates Court as we speak. There is no deficiency — —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, my question was not about charges before the Magistrates Court; my question was about what the now Minister for Industrial Relations said in terms of introducing other ways of dealing with building and construction

unions and what those ways were, and I ask you to bring the Premier back to answering that question.

Mr ANDREWS — On the point of order, Speaker, there is no point of order. The questioner — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier will be heard in silence on the point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — The member for Box Hill has asserted that there are deficiencies and gaps in the law, and I am simply detailing for him and every other member that there are not.

Mr Pesutto — On the point of order, Speaker, the Premier may be very unsettled today and very angry today, but on the point of order and on relevance, the Leader of the Opposition asked a question about what this government has done, having abolished the building and construction code, having abolished drug and alcohol testing — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the member for Clarinda, and I warn the member for Eltham. The member for Hawthorn is entitled to silence, and the Chair must be able to hear the point of order in order to adjudicate.

Mr Pesutto — It was actually the manager of opposition business who asked the question. It related to what the government has done to replace the abolition of the construction code, drug and alcohol testing, the dropping of legal proceedings — a whole host of capitulations to the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union because he does not have the strength to stand up — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Hawthorn will now resume his seat.

Mr Pesutto interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Hawthorn will resume his seat.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I will not warn the member for Hawthorn again.

Mr Pakula — On the point of order, Speaker, neither the member for Box Hill nor the member for Hawthorn are entitled to use a point of order to change the question that was asked. The question did not go to

the issue of whether the government was planning to introduce anything new. The member for Box Hill referred to a quote from the Minister for Industrial Relations which went to the fact that there are other things in place, and the Premier is going to those other things in place, including the fact that people have been charged and are before the courts as we speak. The point of order is out of order because the question is not as it is now being put by the member for Hawthorn and the member for Box Hill.

Mr Guy — On the point of order, Speaker, so you can make an informed decision, that question read:

Since the code was abolished, what are these ways and what has the government done to implement them?

So the Attorney-General's point is not correct. That was the question. It was very clear, and it related to the comment where the minister had previously said that the code was not needed as there were other ways. The member has simply asked — —

The SPEAKER — Order! I have heard sufficient on the point of order. I ask the Premier to come back to answering the question.

Mr ANDREWS — Victoria Police has powers, responsibilities and a willingness to take appropriate action. What those opposite seem to struggle with is that we made commitments, and we have kept every one.

Ministers statements: medicinal cannabis

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — I rise to inform the house of a key Andrews Labor government initiative, and that is the introduction of legislation that will provide a legal framework to enable the cultivation and manufacture of safe and high-quality medicinal cannabis products in Victoria. This will be an Australian first. This landmark law will build on our election promise to make medicinal cannabis available in exceptional circumstances safely, securely and lawfully, because no family should have to choose between breaking the law and watching their loved ones suffer. We know that too many families endure that dilemma currently.

An important ambition of this bill is to ensure that from 2017 children with severe epilepsy, where other forms of treatment have not worked, will be eligible to access medicinal cannabis. These reforms will implement the recommendations of the Victorian Law Reform Commission's report.

Our reforms will also establish the Office of Medicinal Cannabis to oversee the manufacturing, dispensing and clinical aspects of our medicinal cannabis framework. It will enable cultivation trials to be undertaken. It will establish new regulatory powers to license growers to cultivate cannabis for medicinal purposes. We will also be establishing an independent medical advisory committee to provide advice and oversight, and we will enable further research to be done whilst we also continue to work to attract important clinical trials.

This is a very ambitious, very complex reform, but our approach throughout has at all times been one of being careful and cautious, moving through all the regulatory and other issues at all times with expert advice. We have been encouraged recently by the cooperative approach of the commonwealth government and its willingness to discuss a national approach, and we will work with it to that end. This is a framework that will alleviate suffering, and it is well overdue.

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

Mr PESUTTO (Hawthorn) — My question is to the Attorney-General. Noting that the Attorney-General ordered the dropping of contempt proceedings against the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) over the black ban on Boral, handing the union a million-dollar gift, I ask: will the Attorney-General now release all legal and departmental advice that he received prior to making this decision that gave this windfall gift to the CFMEU?

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) — Today is a red-letter day because 374 days after the last election the member for Hawthorn has finally asked me a question in the house!

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I understand that the question and the comments may excite members as we get close to Christmas time, but I ask the Attorney-General to continue.

Mr PAKULA — As the member for Hawthorn well knows, there was a longstanding action between the CFMEU and Boral which the state of Victoria intervened in. That matter between the CFMEU and Boral was settled with the payments of millions of dollars by the CFMEU. It was a settlement that the court accepted and said was desirable, and what the member for Hawthorn is suggesting is that despite the fact that that matter was settled — despite the fact that the contempt proceedings brought by Boral were settled

and dropped — the state of Victoria should have carried on. That would not have been sensible. It is not what has happened in the past, and it would have been contrary to all advice.

Supplementary question

Mr PESUTTO (Hawthorn) — Given that the Attorney-General will not release any of the advice received, will he now at least tell Victorians what contact he, his ministerial staff or any other ministerial staff had with the CFMEU prior to his decision to drop the contempt proceedings and hand the CFMEU a million-dollar gift?

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) — It is an absurd question with an easy answer: none whatsoever.

Ministers statements: water infrastructure

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water) — I rise today to provide the house information in relation to the recently released water outlooks that are released by our water authorities that talk about the state of the storages across Victoria at the moment. This time last year what we saw was that we had storages of around 78 per cent. This has now dropped to below 55 per cent because we continue to see below-average rainfall.

If these dry conditions continue, unfortunately some towns may face water restrictions going forward. The water grid is playing a really critical role in supporting communities who otherwise would be without water and certainly on water restrictions. That is why the Premier, the agriculture minister and I went and visited a number of these communities in the west — drought-affected communities — to talk about how we may extend that water grid and announced some particular commitments around that.

It was a Labor government that built the goldfields super-pipe, the Wimmera–Mallee pipeline, the north–south pipeline, the connection from Geelong to Melbourne, the modernisation of — —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, I have raised with you before the fact that ministers statements are not opportunities to provide information to the house; they are to inform the house about new government projects and initiatives. So far the minister has been speaking for more than half of her allotted time. She has not proceeded beyond providing background information. I ask you to bring her back to complying with sessional order 7.

Ms Allan — On the point of order, Speaker, the minister was in her opening comments indicating that she was providing new information to the house about how we were expanding the state’s water grid. In talking about how we are expanding it, it is important to talk about the infrastructure that is already there, and she is providing entirely relevant material to the house in her statement.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister has provided very valuable information. I now ask the minister to come back to her statement.

Ms NEVILLE — Recently I was in Gippsland, and I am pleased to inform the house about our commitment to the Macalister irrigation district and to \$20 million — and we hope the federal government will come to the party and commit to that money. One of the interesting things that I have heard in the last couple of weeks that really sums up those opposite was a comment from Jon Faine, who said — —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is defying your ruling. She is not providing information to the house about government initiatives, projects and achievements, and she is commencing to debate the issue. I ask you to bring her back to complying with your order.

Ms NEVILLE — On the point of order, Speaker, I have just provided details about a new initiative, a new commitment we have made to the Macalister irrigation district — in fact one that those opposite yelled loudly about why weren’t we doing it, even though they did not in government. That is the story that I am announcing today, and how important it is that we continue to invest in our water infrastructure.

On the point of order, this is clearly new information being provided and a new initiative that the government has committed to that will make a serious difference to the Gippsland community.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the minister to continue on new initiatives and achievements.

Ms NEVILLE — Recently we have announced a whole package of water extensions, so we were in the Donald, Birchip and Wedderburn community, connecting the Wedderburn community. All I can say is that Jon Faine has said to the former minister:

Peter, it seems the Labor Party is standing up for drought-affected communities more than you are.

That says it all. We have invested in the water grid. We continue to support regional communities, unlike those opposite.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister's time has expired.

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

Mr HODGETT (Croydon) — My question is to the Minister for Ports.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr HODGETT — Ports! Ports! The merger — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. Question time is serious business of this house. I ask him to put a proper question.

Mr HODGETT — The merger of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU) and the Maritime Union of Australia will create a — —

The SPEAKER — Order! The question is to?

Mr HODGETT — The Minister for Ports. The merger of the CFMEU and the Maritime Union of Australia will create a mega-union with a shared history of militancy and illegal activity, so I ask: what advice has the minister sought or received and what steps has he taken to ensure that this militant mega-union cannot threaten or jeopardise the operation of a privatised port of Melbourne?

Mr DONNELLAN (Minister for Ports) — A typical juvenile question from the member preceded by a totally irrelevant introduction suggesting somehow or other that I or anyone else would support the idea of roting full stop. Let us be — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister will resume his seat. I will not warn the member for Kew again, nor will I warn the member for Ringwood again. The minister will continue, and the minister will be heard in silence by all sides of the house.

Mr DONNELLAN — Let me make it very clear that as the Minister for Ports I will not be conducting industrial relations down there and doing deals. I am not a communist; I will let the private sector deal with that. I do not know what the former minister thought he

was doing as the Minister for Ports, but I would not expect him to be negotiating leases and industrial relations agreements down there on the port. But I note that the number of days lost to industrial disputes in 2011 was 60 000 days. Let us be very clear, the current figure in 2015 is 23 600 days, so we have a lot better industrial relations environment than that which was presided over by the former government.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The members for Warrandyte, Hawthorn and Malvern will not be warned again.

Mr DONNELLAN — Then if you look at 2012, you see we had the absolute scandal of 85 200 days lost under the former government's watch. The coalition is a pack of amateurs at dealing with these issues, and obviously its communist approach did not work.

Mr Hodgett interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I will not warn him again. The Chair will suspend him should he engage in imputations again.

Supplementary question

Mr HODGETT (Croydon) — I again refer to the government's proposed privatisation of the port of Melbourne, and I ask: what guarantees has the government received that the merged Maritime Union of Australia/Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union will not cause havoc on Victoria's waterfront the way the CFMEU has caused havoc on our building sites and on our streets today?

Mr DONNELLAN (Minister for Ports) — I thank the deputy leader for his question. The only real danger to the operation of the port at the moment is the hypocritical approach of the opposition — to have one position before the election and then do a bit of flip-flopping after the election and feign ignorance of how it operates.

Mr M. O'Brien interjected.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Malvern

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Malvern will withdraw from the house for the period of 1 hour.

Honourable member for Malvern withdrew from chamber.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and
MINISTERS STATEMENTS**

**Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy
Union**

Supplementary question

Questions and statements resumed.

Mr DONNELLAN (Minister for Ports) — The same consultants have been used in the sale process, and they provided the same advice to both this government and the former government. The former government agreed to proceed on the methodology put forward, but now that we have the legislation put before the Parliament, we have this flip-flopping and rubbish which goes on where we have various members on the opposition's team feigning ignorance and an inability to deal with the facts as they are put before them.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister's time has expired.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, I draw your attention to sessional order 11(2), which enables you to determine that an answer to an oral question was not responsive to the question. Both the substantive and the supplementary questions went to a very important issue — namely, what assurances or guarantees the government may have sought or received in relation to disruption of the privatisation of the port of Melbourne. I submit that the minister was not responsive to either of those questions. I ask you to direct him to provide a written answer to them.

Ms Allan — In responding to the point of order, Speaker, and urging you to rule it out of order, the question contained a range of allegations and hypothecations put forward by the member opposite. In responding to the question the minister was quite expansive on those issues around the port and industrial days lost under the former government. His response was relevant to the question that was asked.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair will review the minister's response.

Ministers statements: level crossings

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — I am delighted to provide new — since this house last met — information to the house on how we are removing the 50 most dangerous, congested level crossings with the news that the Andrews Labor government has announced another four level crossings that are going to be removed.

At Melton Highway in Sydenham not only are we removing the level crossing but the work is going to pave the way for a major redevelopment at Watergardens Town Centre. It is expected to create over 1000 jobs during construction and in retail. The local member has been leading a fantastic campaign there to see that level crossing gone.

In Abbots Road in Dandenong South there is a level crossing that was the site of a horrific accident a few years ago — in 2012. The community has been campaigning to see this crossing removed, and it will be done by this government. Regarding the Thompsons Road level crossing in Lyndhurst, not only are we getting rid of this level crossing but we are duplicating the road as part of that important election commitment. Finally, there is the busy crossing at Kororoit Creek Road, Williamstown — 40 buses, 100 trains and 20 000 cars, trucks and bikes go across this level crossing every day.

By the next election 31 level crossings will either have been removed or be in the process of being removed by this government, and we will certainly deliver on that election commitment of seeing 20 gone by 2018. After four long years of public transport abstinence by those opposite, who failed to fund the removal of a single level crossing in four long years, we needed to get on with it. We need to get on with this program.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is both misleading the house and debating the question. I ask you to bring her back to compliance with the sessional orders.

The SPEAKER — Order! I ask the minister to come back to making a statement.

Ms ALLAN — This news comes on top of the 8 level crossings that we have said we would commit to getting planning and design work underway on, the 9 level crossings between Dandenong and the city that the tender process is currently underway on and the

10 level crossings that have already been contracted. Work is underway on those important removals.

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — My question is to the Premier. With a number of current and potential investors in Victoria now not wanting to take on building projects that then come under the control of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union (CFMEU), will the Premier confirm that Victoria is now at risk of losing investment while the CFMEU hijacks projects and drives up costs and delays in our strong construction industries?

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his question. It would seem that the government and I are a bit more optimistic about our state's future than those opposite. It is based on evidence. We have a growth rate which is confirmed from the most recent accounts to be in excess of the New South Wales rate — 2.5 per cent. This is a very strong result. We have unemployment substantially lower than it was the day we were sworn in, the day that this lot opposite were sent packing for having been on a holiday from hard work. We have strong business investment growth of some 9.3 per cent. The Minister for Planning has approved something like \$4 billion worth of capital works — —

Mr Guy interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Mr ANDREWS — And not providing a massive windfall profit with the stroke of a pen, as we saw from the fisherman's friend over here. We are a strong state. We have a strong program of capital works — metro, level crossing removals, schools, hospitals — —

Mr Pesutto — On a point of order, Speaker, on relevance, the Leader of the Opposition's question related to the CFMEU hijacking projects and increasing the cost of those projects. All the other junk the Premier is talking about is not relevant to the question.

Mr ANDREWS — On the point of order, Speaker, if I might ensure that for the benefit of the record and all members of this place and for anyone who might be listening or reading *Hansard* at any point during the member for Hawthorn's no doubt lengthy career, he has just described jobs growth, working people's prospects and business investment as junk. That is what he just said. It is not this government's view that jobs are junk, they are critically — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Premier will resume his seat.

Mr Guy — On the point of order, Speaker, the member for Hawthorn raised a legitimate point around the Premier not addressing the point of the question that was asked. In making your decision, you should also be aware that the Premier called small-business people 'these people' who did not matter to him when he created a new public holiday.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! I warn the Leader of the Opposition. There is no point of order. The Premier to continue.

Mr ANDREWS — As I was saying, we have an unemployment rate that is — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — What we have here is a group of people who think jobs growth, economic growth, confidence and business investment is junk. That is what they think; they think it is junk. That is what the record will show. Like the vast majority of Victorians, excluding this dross opposite, I am very proud — —

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The opposition asked the question of the Premier, and the Premier is entitled to silence.

Mr ANDREWS — I, like most Victorians and in fact the vast majority of Victorians, am very proud of the fact that we have strong jobs growth, falling unemployment, strong business confidence and investment, strong economic growth — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — As usual, bagging Victoria doing well. That is what they are about. They are never happier than when they are unhappy.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, this was a very specific question about the CFMEU and its effect on building projects here in Victoria. The Premier has barely 40 seconds remaining, and his answer as far as I have heard has not once mentioned the CFMEU. I ask you to ask him to stop debating the question and to come back to answering the question.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order. The Premier to continue.

Mr ANDREWS — Strong jobs growth, strong investment growth, confidence is up, economic growth is up, unemployment is down — the government is wasting no time in a strong and very important agenda around capital works in construction. The Minister for Planning, with a proper process as opposed to the form of those opposite, has approved a record amount of capital works. Our state is something we can all be proud of. Those opposite may not be, but we are very proud to say that Victoria is growing strongly. But we will not settle for that; we will keep working hard to do even better for the future.

Supplementary question

Mr GUY (Leader of the Opposition) — Given the Premier has previously said that he takes responsibility for each and every thing that happens under his leadership of the Labor Party and his leadership of the government, I ask: when will the Premier finally end his government and his own faction's unholy alliance with John Setka and the CFMEU?

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair is willing to give the Leader of the Opposition a second chance at phrasing the question and making it about government business.

Mr GUY — Noting the CFMEU's control over many building sites in Melbourne that is jacking up the cost of doing business in our city and hindering jobs growth, I ask the Premier: when will he finally end his faction's and his government's unholy alliance with John Setka and the CFMEU?

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair will allow the question insofar as it relates to government and business interests. I caution the Premier not to enter into matters which are not government business.

Mr ANDREWS (Premier) — I am grateful for your guidance, Speaker, and I thank the Leader of the Opposition for his supplementary question, the second time around. Perhaps he should have had a third go, because he asked me about jobs growth. They were the words that came out of his angry little mouth.

Mr Guy interjected.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will come to order.

Mr ANDREWS — That was the angry comment that came from him. When the Leader of the

Opposition was sworn in as a minister way back in 2010 there was 4.9 per cent unemployment. When he assumed his current role it was 6.7 per cent.

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition on a point of order, in silence.

Mr Guy — On a point of order, Speaker, on relevance, and the Premier did offer — —

Mr Lim interjected.

Questions and statements interrupted.

SUSPENSION OF MEMBER

Member for Clarinda

The SPEAKER — Order! The member for Clarinda will withdraw himself from the house for a period of half an hour.

Honourable member for Clarinda withdrew from chamber.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE and MINISTERS STATEMENTS

Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union

Supplementary question

Questions and statements resumed.

Mr Guy — Speaker, on a matter of relevance — and the Premier did say he would offer me a third go at it — the question was a very straightforward and narrow one. I note that the Premier is still not answering it, so I ask: when will he finally end his government's — his faction's — unholy alliance with the CFMEU?

Honourable members interjecting.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Leader of the Opposition will resume his seat. There is no point of order.

Mr ANDREWS — So we have seen very strong jobs growth, and we will continue working hard so that that trend can continue to the benefit of working people.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr ANDREWS — He asked about jacking up the price of construction. Zoning Fishermans Bend as capital city with a stroke of a pen, how much has that jacked up construction? Hypocritical and confused — that is the Leader of the Opposition.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, I draw your attention to sessional order 11(2) in relation to answers not being responsive to questions. It seems the Premier today has wanted to talk about anything but the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union. I submit that his answer to the Leader of the Opposition's supplementary question was not responsive and you should direct him to provide a written answer.

Ms Allan — On the point of order, Speaker, the manager of opposition business raised an issue about the Premier's response to the supplementary question, but you directed the Premier to only answer the question insofar as it related to government business. The rest of the nonsense that the Leader of the Opposition was peddling was indeed by you, from the Chair, ruled out of order as being disorderly and the Premier was not to respond to that. In answering the relevant part of the supplementary question the Premier was being entirely relevant, to the positive growth in investment and opportunities in this state, and I ask you to rule the point of order out of order.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair does not uphold the point of order.

Ministers statements: Docklands schools

Mr MERLINO (Minister for Education) — I am pleased to advise the house that tomorrow night the Docklands community reference group will meet to finalise its input on the school provision review for Docklands. The report will then be presented to me and subsequently released publicly. There are similar consultations across Melbourne. These vital initiatives are in stark contrast to the actions of previous government, which failed to plan for the future of education provision around the state. The Leader of the Opposition, the former Minister for Planning, was the worst culprit.

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister is debating the issue. I ask you to bring him back to compliance with the sessional orders.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister has set a framework. I ask him to come back to making a statement.

Mr MERLINO — It is true, it is a fact, that in regard to the Docklands, plans to investigate future education provision in the area were shelved. That is what we found when we entered government. Those opposite did not want to know about it. They did not want to know about need in the Docklands. Labor committed — —

Mr Clark — On a point of order, Speaker, the minister has returned to debating the issue and defying your ruling. I ask you to bring him back to compliance with sessional order 7.

The SPEAKER — Order! The minister was about to get on to making a ministers statement. I strongly encourage the minister to come back to making a statement.

Mr MERLINO — Labor committed at the last election to restart the planning process, and that is exactly what it has done. The Docklands community reference group has provided vital local input to that process. Let us talk about Fishermans Bend. The *Plan Melbourne* advisory committee stated:

Local services such as schools ... need to be provided at an early stage in a neighbourhood's development. Lags in the delivery of community services, especially health and education, can result in social isolation, lower VCE participation rates and health-related issues.

There are 80 000 people in Fishermans Bend, and 5000 kids attending school have one school. Someone quoted said, 'We've got to look at schools differently, and there are so many opportunities'. An opportunity to put 5000 kids in one school is not an opportunity; it is wilful neglect by the Leader of the Opposition.

The SPEAKER — Order! The time for constituency questions has now arrived.

Mr R. Smith — On a point of order, Speaker, I refer you to sessional order 12 in what seems to be a regular occurrence nowadays. The Minister for Roads and Road Safety has not responded to the following questions on notice that were due on 19 November: 3673, 3656, 3654, 3657 and 3655, and a further question, 942, that was due on 19 October. The Minister for Industry has three questions that were due on 19 November: 3660, 3639 and 3641. The Minister for Public Transport has two questions: one was due on 6 October and the other on 5 November; they are 1100 and 1098 respectively.

Speaker, as I said, this is a regular occurrence. Not only have I been on my feet asking ministers to adhere to the sessional orders but many members on this side of the chamber have also grown very tired of going back to

their constituents and saying that ministers are not doing their jobs and are not putting forward the answers to questions that our constituents want answers to.

The SPEAKER — Order! The Chair will follow those matters through.

Mr T. Bull — On a point of order, Speaker, question on notice 517 lodged on 3 September to the Minister for Mental Health has not been answered. Deputy Speaker, as you are now in the Chair, this is something that I was advised would be brought to the minister's attention on previous sitting weeks, but the question still has not been answered. I request yet again that it be followed up.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I will follow that through with the Speaker for the honourable member.

Ms Ryall — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I have questions outstanding from the Minister for Police that are more than 15 days over the 30-day limit. This is an important issue for my constituency in relation to policing in Ringwood, and I ask that it be responded to immediately.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I will pass that matter on to the Speaker for him to follow through.

Ms Kealy — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I wish to draw your attention to sessional order 9(2) regarding constituency questions and the requirement that a response must be given in writing within 30 days. On 22 October I asked a question of the Minister for Agriculture regarding Shannon Glen Berries. I note that this is also a constituent of the Minister for Agriculture, so it is very disappointing that she has not yet taken the time to even contact Judy Smith of Shannon Glen Berries. I ask that the Speaker urgently intervene and to ensure that the minister respond appropriately and urgently.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I will pass that position on to the Speaker and request that he follow that through with the minister.

CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

Gembrook electorate

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — (Question 6635) My constituency question today is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. A car park and scenic lookout located on Beaconsfield-Emerald Road just near Upper Beaconsfield has had issues in relation to cleaning over the past 12 months, where VicRoads has neglected to

grade the road or upgrade the area as required. We have met with VicRoads in the past and have also met with the council. I ask the minister if we can get an update on the date that we expect this area to be cleaned. I also note that we expect it to be graded so it can be used for the summer period. Two local community groups, the Upper Beaconsfield Association and the Upper Beaconsfield Men's Shed, are willing to assist with this. All we require is for the minister to act on this to ensure that the information on what date this will be finished is to hand.

Essendon electorate

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — (Question 6636) My constituency question is to the Treasurer. Essendon Fields, which is based at Essendon Airport, used to employ 500 people 15 years ago and now employs more than 5000 people and is one of my electorate's largest employers. I am interested in encouraging Essendon Fields to access the Back to Work program and encourage welfare recipients on the public housing estates in Flemington and Ascot Vale to re-enter the workforce. My question to the Treasurer is: when will he meet with members of the Essendon Fields and public housing communities to discuss this proposal?

Ovens Valley electorate

Mr McCURDY (Ovens Valley) — (Question 6637) My constituency question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety. The Murray Valley Highway in northern Victoria continues to be neglected, particularly at Cobram East. The highway transports a mix of local traffic into Cobram and Yarrawonga but is largely a freight corridor in the north that carries an enormous number of tourists, including grey nomads. I was recently approached by a local resident, Glen Riseborough, as he has witnessed many near misses and was nearly the victim of a head-on collision due to the narrowness of the road. Quite simply, this road does not have shoulders and there is simply not enough room for vehicles to pass at the minimum distance required. As more experienced drivers of cars and caravans have B-double trucks approaching them they tend to slip off the main surface, with half the vehicle on the asphalt and the other half on the dirt road. I ask: will the minister commit to ensuring that shoulders are attached to this important highway to allow more flexible movement of vehicles as they pass each other east to west? A highway such as this on an east-west road is already an increased risk with the sun setting or rising as motorists struggle to see at those times of the day.

Yuroke electorate

Ms SPENCE (Yuroke) — (Question 6638) My constituency question is to the Minister for Local Government. I note that the first round of funding approvals for the Labor government’s Interface Growth Fund was recently announced. This grants program is vitally important to outer suburban communities like those in the Yuroke electorate. I note that the Annadale community facility in Mickleham received \$500 000. I ask: what are the planned timelines and outcomes for the community of this project?

Nepean electorate

Mr DIXON (Nepean) — (Question 6639) My question is to the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water. As the minister is aware, hundreds of millions of litres of A-class water are pumped out to sea each day near Gunnamatta Beach in my electorate. At the same time our agribusinesses and streams in the hinterland of the peninsula are crying out for more water to sustain and expand their businesses and for environmental flows respectively. I ask the minister: what is the best way to start looking at moving that recycled water up to the peninsula’s hinterland?

Footscray electorate

Ms THOMSON (Footscray) — (Question 6640) My constituency question is to the Minister for Health, and it concerns a constituent of mine, Mr Jim Given. Mr Given is 94 years of age. He is a returned servicemen. He is battling chronic pain through his lower body. He is acute of mind and a wonderful man whom I have known for very many years, but Mr Given would like to be able to end his own life at a time of his choosing. He does not want to have to be hospitalised or to receive palliative care at the end of his life. Mr Given would like to choose for himself when his life will end. I ask the minister: is there any information that she can pass on that will give Mr Given comfort in his later life?

Shepparton electorate

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) — (Question 6641) My constituency question is for the Minister for Police. Volunteers are the backbone of charity and community organisations across the state. Many pensioners in my electorate volunteer for more than one organisation and in some cases as many as four or five. Often it is the active pensioners who have the time and social commitment to give back to the community. Several have contacted my office, and they are perplexed as to why they must undergo a separate police check for each

of those organisations despite working concurrently for them. They tell me that requiring people who already have their police check paperwork to undergo another check can be a disincentive when recruiting volunteers. Will the Minister for Police provide a mechanism by which volunteers can undergo a police check that can be transferred from one organisation to another during an agreed period of time, perhaps in the manner of a renewable licence?

Pascoe Vale electorate

Ms BLANDTHORN (Pascoe Vale) — (Question 6642) My constituency question is for the Minister for Roads and Road Safety, and it concerns the speed limit in the Coburg Primary School zone on Bell Street in Coburg. I have previously spoken about this issue in this house. Currently the reduced speed limit applies between the peak school times of 8.00 a.m. to 9.30 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. until 4.00 p.m., but the reduced speed limit should be extended throughout the school day.

I thank the minister for previously providing me with an update on the progress of the road safety review that VicRoads was conducting in the vicinity of Bell Street and Sydney Road in Coburg. I understand that the VicRoads safety review of the Bell Street-Sydney Road precinct has been completed and that upon completion of the review a proposal was submitted for further consideration under the Safe System Road Infrastructure Program. I ask the minister: what is the progress of the proposal?

Rowville electorate

Mr WELLS (Rowville) — (Question 6643) The constituency question I have is for the attention of the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, and it relates to the water levels and conditions of the Rowville Lakes, which are in my electorate. Rowville Lakes comprise three separate man-made lakes — Cogley, Sutton and Hill — and they are located in a residential area of Rowville, east of Stud Road, west of Taylors Lane and south of Kelletts Road. The lakes are of local significance, supporting native wildlife and flora and a wealth of waterbirds. They were originally constructed some 40 years ago for the purposes of stormwater drainage, water quality and amenity for the then developing new housing estates.

I ask the minister: in light of the recent period of low rainfall and with a forecast of continued warm, dry conditions during summer, thereby reducing water flows to the lakes, is Melbourne Water currently monitoring both the water levels and the water quality

of the Rowville Lakes to ensure that local residents' amenity is not significantly affected?

Narre Warren South electorate

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) — (Question 6644) My question is to the Minister for Roads and Road Safety and concerns Glasscocks Road in Narre Warren South, a road that I am regularly contacted about by concerned local residents. I ask the minister to provide information on any plans to extend Glasscocks Road on either side of Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road.

Glasscocks Road is currently broken up into two sections between Frankston-Dandenong Road, Western Port Highway, South Gippsland Highway, Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road and Clyde Road. Unfortunately these roads do not all connect, with Glasscocks Road ending abruptly on either side of the South Gippsland Highway and Narre Warren-Cranbourne Road. This often forces local motorists onto surrounding residential streets or the heavily congested Thompsons Road. The future upgrade of Thompsons Road will ease some of the congestion. However, an extended Glasscocks Road would provide an alternate east-west route for local residents, ensuring that they spend less time stuck in traffic and more time with their families.

BUILDING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CONSUMER PROTECTION) BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995 and the Building Act 1993 to enhance consumer protection in relation to domestic building work and to otherwise improve the operation of those acts, to make consequential amendments to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal Act 1998 and for other purposes.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I ask the minister to provide a brief explanation further to the long title.

Mr WYNNE (Minister for Planning) — The Building Legislation Amendment (Consumer Protection) Bill 2015 will amend the Building Act 1993 and the Domestic Building Contracts Act 1995 to provide essential improvements to domestic building consumer protection and generally improve the practitioner registration and disciplinary system.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

RACING AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT (GREYHOUND RACING AND WELFARE REFORM) BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Mr PAKULA (Minister for Racing) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Racing Act 1958 in relation to Greyhound Racing Victoria, the GRV Racing Appeals and Disciplinary Board, the Racing Integrity Commissioner, the use of animals as lures in greyhound races, certain enforcement powers and the use or disclosure of information, to amend the Domestic Animals Act 1994 in relation to codes of practice for the keeping of certain greyhounds and fees to be given by Greyhound Racing Victoria to the Treasurer, to amend the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act 1986 in relation to the time for charging certain offences under that act and for other purposes.

Read first time.

JUDICIAL COMMISSION OF VICTORIA BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) introduced a bill for an act to amend the Constitution Act 1975 to establish the Judicial Commission of Victoria under that act, to provide for investigations into judicial officers and non-judicial members of VCAT, to make consequential and other amendments to other acts and for other purposes.

Read first time.

ROOMING HOUSE OPERATORS BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Ms GARRETT (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to improve the operation of rooming houses by establishing a licensing scheme for rooming house operators and to make consequential amendments to the Australian Consumer Law and Fair Trading Act 2012, the Business Licensing Authority Act 1998, the Estate Agents Act 1980 and the Residential Tenancies Act 1997 and for other purposes.

Mr NORTHE (Morwell) — I ask the minister for a more thorough explanation of the bill than she gave last time.

Ms GARRETT (Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation) — The bill establishes a licensing scheme for rooming house operators under which only fit and proper persons will be eligible to be licensed or have existing licences renewed. This is designed to protect vulnerable tenants from being exploited.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

NATIONAL ELECTRICITY (VICTORIA) FURTHER AMENDMENT BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy and Resources) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005 to apply in Victoria certain provisions of the National Electricity Law and to amend the National Electricity Rules as in force in Victoria to implement certain retail customer connection arrangements and for other purposes.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I ask that the minister provide a brief explanation of the bill.

Ms D'AMBROSIO (Minister for Energy and Resources) — The bill will introduce in Victoria a new framework governing how small customers, including those with small renewable energy-generation facilities such as solar panels, connect to the electricity grid. This framework is more transparent, timely and customer friendly than the existing framework.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

GENE TECHNOLOGY AMENDMENT BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the Gene Technology Act 2001 following the enactment of the Gene Technology Amendment Act 2015 of the commonwealth and for other purposes.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I ask the minister to provide a brief explanation further to the long title.

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) — Victoria is a signatory with the commonwealth and other states to the intergovernmental agreement on gene technology matters. This bill effectively places Victoria in a

position to adopt consistency with some recent national reforms in that area. I put on the record also that this amendment bill places no additional regulatory burden or cost on the regulated community.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

ACCESS TO MEDICINAL CANNABIS BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Ms HENNESSY (Minister for Health) introduced a bill for an act to provide for medicinal use of products derived from cannabis by establishing a scheme for the lawful cultivation of cannabis for those products, the lawful manufacture of those products and the lawful use of those products by a limited class of Victorians, to consequentially amend the Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Act 1981 and to make related amendments to certain other acts and for other purposes.

Read first time.

INTEGRITY AND ACCOUNTABILITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (A STRONGER SYSTEM) BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to amend the Independent Broad-based Anti-corruption Commission Act 2011, the Audit Act 1994, the Ombudsman Act 1973, the Public Interest Monitor Act 2011 and the Victorian Inspectorate Act 2011 to implement a stronger system of integrity and accountability, to consequentially amend certain other acts and for other purposes.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I ask the minister to provide a brief explanation in addition to the long title.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — The government took to the election a commitment to strengthen the powers around IBAC. This bill delivers on that election commitment, as the long title says, to implement a stronger system of integrity and accountability, and there are consequential amendments to the other independent statutory bodies that are involved in the legislation.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

TRANSPARENCY IN GOVERNMENT BILL 2015

Introduction and first reading

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — I move:

That I have leave to bring in a bill for an act to facilitate regular public reporting of performance-related data in relation to certain emergency and health services and to ensure transparency in relation to the delivery of those services and for other purposes.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — I ask the minister to provide a brief explanation further to the long title.

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — This bill is also the legislative implementation of another election commitment. It was brought about by the practice of gross secrecy that was engaged in by the now opposition when it was in government and its members refused to provide information to the community about important emergency services response times. This was an unacceptable position to those of us on this side when we were in opposition. We made an election commitment to provide greater transparency and information to the community, and that is exactly what we are delivering on with this bill.

Motion agreed to.

Read first time.

PETITIONS

Following petitions presented to house:

Sydney Road, Brunswick, cyclist safety

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

Various stakeholders and cycling groups have been proposing and lobbying for extreme changes to be made in infrastructure, for the safer sharing of Sydney Road. Whilst we agree with a safer road for all, we feel these changes will have an immediate, profound impact, detrimental to the businesses and the long-term viability of this shopping strip.

We would like to halt any proposals, particularly in removing any on-street car parking, until all major stakeholders are consulted appropriately, with impacts recognised and all alternatives rationally considered.

To ensure a thriving and accessible shopping strip, we do not agree with removing car parking from the main street of Sydney Road, Brunswick, because we believe it will have a negative impact on the business community.

By Ms GARRETT (Brunswick) (1076 signatures).

Family violence

To the Legislative Assembly of Victoria:

The petition of we, the undersigned citizens of Victoria, draws the attention of the house in seeking that funding be provided immediately for the provision of women's refuges to cater for the needs of women and their children affected by family violence in the western suburbs of Melbourne.

For Victorian women aged 14–44 years, violence is the leading cause of illness, death and disability.

Family violence is increasing dramatically in the western suburbs, especially in Melton, Brimbank and Wyndham municipalities. And, despite the rapid growth in these areas, the number of government-funded refuges remains at two compared to six in the eastern suburbs. The west has not received any new funding since the 1980s.

The petitioners therefore request that the Legislative Assembly of Victoria immediately take the necessary steps to redress this imbalance and provide the refuges so desperately required.

By Mr NARDELLA (Melton) (1571 signatures).

Ordered that petition presented by honourable member for Melton be considered next day on motion of Ms GREEN (Yan Yean).

ACCOUNTABILITY AND OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Victorian oversight agencies 2014–15

Mr ANGUS (Forest Hill) presented report, together with appendices.

Tabled.

Ordered to be published.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

Sitting hours and operation of house

Mr BROOKS (Bundoora) presented interim report.

Tabled.

Ordered to be published.

SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Alert Digest No. 16

Ms BLANDTHORN (Pascoe Vale) presented *Alert Digest No. 16 of 2015* on:

Aboriginal Heritage Amendment Bill 2015
Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015

Bail Amendment Bill 2015
Consumer Acts and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2015
Drugs, Poisons and Controlled Substances Amendment Bill 2015
Education and Training Reform Amendment (Victorian Institute of Teaching) Bill 2015
Occupational Licensing National Law Repeal Bill 2015
Notice of Amendments to Australian Rules of Harness Racing (ARHR) and Australian Trotting Stud Book Regulations (ATSBR)

together with appendices.

Tabled.

Ordered to be published.

DOCUMENTS

Tabled by Clerk:

Auditor-General — Responses to Performance Audit Recommendations: 2012–13 and 2013–14 — Ordered to be published

Coroners Court of Victoria — Report 2014–15

Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 — Order under s 17D granting a lease over Anglesea Riverbank Reserve

Duties Act 2000 — Reports 2014–15 of exemptions and refunds under ss 250B and 250DD (two documents)

Financial Management Act 1994 — Budget Update 2015–16

Planning and Environment Act 1987 — Notices of approval of amendments to the following Planning Schemes:

Ararat — C34

Casey — C217

East Gippsland — C124

Hobsons Bay — C102 Part 1

Knox — C133, C138

Melbourne — C283

Moonee Valley — C156

Victoria Planning Provisions — VC107

Whitehorse — C158

Wodonga — C106

Yarra — C199, C208

Statutory Rules under the following acts:

Corrections Act 1986 — SRs 140, 145

Crimes Act 1958 — SRs 137, 138

Domestic Animals Act 1994 — SR 136

Gambling Regulation Act 2003 — SR 139

Mental Health Act 2014 — SR 141

Sentencing Act 1991 — SR 143

Supreme Court Act 1986 — SRs 142, 143, 144

Subordinate Legislation Act 1994:

Documents under s 15 in relation to Statutory Rules 125, 128, 132, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144

Documents under s 16B in relation to the:

Education and Training Reform Act 2006 — Ministerial Direction MD146 — Standards for Registered Training Organisations

Gambling Regulation Act 2003 — Ministerial Determination under s 3.8A.19A

Wodonga Institute of TAFE — Report 2014 (*in lieu of report previously tabled on Thursday 16 April 2015*).

The following proclamations fixing operative dates were tabled by the Clerk in accordance with an order of the house dated 24 February 2015:

Education and Training Reform Amendment (Miscellaneous) Act 2015 — Remaining provisions — 1 December 2015 (*Gazette S363, 24 November 2015*)

Mental Health Amendment Act 2015 — Remaining provisions — 25 November 2015 (*Gazette S363, 24 November 2015*)

Serious Sex Offenders (Detention and Supervision) and Other Acts Amendment Act 2015 — Division 1 of Part 2, and ss 42, 44 and 45 — 1 December 2015 (*Gazette S363, 24 November 2015*).

ROYAL ASSENT

Message read advising royal assent on 1 December to:

Child Wellbeing and Safety Amendment (Child Safe Standards) Bill 2015

Fisheries Amendment Bill 2015

Local Government Amendment (Fair Go Rates) Bill 2015

Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (Safe Access Zones) Bill 2015

State Taxation Acts Further Amendment Bill 2015.

APPROPRIATION MESSAGES

Messages read recommending appropriations for:

Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015

Occupational Licensing National Law Repeal Bill 2015.

SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE

Membership

The SPEAKER — Order! I have received the resignation of Ms Kealy from the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee effective from 26 November 2015.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Program

Ms ALLAN (Minister for Public Transport) — I move:

That, under standing order 94(2), the orders of the day, government business, relating to the following bills be considered and completed by 5.00 p.m. on Thursday, 10 December 2015:

Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015

Bail Amendment Bill 2015

Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015

Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015

Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015.

As the house has just been informed, there are five important pieces of legislation on the government business program for consideration and, hopefully, successful passage by 5.00 p.m. on Thursday of this week. A number of these bills relate to the implementation of important election commitments, whether it be in the Ballarat area around the Canadian Regional Park, the commitment to the Geelong community around Kardinia Park or other matters around the Bail Amendment Bill 2015 and the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015.

In addition to those five pieces of legislation, I wish to flag to the house, and I have already indicated this to the manager of opposition business, that the government intends tomorrow to put to the Assembly — again, hopefully for successful passage — the Adoption Amendment (Adoption by Same-Sex

Couples) Bill 2015 as amended by the Legislative Council. We feel that this is a bill of critical importance, and we wish the house to deal with this matter by the end of the parliamentary sitting year.

On that point, it is the end of the parliamentary sitting year. That comes with great elation, I am sure. Certainly for those of us on this side of the house it comes with a great sense of pride about the large number of bills we have been able to put to the Parliament, rapidly moving to implement the raft of election commitments that we took to the Victorian community. As the introduction of bills has just been undertaken, I lost count of the bills as there were so many pieces of legislation that we introduced on significant issues that are important in delivering on our election commitments. We look forward to working through those when the Parliament resumes in February next year.

But before we get to February next year — and I know the member for Brighton is greatly keen to come back in February for the resumption of debate on those bills — I flag to the house and to all members that the government intends tomorrow to debate the welcome to country motion that has just been moved by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, who is keen to see this progress. I acknowledge the work of the Speaker in encouraging us to make this change to our sessional orders to allow an acknowledgement of country to be made in the house each sitting Tuesday. It has been a more recent feature of the opening of each new Parliament that there has been an appropriate welcome to country, and it is entirely appropriate that in each sitting week we also make that important acknowledgement to the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting.

With those comments and observations, as I said, there are a number of bills and a couple of other matters that we look forward to resolving with the cooperation of the house this week.

Mr CLARK (Box Hill) — The coalition parties do not oppose the government business program. There are a number of bills on the program that deserve close scrutiny by the house, some of those relating to specific land proposals. Land proposals are always significant, particularly for the communities that are directly affected and often for the broader community, so it is important that we examine what needs to be examined in relation to those proposals.

The Bail Amendment Bill 2015 deals with two separate topics: the first relating to terrorism, and the second relating to younger alleged offenders who are on bail.

Those are both important issues, and both aspects of the bill will deserve close scrutiny to ensure that the measures it contains are appropriate and to examine whether or not amendments should be made to it.

The Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015 deals with a very significant issue that has been under examination by successive parliaments and is very important for those members of the community affected by it. It has received a considerable amount of attention from successive governments and parliamentary committees in at least two parliaments. It is a matter on which I expect a number of members will have significant contributions to make.

The issue with the business for the week is not so much with the program but, as is often the case, with how the government intends to handle the program. We certainly hope the government will ensure that the house devotes attention to the bills that need detailed and, if necessary, extensive scrutiny. We hope we do not see a situation where government members filibuster on bills on which both sides of the house agree simply to avoid time being devoted to scrutiny of those bills and those aspects of bills that the government might not want subjected to detailed scrutiny.

We appreciate the fact that the Leader of the House has alerted the house and me to the additional matters proposed for Wednesday morning, and we do not see any difficulty in accommodating those in the program.

Let me conclude simply by taking issue with the minister's remarks in relation to the bills of which notice has been given this week and the general size of the legislative program over the past year. I have to say that a large number of the bills that this house has dealt with, including very late in this year's sittings, have been bills on which the vast bulk of work was done by the previous government. This government should be subjected not to congratulations for getting them to the house but to censure for taking so long to do so.

Even amongst the bills of which notice has been given this week, subject to seeing the detail of those bills it would appear that those related to domestic building and consumer protection matters were already well advanced under the previous government. The judicial commission legislation, if I recall correctly, was introduced into the house by the previous government but not dealt with; likewise, some of the integrity reforms the government is talking about may, if subjected to scrutiny, bear a very close resemblance to reform measures that were well advanced under the previous government.

With those observations I confirm the fact that the opposition does not oppose the government business program.

Mr McGUIRE (Broadmeadows) — Victorians are well pleased to have a government that has a vision and a plan that it is implementing for economic development and social reform.

Ms Asher interjected.

Mr McGUIRE — This is the proposition. It is no good the former manager of government business complaining. You either do it or you do not. The vote is in. This government is getting on with taking care of business, and we have seen that right through the entire year. Now it culminates in the final government business program of this year.

It is a fine record. Legislation has been brought in with a whole range of different reforms around Melbourne Metro, rebuilding TAFE and schools, and also economic development. I particularly want to thank the Premier and the Minister for Industry for what they have done on automotive manufacturing. I remind the house that the federal government has taken \$800 million away from this proposition.

Honourable members interjecting.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I ask the member to come back to the government business program.

Mr McGUIRE — As a preamble to my contribution to the debate on this week's government business program, I put those things on the record because we need to address the big picture here as well. The Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015 is critical for people who need to know their genetic heritage and also critical to the health and wellbeing of those people. What we are doing in genomics in this area, particularly in Victoria, is world leading, and the research is increasingly available and important. This delivers on the 30 recommendations of the parliamentary Law Reform Committee — —

Mr Crisp — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I ask that the member confine his remarks to this week's business program and not venture into the area of speculation on or anticipation of a bill yet to come before the house.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I uphold the point of order. The member for Broadmeadows is to confine his remarks to the government business

program. It is a very narrow debate. I ask him to come back to debating the motion before the house.

Mr McGUIRE — To continue on the government business program, these are issues of significance to a lot of people in the state of Victoria. This debate has been brought from the past Parliament into — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr McGUIRE — No, it goes to the point of it. The opposition is not opposing it. I am glad to hear that. I was glad to hear the manager of opposition business say — he did not directly say it but I presume he was saying — the opposition would not oppose the welcome to country motion. Hopefully that gets through as well. That is an important and progressive proposition, and I think it is really something. This is another strong end to the year. It shows that the government has had the vision, has had the plan and is now delivering. The vote is already in on the previous administration — two years of delay and two years of instability — so that is why this government is getting on with taking care of the business in the best interests of the people of Victoria.

Mr HIBBINS (Prahran) — I rise to speak very briefly on the government business program. The Greens will not oppose the government business program in this instance. We have not requested that we go into consideration in detail on any bills, but obviously it has been unfortunate over the year that we have only gone into the consideration-in-detail stage once — possibly twice, I am not sure.

Surely bills in this house deserve further scrutiny and consideration, and I hope that next year the government sees fit to have more bills go into consideration in detail to ensure that this house does its job and works effectively in scrutinising legislation.

There are five bills on the agenda: the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015, which I understand is a very important bill coming before this house; the Bail Amendment Bill 2015; the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015; the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015; and the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. I note that also on the notice paper we have the Adoption Amendment (Adoption by Same-Sex Couples) Bill 2015 to come back before this house. I understand the other place will be debating the Delivering Victorian Infrastructure (Port of Melbourne Lease Transaction) Bill 2015. It will be very interesting to see whether that bill comes back to this house this week.

I note the motion put forward to include a welcome to country as a standard feature of a sitting week. Certainly that is another good step towards recognising our Indigenous heritage and our Indigenous population here in Victoria following on from the flying of the Indigenous flag upon Parliament House. It is another step in the right direction. I look forward to the debate on that motion. As I said, the Greens will not be opposing the government business program in this instance.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I would like to make a brief contribution in relation to the government business program. As has been outlined, there are five bills to be debated this week in addition to the welcome to country motion tomorrow. We are finishing the year as we started it: by having a solid workload before the house. There is a wide variety of bills, some of which could be broadly considered to be machinery-of-government bills that we would expect to see, like the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. Some give effect to commitments that we took to the election last year, like the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015. Some relate to issues that the government has had to respond to in relation to matters that have arisen during the year.

I think it is worth noting that we have had a very good year in terms of the workload of the Parliament. I have checked with the parliamentary library, and 67 bills have been passed and assented to this year by the Parliament. By my count on the website, there are nine bills that have passed the Assembly but have not yet passed the Council, and there are obviously the five bills before the house today. Whereas this might not be in the territory of Sir Henry Bolte and Arthur Rylah in 1958, a year which saw a particularly prodigious workload in terms of the number of bills passed — I think it might have been in the order of 300 — this is nonetheless a solid work program before the house. It achieves that nice balance between dealing with the matters that any government will confront on a day-to-day basis, honouring the commitments we took to the election last year and responding to those more topical matters. It is a good program. It is a solid program.

I welcome the manager of opposition business's comment that he will not be opposing the program. I note that the member for Prahran made his standard brief contribution, but in this case at least it was a brief yes rather than a torturous no. I am not sure whether the member for Prahran has ever been able to speak for his allotted time, but nonetheless he is learning, as are we all. I welcome the fact that we finish this year as we

began it. We are getting on with it. It is a solid workload. It is an outstanding business program, and I commend the motion.

Mr CRISP (Mildura) — I rise on behalf of The Nationals in coalition to indicate that we are not opposing the government business program; however, I notice that it is a little bit light on, so there are some issues about times for debate. A number of these bills are not in dispute and in fact could be considered to be very much mechanical for the Parliament to deal with. This could give us time to consider in detail a number of bills, should we so wish. The Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015 might be one on which it would be worthwhile to go into consideration in detail.

I also note that the amendments from the upper house to the Adoption Amendment (Adoption by Same-Sex Couples) Bill 2015 will be considered on Wednesday. Also on Wednesday will be a debate on a motion regarding the acknowledgement of country. I would like to sort out something before members speak on this motion tomorrow, and that is the difference between welcome to country and acknowledgement of country. The motion is about acknowledgement of country. The members for Broadmeadows, Prahran and Essendon need to sort this out. A welcome is something given by a traditional land-holder to a non-land-holder coming to their country. An acknowledgement is something given by a non-Aboriginal custodian to acknowledge the country that they are on. It is an important difference to Aboriginal people. I ask members to get it right. Let us not have — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I ask the honourable member to come back to the government business program and not to debate the subject.

Mr CRISP — I will, but I thought it was important to get that on the record. I also notice that we have an order of the day at the bottom of the notice paper regarding a message requesting the appearance of a minister at a committee. I think this item will probably be left to languish on the bottom of the notice paper until the Parliament is prorogued in 2018. I just do not see that this government is going to debate that. This will keep a bit of pressure on the government to make sure it has plenty of bills on the notice paper, otherwise by default we might be debating this message, or perhaps the government would like to bring it on this week and dispatch it. It will be interesting to see how that is going to be managed.

As I said earlier, the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other

Matters) Bill 2015 is about housekeeping around the Hepburn and Kerang area. There are interesting issues around bee site licences which I think are well worth some discussion in the house. The Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015 is around Albert Park and the future of Parks Victoria's building. The Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015 will bring the stadium into line with the way the MCG is managed. This will provide a number of opportunities for the strong Geelong supporters to get up and have a say during the course of the week.

The Bail Amendment Bill 2015 will be a little more controversial and is certainly another bill that could be well worth taking into consideration in detail because we are dealing with things such as terrorism and the failure to answer to bail. Of course the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Amendment Bill 2015 is one that I think has some challenges in it over the issue of retrospectivity and that very strong desire for people to know about their heritage. The Nationals are not opposing this program, but I again stress that we have — —

Mr McGuire interjected.

Mr CRISP — Frank, you've had your say, and it wasn't very good! The Nationals in coalition are not opposing the government business program.

Motion agreed to.

MEMBERS STATEMENTS

Emperor of Japan birthday celebration

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — This week I attended the celebration of the Emperor's birthday at the residence of the Consul General of Japan. Ms Keiko Haneda invited me and other members to an event that was well attended by various business, education and local community groups. The role of consul general is important for establishing long-term cultural and business relationships between Victoria and Japan. With more than 20 sister cities and the 35-year celebration of the Aichi-Victoria relationship, we are pleased to have Ms Haneda as the representative in Victoria.

Trade union influence

Mr BATTIN — Today we have the United Firefighters Union protesting on the front steps of Parliament House, and Victorians could rightfully ask why. At the last state election the current Premier convinced everyone that all the union issues would be resolved. The opposite could not be more true. The

Premier lied to the firefighters and is now at war with them. He created this issue with secret deals and now will not face the problems. Some are saying Victoria is becoming the union state. Let me assure you all that this is not true; as soon as the puppet of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union, the member for Mulgrave, became Premier, Victoria officially became the union state.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I remind members that they do not accuse other members of lying while in the house. I did not want to interrupt the honourable member for Gembrook when he was on his feet, but I remind all members that that is unparliamentary.

Nick Habib

Mr PAKULA (Attorney-General) — I want to use my time today to pay tribute to a lion of multiculturalism, Nick Habib. Nick passed away on 3 November at the age of 77. He was president of the Alexandrians Friendship Social Club, having been born in Alexandria. He had a Lebanese father and a mother who was half Cypriot and half Cretan. He was born and raised in Egypt and lived most of his adult life in Australia. He spoke Arabic, French, English, Greek and Italian, and he came here by boat in 1958. He was the first ethnic consultant employed in a major corporation and established the Ford soccer team. He was one of the first translators for Victoria Police, volunteering his skills to the Richmond police station in the 1960s.

Nick trained doctors and nurses on how to care for migrant patients. He was an adviser to RMIT in its establishment of the first course in Victoria for interpreters. He was involved in the development of the Australian Greek Welfare Society and the League of Greeks from Egypt and the Middle East. He was an adviser to the Syrian Orthodox community in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, and he advised the Vietnamese community as well. He was involved in the inception of the Hellenic association and its awards for Greek Australians who make their mark. He worked closely with Victorian and Australian governments on multicultural policy, including contributing to the Vernon and Galbally reports, which guided the implementation of multiculturalism for over four decades. He was also an honorary life governor of the Royal Children's Hospital. He leaves behind three great kids in George, Marc and Elie. He will be sadly missed.

Heyfield timber workers memorial

Mr T. BULL (Gippsland East) — On the weekend I had the pleasure of attending the opening of the

Victorian timber workers memorial in Heyfield, where I was given the great honour of reading the names on the honour roll. People came from right across Victoria and throughout the electorate from traditional timber towns, such as Orbost, Swifts Creek, Bairnsdale and Cann River in my electorate. They attended the opening, which was a special event for many in attendance. The memorial is fitting recognition for Victorian timber workers who lost their lives while working, and it is a great place of reflection for their families. I would like to recognise the hardworking Victorian Timber Workers Memorial Committee, led by its chair, John Mahoney, and including Karen Coleman, for their vision and perseverance in bringing this project to fruition. The previous government contributed \$65 000 to the memorial.

Methamphetamine user rehabilitation services

Mr T. BULL — I would like to acknowledge the federal coalition government's commitment to tackling the scourge of ice in our communities and welcome its \$300 million package to improve treatment, education, prevention, support and community engagement. Of particular note is the additional \$241.5 million to be invested through 31 primary health networks, which will use their local knowledge to boost the alcohol and other drug treatment sector. This package also includes \$24.9 million to help families and communities by providing the resources, information and support they need. In Victoria we have a number of agencies that are very keen to have more public rehabilitation beds, and I call on the Minister for Health to provide more rehabilitation beds for the general public, particularly in regional Victoria.

Clayton North Primary School

Mr DIMOPOULOS (Oakleigh) — I rise today to congratulate Clayton North Primary School on its 150th birthday, which it celebrated recently. I was proud to join the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Education at the school.

One hundred and fifty years ago, in 1865, Melbourne was in its infancy, having been established just 30 years earlier. To think that all these years later the school is still going strong is incredible. Tens of thousands of students have passed through the school in that time. As I said at the celebration, what an amazing achievement to reach the milestone of 150 years of serving our local community! There have been some enormous changes locally since 1865, but Clayton North Primary School continues to provide a first-class education, with incredible staff, parents and students. It should be very proud of its history but equally proud of what it does

for education every day. Happy 150th birthday, and well done.

I pay tribute to all the former staff, parents and students over the years who have made the school what it is. Special thanks go to the current principal, Brian Mills, and all the team for their dedication and passion for quality education in my local community. Congratulations and special thanks also go to an incredible local historian, Helen Gobbi, who wrote a fantastic hardcover history on Clayton North Primary School to present at its 150th birthday. Congratulations to all again, and I look forward to attending — although this may be a bit ambitious on my behalf — the 200th celebration in 2065.

Professor Snow Barlow

Ms ASHER (Brighton) — I wish to pay tribute to the retiring chair of VESKI, otherwise known as the Victorian Endowment for Science, Knowledge and Innovation. Professor Snow Barlow is standing down after eight years, and it is ironic that I am making these observations in Parliament after innovation received an *Age* editorial today. It is very rare for innovation to have this level of public attention. Professor Barlow, on the other hand, has been talking about innovation and its importance for many years. I was delighted to work with him as the previous Minister for Innovation.

Professor Barlow and his organisation need to be commended for a number of things: firstly, for the VESKI innovation fellows, making sure that global leaders get opportunities to work in Victoria; secondly, for their encouragement of science overall, particularly amongst young people; thirdly, for their encouragement of women in the scientific field of endeavour — again, I think there is an overall acknowledgement that there are insufficient women in the field, and VESKI put in a lot of effort to try to have more women in this field. I also wish to commend them for their understanding of the need for collaboration between science and industry. They are in favour of commercialisation and wanted to maximise those opportunities. I wish Professor Snow Barlow well for his future. He was an outstanding person to work with and has made an enormous contribution to Victoria. I wish Professor Ian Smith, his replacement, all the best as well.

Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund

Mr EREN (Minister for Sport) — I am delighted to update the house on the Andrews Labor government's work to help grow the economy and job opportunities

for the people in my electorate of Lara and the Geelong region.

Together with the Minister for Industry I recently announced that Geelong businesses would benefit from over \$11.2 million in funding thanks to round 3 of the state and federal government Geelong Region Innovation and Investment Fund. Three businesses from my electorate of Lara received funding in this round: Air Radiators Pty Ltd received \$3.3 million for its \$8.1 million project; M. C. Herd received \$3 million towards its \$6 million project; and Caronlab Australia Pty Ltd received \$225 000 towards its \$505 000 project. These projects are expected to create a combined total of approximately 78 jobs by June 2017.

Avalon Airport

Mr EREN — I am also delighted to inform the house that today Jetstar announced new services from Avalon Airport to Adelaide and Hobart, which will begin in 2016, taking the total number of Australian cities Avalon services to four. Jetstar's announcement comes just months after the Andrews Labor government secured Avalon's future through a landmark 10-year partnership. In total Jetstar will be offering more than 900 000 seats to and from Avalon Airport annually. Both of these initiatives will help grow business and job opportunities for our local community. The unemployment rate has gone from just over 6 per cent 12 months ago to just over 5 per cent. Obviously Labor's jobs plan, which we implemented prior to the election, is working

Evelyn electorate electricity supply

Mrs FYFFE (Evelyn) — On 19 November I received a call from a fruitgrower regarding a notice from AusNet Services advising of plans to cut electricity supply to the area on Sunday, 29 November, for maintenance works. Despite AusNet Services having operated in the valley for many years, there still appears to be a lack of understanding that agricultural businesses operate seven days a week and are often busiest on Sundays when tourists come to pick berries and other seasonal fruits, and growers will be picking and packing for overseas and local markets.

After contacting the AusNet Services external affairs manager, the electricity was rerouted for a couple of businesses but not others. Better understanding of local business is needed by AusNet Services to prevent these businesses from being unreasonably impacted by works at their busiest time of the year. We are not talking about a man-made product in respect of which time is

not essential. Fresh produce must be picked when it is ready. Winter and spring would be a much better time for AusNet Services to carry out maintenance.

Rotary Club of Lilydale

Mrs FYFFE — On Saturday, 14 November, Lilydale Rotary celebrated its 50th anniversary. I was thrilled to attend to help the members celebrate their impressive achievements, which they turned into a commemorative book outlining all the projects members have been involved in. Lilydale Rotary has a very rich history of service above self. The club's membership is a mix of men and women of all backgrounds and ages who enjoy the friendship and fellowship, and the club is known for reaching out internationally. The club has delivered school chairs and desks and stationery to East Timor.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The member's time has expired.

Cyberbullying

Ms BLANDTHORN (Pascoe Vale) — My statement is in regard to a discussion I facilitated with year 9 students from Antonine College in Pascoe Vale. I agreed with the students that I would present their ideas and recommendations to the Parliament for the consideration of the Premier and the Deputy Premier, who is also the Minister for Education.

Earlier this year I received letters from four students: Amanda Eid, Katherine Eljammas, Sabine Elias and Younes Ahmed. They wrote that they were particularly concerned about the prevalence of cyberbullying. The students acknowledged that it was important that the community come together to address this issue and devise a common set of strategies to increase cybersafety.

The students defined cyberbullying as systemic and repetitive verbal and emotional online harassment. They also identified that whilst bullying has a particular definition, different people feel and react differently to it. They acknowledge that what feels like harassment and intimidation for some will be different for others. The students described cybersafety as being able to express themselves online without judgement or the fear of being judged. They also said that it was important that they know who they are talking to online. The students recommended that schools, the community and government work together to reduce the prevalence of cyberbullying and increase levels of cybersafety.

The students acknowledged that as individuals they have a responsibility to themselves, their friends and their families to create a safe online environment by being careful with the profile they create online and how they respond to others. They suggested that they could promote responsible online activity through the development of a campaign. They requested that their school communities provide mentoring regarding online activity. They requested that government consider ways it can also promote cybersafety and work with schools to provide those mentoring opportunities. They also suggested that government work to monitor the regulatory environment in which online activity occurs.

Benalla Airport

Ms RYAN (Euroa) — I thank the federal Nationals leader, Warren Truss, who stepped in yesterday to assist Benalla Rural City Council with \$715 000 in funding through the National Stronger Regions Fund to upgrade the Benalla Airport. Council first applied for funding from the former Victorian coalition government's Regional Aviation Fund in September last year to undertake urgent works. This included an extension of the airport's runway to enable Benalla to host the 34th World Gliding Championships, which start with early events next month before the main event in January 2017. Upon Labor coming to government, the gliding club and the wider community were upset to learn that it had scrapped the program. Council has been fighting to have the project considered under Labor's half-baked regional development program ever since, and 12 months later is still waiting for a decision.

O'Keefe rail trail shelter

Ms RYAN — I recognise members of the Heathcote Lions Club, who have entirely funded a beautiful new rail trail shelter on the O'Keefe rail trail. Last week I had the opportunity to look at the final product with members of the Friends of the Bendigo-Kilmore Rail Trail when the Great Victorian Bike Ride came through town. The shelter has been built by a local, Joe McMahon, and is a wonderful example of beautiful craftsmanship.

For the benefit of the Minister for Regional Development I highlight the value of extending the rail trail through to Kilmore, a project I supported before last year's election with a commitment of funding for a feasibility study for this phase. I look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the local community on this project. Heathcote Tourism and Development is also developing a plan for spur trails to

local wineries and to local attractions, such as Pink Cliffs.

Benalla street art

Ms RYAN — If members of this house are looking for somewhere to go over Christmas, I invite them to come to Benalla to see how contemporary art can transform a — —

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mulu Mihreteab

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I acknowledge Mulu Mihreteab's recent award as Victorian Family Carer of the Year. Mulu is Eritrean and fled from Eritrea and arrived in Australia via New Zealand and South Sudan. Mulu is my neighbour of some 10 years and is the single parent of six children. Her youngest daughter, Heaven, is severely disabled and requires care around the clock. In all the years that I have known her, Mulu has not had a holiday and sleeps for around 3 hours per night. Over the last decade I have watched Mulu raise her children and seen them grow into fantastic adults and contributors in our community. Mulu is an inspiration and a modern-day immigration success story. All of her children are a credit to her labours and endeavours in the face of adversity. I look forward to the day when Mulu and her children can all become Australian citizens.

Regan May

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I also congratulate Regan May, who has been elected as head school captain of Mount Alexander College for 2016. Regan has been an active participant in the Essendon Youth Council throughout the year, and I am delighted that he has been elected by his peers as head school captain. I am sure that this will be the first of many awards and achievements in the years to come.

Eritrean community awards night

Mr PEARSON — I also thank Al-amin Idris for inviting me to the 5th Awate Awards night, which recognises academic success in our Eritrean community. At the ceremony were students who had completed their masters or bachelor degrees or who had recently completed high school. The focus on academic excellence is something of which we should all be proud, but I am particularly pleased to see newly arrived migrants encouraging their children to work hard, study and achieve academic success. This is the

best way to ensure prosperity in our communities and to make sure that these communities can prosper.

United Firefighters Union

Mr WELLS (Rowville) — This statement condemns the Andrews Labor government for its failure to stand up to the blatant industrial militancy of the United Firefighters Union (UFU) during the current enterprise bargaining dispute, which is at the expense of the Country Fire Authority (CFA) and its dedicated volunteers. In recent weeks UFU flags have begun flying from CFA stations and hanging off the back of CFA trucks — an action which is a real insult to the CFA's 58 000 volunteers. Clearly the UFU is trying to take control of the CFA.

Why is it that the government is not willing to do the right thing by demanding that the UFU flags be immediately removed from stations and trucks? Why? Because the Andrews Labor government has lost control of the enterprise bargaining agreement negotiations and is beholden to its union mates for their support and deplorable actions during last year's state election. The UFU actions included blatantly lying to the Victorian community and the totally unacceptable intimidation and harassment of female coalition candidates and polling booth workers by UFU members.

It is time that the Andrews government for once stood up for CFA volunteers and stood against its union mates by immediately acting to ensure that the UFU flags are removed from CFA property. If the Andrews Labor government does not do so, then it is yet again sending a clear message to CFA volunteers that they are second-class citizens and the UFU is well and truly in control of the CFA and the government.

Keilor Basketball Netball Stadium

Mr CARROLL (Niddrie) — I rise to congratulate the volunteers, members and supporters behind the Keilor Basketball Association on the opening last night by the Minister for Sport of the \$6.5 million recently developed Keilor Basketball Netball Stadium. I congratulate Brimbank City Council and all the hardworking community members who have advocated for this facility for nearly two decades.

This issue has been on my radar since my election to this place in 2012, and I have continued to fight for the locals who use the facilities on a regular basis. Almost 30 years ago, in 1987, I played basketball at the stadium — no. 6 for St Christopher's Basketball Club. It was both physically and socially fantastic for me as a

young boy growing up. I am pleased to deliver for all the children and young people in my community so they can have the opportunities that I had growing up in the north-west. This expansion provides three new courts, flexibly allowing for basketball, netball, badminton and volleyball. A 200-seat grandstand has been installed as well as women's changing rooms, a courtyard and storage facilities.

Encouraging young children to play sport is one of the best investments we can make as a community. I visited the facility earlier this year with the Minister for Sport and he got to see firsthand what a wonderful project this is. I commend Robert Dierickx, Mary Kipa and Mark Lowry at the Keilor Basketball Association for their persistent lobbying and for bringing all the moving parts of this project together. I also thank the Brimbank City Council for its commitment. I congratulate the thousands of players, volunteers, parents and community members who have been involved in this stadium development in some way; it would not have happened without them. This is a fantastic project that is going to pay dividends for years and years to come.

Community Hero awards

Mr NORTHE (Morwell) — I rise today to acknowledge local recipients of the recent Community Hero awards. Firstly, a big well done to Traralgon 11-year-old boys Tom Said and Charlie Lockwood, who helped save young Daniel Carstein after they noticed him on the bottom of the Traralgon swimming pool. With the support of others, thankfully, Daniel was able to have a reasonably quick recovery. It was an amazing effort by Tom and Charlie, and their families should be proud. I wish Mark and Tanya Carstein and their children, Matthew, Caitlyn and of course Daniel, all the very best in dealing with what was a traumatic experience.

The Australian Paper Mills emergency response team at Maryvale was recognised for saving the life of David Brown, who collapsed at work in August of this year. Well done to Stewart Henley, Andrea Notting and Chris Winnell, who played a major role in responding to this emergency, and I also wish David all the very best in his recovery.

John Parker

Mr NORTHE — I also rise to acknowledge the recent passing of a Gippsland identity in John Parker. John was a key figure in the Gippsland Trades and Labour Council, a lateral thinker and a very talented craftsman and artist. John regularly discussed how industry transition could take into account not only the

future welfare of workers but also the potential benefits to the wider community. Whilst I can confidently say that John and I sat on opposing sides of politics, our conversations were rarely about politics. I can sincerely say that I thoroughly enjoyed my discussions with John and, like many people in our community, my respect for him was immense. To John's wife, Alison, and children, Tony, Pam, Steven, Christine and their families, our deepest sympathies are with you at this difficult time.

Hayden Kevin Shell

Ms COUZENS (Geelong) — I rise to acknowledge the death of Hayden Shell, who passed away on 11 November. According to Hayden, entering politics was a matter of evolution. Hayden's position as state secretary of the union of postal clerks brought him into conflict with his employer at the time, the federal government. As the government would not listen let alone grant the union's request, Hayden entered the Labor movement. He held several positions with the party and eventually gained endorsement. Once endorsed as the candidate for the seat of Geelong West, Hayden rallied hard and fast and became known as the doorknocker, knocking on most if not every door in his electorate. His hard work paid off, and he was elected as a state member of Parliament for the seat of Geelong West in 1982. After a redistribution this became the seat of Geelong.

Hayden has left a legacy for the people of Geelong. If it were not for the Cain and Kirner governments and MPs such as Hayden, we would not have WorkCover, the Transport Accident Commission, the ethnic affairs council, the Equal Opportunity Board or Victoria University. We also saw in Geelong the significant development of the community sector under a social justice framework that focused on housing, youth, disability and health, to name a few. This commitment saw services put in place to directly support Hayden's constituents. Geelong owes Hayden an acknowledgement for the legacy he left. During his time in politics Hayden was the people's politician and he always represented his constituency to the fullest. To this day a mention of the name Hayden Shell in Geelong garners respect from all people he came into contact with regardless of political bias.

Ringwood electorate police numbers

Ms RYALL (Ringwood) — It is alarming, but not surprising, to read in today's *Maroondah Leader* that over the last month Ringwood has been without a police day shift patrol van on several occasions. We have fewer police officers now than when the

government was elected, all at a time when our hardworking local police are having to deal with crime increasing under the Andrews Labor government and the scourges of family violence and ice in the local community.

The minister refuses to answer basic questions within the time frame set down by the Parliament. Questions put to the minister that are well overdue include when the jail at the Ringwood police station will receive custody officers and whether the police doing the babysitting will be returned to the beat in Ringwood. He has also failed to answer what number of police and policing hours are being taken up minding prisoners at the Ringwood jail. These are very important questions for my community. For a government that promised transparency, we see very little of it.

The safety of my community is a priority, and we will not be sidelined or treated with contempt by a Minister for Police and a Premier who refuse to fund more police officers across our state as our population increases by an MCG full of people per year. The Premier wasted \$860 million by cancelling the east–west link, and when one thinks about how many additional police officers that could have funded, one can be nothing but disgusted. I know my community is. I call on the Premier and the Minister for Police to start acting in the interests of my community, to answer our questions and to prioritise resourcing additional police in Ringwood.

Sunbury rail services

Mr J. BULL (Sunbury) — On Friday, 27 November, I joined the Minister for Public Transport in Sunbury to announce that the Andrews Government will add 83 Metro Trains Melbourne services for Diggers Rest and Sunbury each week by this year's end and ensure that local passengers retain access to most V/Line services. From 31 December 2015 all trains from 7.00 p.m. onwards will extend to Diggers Rest and Sunbury. These new services are on top of the 10 additional Metro train services being provided through the Labor government's Night Network trial.

Last month the minister and I joined nearly 200 people at a transport workshop in Sunbury, and a further 100 had their say through an online survey. Feedback showed that people would like to see V/Line services continue stopping at Sunbury. In addition to this, from 1 January next year Sunbury passengers will be able to board all but two V/Line services — the 4.25 p.m. and the 5.04 p.m. weekday trains. These evening peak

Bendigo line services are the ones that are experiencing the greatest level of overcrowding.

Many months ago I spoke with a number of concerned residents about local train services. I suggested they form a group and call it the Sunbury Train Association. Since that time the association has done a wonderful job in constructively advocating for Sunbury commuters. It went as far as producing a report on what people were asking for in the area and presented that to both Public Transport Victoria and the minister. It also met with me on numerous occasions. I thank the association's members for all their time and effort. It is a great result for the Sunbury community and a great result for Sunbury commuters.

Grampians Pyrenees Business Awards

Ms STALEY (Ripon) — Last week saw the gala presentation dinner for the biennial Grampians Pyrenees Business Awards, a partnership of the Shire of Northern Grampians, the Shire of Pyrenees and the Rural City of Ararat. Held this time at the Ararat Performing Arts Centre, the event showcases the many innovative businesses across the region.

I congratulate all the category winners: best new business, Eurambeen Homestead, Beaufort; innovation and technology, Carey Covers, Stawell; agribusiness, Grampians Estate, Mafeking and Great Western — go Tom and Sarah; retail business, 75BC, Ararat; manufacturing, AF Gason, Ararat; food and beverage, Kookaburra Hotel, Halls Gap; trades and construction, GJ Gardner Homes, Ararat; professional services, Skinco, Ararat; community enterprise, Eventide Homes, Stawell; tourist attraction and service, Cave Hill Creek, Beaufort; event or festival of the year, Grampians Grape Escape, Halls Gap; and the people's choice, Fred & Bet's Cafe, Ararat — and I can heartily recommend the coffee there. The overall business of the year was the Kookaburra Hotel of Halls Gap.

I congratulate all the winners and the shires on creating and hosting these important awards for our region. These are businesses everyone should get behind, and I again congratulate them all.

Family violence

Mr EDBROOKE (Frankston) — Last week I represented the Minister for the Prevention of Family Violence and Minister for Women in opening a debate on the question 'Can the media prevent violence against women?'. The sold-out event featured a stellar cast of speakers, including Leslie Cannold, Sally Warhaft, Dr Deb Waterhouse-Watson, Dr Susan Carland and

Kate Holden. It was also great to be joined by the member for Carrum.

Frankston railway station precinct

Mr EDBROOKE — Yesterday the Frankston transit precinct redevelopment master plan delivery board met for the first time. Thanks to Kevin Hutchings, managing director of South East Water, for allowing us to use South East Water's amazing building in the new South East Water precinct and enjoy the inspirational view. This is part of an approximately \$170 million package of commitments for the Frankston area. There has been more investment, opportunity and confidence in Frankston in one year than in previous decades combined. This is also, as someone put it, the ignition point for Frankston. When you see what the bigger picture is — what is already on the horizon, some of which is still commercial in confidence — you see that this is the largest project Frankston and the peninsula have most likely ever seen.

We have at our disposal the departmental team that worked on the Dandenong rejuvenation and that led the Ringwood project, which used \$67 million as a catalyst to leverage over \$600 million in investment. Community consultation has finished. We have the plan, we have the goal, and from here on we are all about achieving the end product. This is an amazing once-in-a-lifetime opportunity not just to rebuild Young Street and the train station but to rejuvenate a whole CBD and have wider socio-economic effects for Frankston by attracting the right style of investment, not just in the central business district.

Foundation for Young Australians

Ms SULEYMAN (St Albans) — I had the honour on Thursday, 19 November, to present the social entrepreneur award for Victoria at the Foundation for Young Australians \$20 Boss Awards to the students of St Albans Secondary College, team VC Delights. The students developed their own school canteen business and made a profit of over \$4500, which then funded the cost of students attending a school camp and donations to the Lost Dogs Home and the Lung Foundation Australia. I thank NAB and the Foundation for Young Australians for giving young students the opportunity to develop their entrepreneurial skills.

St Albans Saints Soccer Club

Ms SULEYMAN — It has been fantastic to see a lot of community groups and sporting clubs during the year, in particular the St Albans Saints Soccer Club at its Christmas party on Sunday, 5 December. I would

like to thank the volunteers and in particular Ivan Maric, the president of the St Albans Saints who is also the Richmond Football Club's no. 1 ruckman. His dedication to volunteering on behalf of the community is to be commended. St Albans Saints is an integral part of the community.

Bosnia and Herzegovina Independence Day

Ms SULEYMAN — I also attended celebrations for Bosnia and Herzegovina Independence Day on Saturday, 28 November. The evening included performances by folk group KUD Dukat. I would like to thank the Bosnian community, KUD Dukat and the Australian Bosnian Islamic Centre for a fantastic event.

Winters Flat Primary School

Ms EDWARDS (Bendigo West) — I congratulate Winters Flat Primary School in my electorate, which at the recent ResourceSmart Education Awards won 4 of the 10 awards on offer, including ResourceSmart school of the year and ResourceSmart teacher of the year. I would like to congratulate Jeanette McMahon on her leadership and innovation. Winters Flat Primary School is also one of the ResourceSmart schools to achieve the highest 5-star sustainability certification.

The school has demonstrated significant leadership in each of the five ResourceSmart schools modules of core, biodiversity, energy, water and waste, and it actively helps other schools to start their own sustainability journeys. All 5-star leadership schools not only help other schools to take action on climate change but also show the Victorian community what can be done at the local level. Winters Flat Primary School is an impressive leader in education for a sustainable future, embedding sustainability in its curriculum and engaging students, parents and the broader community.

The student-led action team 'Eco kids — community leaders' is a group of students from grades 3 to 6 who lead events and activities to create a sustainable school. The leaders attend conferences, workshops and community meetings to extend their understanding of environmental impacts and to grow their presentation skills. Enthusiastic, ideas-driven, helpful and encouraging, the students challenged the school to reduce its carbon footprint by making positive changes at school and home. Some of the behavioural changes included nude food every day and one, two or three clothing layers based on the weather to reduce the energy needed to heat and cool classrooms.

Volunteer firefighter cancer compensation

Mr KATOS (South Barwon) — Last week I was to attend the Highton Country Fire Authority (CFA) station to sign the pledge supporting our CFA volunteers in obtaining presumptive legislation, but unfortunately they were called away to a fire so we will be rescheduling that. Next week I will be going to the Grovedale CFA station, which contacted me and wants me to sign the pledge in front of its volunteers. I certainly put those volunteers first, unlike this government.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Blandthorn) — Order! The time for making statements has now ended.

CROWN LAND LEGISLATION AMENDMENT (CANADIAN REGIONAL PARK AND OTHER MATTERS) BILL 2015

Second reading

Debate resumed from 21 October; motion of Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water).

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — I rise to speak on behalf of the opposition to put forward our position in relation to the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. I firstly put on the record that we are not opposing this bill. A few of these items have been in play for a while — some since we were in government, which have continued through to the current government. We acknowledge the government putting in place a lot of these points.

National parks in Victoria, as we know, are very important. We do not agree on everything when it comes to national parks — there are some obvious elements we do not agree on — but I honestly believe that those people who work in our national parks or in any of our parks in Victoria, even though they may sometimes not agree on exactly where they are heading, all have the one common goal, which is generally for a better environment for the community's use in the future.

A few of the areas the bill amends are these. It will amend the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 to create Canadian Regional Park, Hepburn Regional Park and Kerang State Wildlife Reserve. It will excise land from the Cobboboonee Forest Park and add land to Macedon Regional Park. It will also amend the National Parks Act 1975 — 1975 was a fantastic year; that was 40 years ago — to alter the national park boundaries of

several parks. That will add land to Dandenong Ranges National Park, which is out in my electorate, Murray-Sunset National Park, Warrandyte State Park, Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and others.

Interestingly the bill will also amend the Wildlife Act 1975 to accommodate changes to bee site licenses. That is something that many would see as not a huge or important issue. When you speak to beekeepers out there who currently utilise parks in Victoria for beekeeping and understand the Victorian environment and how important bees are to it, you see that this piece of legislation is vitally important. It takes away red tape. It ensures that our beekeepers will have the ability to be in a park for 10 years as it removes the necessity for them to renew their licences every 12 months. The beekeepers opposition members have spoken to — and there are some out in the Dandenong Ranges — are very keen to see this change. They were keen for the change prior to the change of government, and we are very happy to see this occur. We thank the people in the department who have given us advice on this. It has been important to get out there, and I now have a greater understanding of the importance of bees in our parks and of the growth in beekeeping in Victoria.

The government will say that the major part of this bill delivers on a commitment it made when in opposition before the state election in 2014. I will put on the record some of the issues the opposition has surrounding the delivery of that. Prior to the election the now government put on the record that it was going to deliver the Canadian state park. That is what it went to the election with. Now we see that this bill introduces a Canadian Regional Park. I understand that there has been consultation since the date of the election, and that consultation has been around feedback from the community on what is a state park and what is a regional park, who has access to them, and what facilities can be utilised inside them. The community there has spoken, and its voice has been quite loud in saying that it wanted to make sure there would be a regional park.

I note that Josh Morris, a member for Western Victoria Region in the upper house, wrote a letter to the editor when this happened. That letter to the editor surrounded the fact that the commitment was not going to be delivered around a state park. A response came back to him loud and clear that a regional park was what the community was actually after in the area. Opposition members commend that, and I have spoken to Josh Morris about that. If I am to put anything on the record in relation to consultation, it is this: we all understand the importance of consultation. If you are going to be delivering anything in any area, and particularly

relating to a park for use in a community, it is vital that you consult prior to making a commitment that you are going to take to an election. The commitment given for a state park was, we were assured, based on the fact that there had been consultation with the community.

The community has now assessed that and gone back and said, 'Well, that is not actually what we really want with that'. The local member there I understand knows the chair of the Friends of Canadian Corridor, who is also, I understand, a chair of the Labor Party in the region. You would think the consultation would have been done prior to that to make sure the now government had that information before it took the commitment to the election. When you take a commitment to an election, and you say that is what you are going to deliver, that is what everybody expects. As I said, I have gone out of my way to ensure — I have spoken to one of the local members up there about the Canadian Regional Park — that I have taken people's views on board.

I do not know the area all that well. I am not 100 per cent familiar with the area, so I spoke to the chair of Friends of Canadian Corridor and made sure I got that group's views, and the views of its members are that they want that regional park. That is why the opposition is not opposing this bill. We are not opposing it because the community has called for that. However, I want to put on the record that when you go to an election with a commitment for a state park, then that is what you should be delivering. We will not oppose it on the grounds that the community has called for something else after that. It is vital that I put on the record that the consultation seems to have been done after the process, and not before.

I understand The Nationals will be speaking in relation to the other parks, the Hepburn Regional Park and Kerang State Wildlife Reserve. They will be speaking in depth on the Kerang state wildlife park. The Hepburn Regional Park is obviously very important to Victoria, and the changes to that park will improve its facilities and ensure that access for community members is kept open into the future.

I will go on to talk about some of the other parks, particularly the Dandenong Ranges National Park. Of the parks that are included in the bill, I probably have the greatest knowledge of the Dandenong Ranges park. As many members will be aware, the Dandenong Ranges are known as the lungs of Melbourne. There are many other terms for the area down there. It is an area of high fire danger. It has one of the highest fire danger levels not only in Victoria but also around the world. There is a history of fire going through the area,

including the Ash Wednesday fires. It was also touched by the Black Saturday fires that came up through that area. It is an area with a large population residing around a national park and a state park. You need to take a lot of things into consideration when you have that many residents in such a forested area. Whichever park you are looking at, there are people in those areas.

As people have relocated out to the Dandenong Ranges over the years, the message we have got from most of them is, 'We moved here because we wanted to have a life that was out in the forest, out among the trees. We wanted a tree change from the city. It is fresher air'. There are a lot of positives to living out near or in some of the parks we have throughout Victoria. I reside in Berwick, but I travel up there quite regularly. It is fantastic to have that as almost our backyard. We have Puffing Billy up there and some other great tourist spots. Our national parks and state parks are so important to our future and so important to our tourism future.

Mr Noonan interjected.

Mr BATTIN — What have we got there?

Mr Noonan — Miss Marple's.

Mr BATTIN — We have Miss Marple's Tearoom up there, and the Kallista Tea Rooms. They are so fantastic. They are so vital to our tourism future, but they are also vital to our environmental future, and we need to make sure we keep that balance, and it is a difficult balance sometimes to keep.

When you have residents moving into an area, you also have to take into consideration the fire risks. Fire is a standard risk through Victoria that I think anyone who has resided in Victoria all their life would have been brought up with. It does not matter which Victorian electorate you are in, you will have been affected or touched by fires at some time in your past. When we are considering these parks and looking at what we are going to be doing with them, the staffing of the parks, the funding of the parks and the ability to work within those parks are all vital considerations. You not only need to make sure that you have your rangers there who can work through and identify issues but you also need to have project firefighters, planned fire burns, treatment areas, and areas of protection — areas to protect the wildlife, the fauna. There are so many different things you have to take into consideration, especially once you are putting people into that mix.

People will continue to move out to areas like the Dandenong Ranges because they are beautiful areas. They are places where people want to live or start a

business. Into the future these parks will ensure that we can get extra tourism in many regional areas throughout Victoria.

In relation to the parks particularly around Ballarat — and I am sure the member for Buninyong will be speaking on this as well — the importance of tourism through an area like Ballarat is paramount. Jobs are created through so many roles. There are education facilities up there, there are businesses that have survived for a long period of time and there are departmental and other government positions. But to actually create employment through tourism up there is bringing new money into that town. That is supporting small businesses, that is supporting local communities. To a local community up in an area like Ballarat, job growth is so important. That is why, when the opposition went through this bill, the decision to not oppose it was all based around the question of how we can make sure this is the best outcome for the community.

I look forward to visiting the Canadian park when it has been created as a regional park. Some questions need to be raised, particularly through the minister, to ensure that we can get some answers. The issues will be around the funding — whether the government has made sure it has the correct funding for the regional park with the changes it is making, how it will maintain the park and where it will get the staff. Is it adding additional staff or is it removing staff from other parks that are already in place, which would see a decline in other areas? If that is the case, what is the process and the planning to get them across? Will they be based at the office up there? Do they need to expand? Do they need to move? All of these questions as to how the government will implement that going forward still need to be answered by the minister.

As I said, the opposition does not oppose this bill. Many of the items have been there since before the last election. Whilst we do not always agree on where we are heading within the environmental realm, we believe the best outcome is something that should be done.

I will say, though, that the Friends of Canadian Corridor have done the work. Having spoken to them, I am assured and feel fairly comfortable to say that these are people who are going to continue their work in that area. They obviously love the area they live in, and it is because of people like that that these parks will continue. The regional park will grow and will end up with more tourism based on the fact that you have got a great local community who are willing to get behind a project like this. On that, our position is to not oppose this bill.

Mr HOWARD (Buninyong) — I am very pleased to speak on this bill, which as we know is the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. As the subtitle suggests, the most significant component of this bill, certainly as I and my community see it, relates to the creation of a new regional park in the Ballarat area — that is, the Canadian Regional Park.

The bill also, as we have heard from the shadow minister for environment, the member for Gembrook, establishes some other regional parks, in particular the Hepburn Regional Park, which is in an area that was dear to me as part of the Ballarat East electorate, but I will allow the member for Macedon to speak on that component of the bill if she has an opportunity. That is another worthy component of this bill, but I want to concentrate on sharing with members the history of how people in my region made a dream come true and brought a vision to fruition, because this bill means that approximately 640 hectares of mostly forested land on the eastern and south-eastern boundaries of residential Ballarat are now to be protected for all future generations of people who live in or come to visit the Ballarat area.

This is a great decision that has been made by the Andrews Labor government. It does not just involve the establishment of a new park that brings together the former Canadian State Forest and some timber logging plantation land that the state had leased to a logging firm until the logging firm handed it back to the government, as well as the step being taken today in progressing this bill to see the Canadian Regional Park established, the Andrews Labor government has committed \$2 million. Some parts of this land have significant issues associated with weed infestation and are not in as pristine condition as they should be. A forested area was cleared some five years or thereabouts ago and is in a mixed state of regrowth, but we will be able to see this area regrown as it should to a multispecies-type forest that will add to the overall area. Clearly that \$2 million will be a great benefit in terms of enhancing the present Canadian State Forest so that it becomes the Canadian Regional Park and will see it being able to be utilised by more and more people in and visitors to the region.

How did a vision come to be the reality that has now nearly been brought about? I am pleased to hear that the opposition does not oppose this bill, so it should progress through this house and subsequently through the upper house and be proclaimed. It came about because of some residents in the area, and I will name two key residents who came and saw me a number of years ago: Jeff Rootes and Bob Hartmann. They drew

to my attention the fact that plantation land near Mount Clear College had been cleared and the licence for that plantation had been handed back to the government. They were saying, 'We're concerned about what this might mean. Will this mean that the government will take on the land, or will the government see this as an opportunity to sell some of its land and we will see this end up as residential housing lots?'. There was a very clear threat of that happening, and certainly there were discussions with the coalition government of the day. It was very unclear about the future of that land, but at least we know that it did not sell it before the state election in 2014.

Those residents banded together with other residents who saw they had a common interest in the land and became the Friends of Canadian Corridor. The Friends of Canadian Corridor included over 100 individuals who had particular interests in the forest. Some of them represented other groups in the area including the Friends of Sparrow Ground, the Ballarat East Network, the Friends of Pryor Park, the Ballarat Environment Network and the Buninyong Mount Helen Lions Club. The editor of the *Wildlife Whistler* became involved. Members of the Eureka Orienteers club said, 'Yes, we want to be on board', as did the Ballarat/Sebastopol mountain bikers, who had developed a nice riding course near Mount Clear College. Ballarat field naturalists club members said, 'We value this land. We want to be involved', as did members of the Great Dividing Trail Association. There were also other groups — the Leigh catchment Landcare group expressed its interest. The University of Ballarat, which is now Federation University, also shared its advice and expertise.

Over the subsequent months the Friends of Canadian Corridor held a number of meetings at the earth education centre at Mount Clear College, and it also held some community days where it invited people to come along to appreciate the wildflowers that could be found growing in various parts of the Canadian forest. Its members took people out and showed them the area that had been cleared and talked about what the vision could mean for them, for their children and for the rest of our Ballarat community. So many people got very excited about this opportunity.

I note that the government of the day did not express a particular view. It expressed the view only that it would ask the department of environment to consider whether the land should be retained or what the status of the land was. It is fair to say that perhaps it committed to some consultation with the council before any action was taken. I, on the other hand, was pleased to attend a number of the meetings that the Friends of Canadian

Corridor held. I was very excited about their suggestions, and took them to then Leader of the Opposition, now the Premier, the then shadow environment minister, now the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, and other members of the Labor Party.

I was delighted, as were many members of Friends of Canadian Corridor and other community members when, ahead of the last election, the then Leader of the Opposition came to the Canadian forest and announced that if Labor were elected not only would it create the Canadian Regional Park, as the shadow minister for environment confirmed a moment ago, but it would also commit \$2 million to the first stages of enhancing that forest area. This was the great announcement made by Labor last year.

I have been pleased that not only Friends of Canadian Corridor but so many other people who I had not met previously have approached me over this last year and said what a great decision that was and how excited they were about the opportunity to keep this land in perpetuity for the benefit of people in our area. As we know, the Andrews Labor government is all about keeping every one of the commitments it made at the last election, and hence that is why this bill is before the house today.

My time is quickly running out, but I want to thank a number of people in regard to this legislation. I thank the Premier for giving this project his support. I thank the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water and some of her ministerial staff, who were involved in this project. Staff in the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning have been terrific to work with over the past year. I must mention Grant Hull, who led the team. Many of his staff helped with the community consultations and other aspects of developing this bill to the stage it is now at, so they should also be congratulated. The City of Ballarat has also offered its support for this project. I commend Jeff Rootes, Linda Zibell, Bob Hartman and the other central members of the Friends of Canadian Corridor for their vision and for involving other community members to help them to see what this opportunity could mean for them and for broadening this concept.

The new park will not only benefit people from an environmental point of view but it will also have great social benefits, including for people who walk their dogs, ride their bikes or just appreciate the wildflowers. Young people will also benefit, whether they visit with their families or with schools. Many people will benefit from the new park, including people from other areas.

There will also be economic spin-offs in establishing a great regional park like this.

This does not finish here. The naming of the park as the Canadian Regional Park is just the start. Next year will be an exciting one for me and other people in the community. Parks Victoria will develop the first stages of its management plan, and in enacting the plan we will try to involve as many people as possible in this great park.

Mr T. BULL (Gippsland East) — It is a pleasure to rise to make a contribution on the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. As our lead speaker pointed out, we will not be opposing this bill.

The purpose of the bill is to amend the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978 to create the Canadian Regional Park, the Hepburn Regional Park and Kerang State Wildlife Reserve; to excise land from Cobboboonee Forest Park and to add land to Macedon Regional Park. It also amends the National Parks Act 1975 to amend national park boundaries of several parks, adding land to the Dandenong Ranges and Murray-Sunset national parks, Warrandyte State Park, Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and Steiglitz Historic Park, and excises land from Lake Tyers State Park, which is in my electorate, and Steiglitz Historic Park.

An aspect of this bill that I would like to talk about concerns the amendments to the Wildlife Act 1975 to accommodate changes to bee-site licences. The apiary industry in Victoria is an industry that is undervalued, not appreciated or not fully understood by a lot of people in our community. The changes that are being made to the industry as part of this bill are the result of a lot of work that was done by the previous government under the putting the buzz back into agriculture initiative, which from memory involved a \$400 000 investment. A lot of work was done by the various bureaucracies and also the apiary industry.

The changes brought by this bill will increase the granting of licences in state forests for up to 10 years and significantly reduce the red tape that has often been encountered by the industry. This was a key focus of the putting the buzz back into agriculture campaign. For years and years beekeepers' applications to Parks Victoria and other departments for new bee sites have been rejected with little or no information as to why they were rejected. This bill will hopefully not only allow for greater tenure around the licences but also assist in resolving a lot of those red tape issues.

This bill also supports an industry that is absolutely pivotal to food production in this state and indeed this country. Many people are unaware of the importance of our apiary industry. It is generally considered as involving honey production, but one of the biggest industries that our beekeepers are involved in is the pollination of our crops. The industry directly contributes \$88 million to our national economy. However, when you take into account the amount of work that beekeepers and the apiary industry do in relation to the pollination of crops and food production, that figure grows to between \$4 billion and \$6 billion, which is an incredible figure. That shows how important this industry is to food production, not only in this state but also in Australia.

Victoria contributes significantly to our national honey production. Just under 25 per cent of our nation's honey is produced in Victoria. My electorate of Gippsland East is home to a very healthy apiary industry. There is a lot of honey production in my electorate. The industry is a good employer. There are 3400 registered beekeepers in our state.

Mr Noonan — Name them.

Mr T. BULL — I can probably name a couple for the minister. A number of those are in my electorate. As I said, it is a significant employer in my electorate. I am sure that anything we can do in this chamber and in this Parliament to support this critical industry is welcome.

In relation to other aspects of the bill, as has been mentioned by previous speakers, the major park recognised by this bill is the Canadian Regional Park. As members know, the original pre-election commitment was to establish that area as a state park, but in community consultation subsequent to the election it was revealed that it was better suited to be a regional park. Given my previous comments, I add that beekeeping is part of the activities undertaken in our regional parks.

As the lead speaker for the opposition pointed out, the consultation should and perhaps could have been done before the election so that it could have been identified that the area was best suited to be a regional park. The definition of regional parks is important. They are areas of land containing indigenous or non-indigenous vegetation readily accessible from urban centres or major tourist routes. Regional parks are different from state parks. They allow for a higher level of activity within their boundaries. They offer diverse recreational activities and other opportunities for quite large groups of people.

In relation to other parks, I am advised that a number of the changes that are being made by the bill relate to areas or pockets of land that currently are adjacent to park reserves and that in many instances those areas of land are already managed as they would be if they were part of the adjacent park reserves. The anomaly is that they do not fall within the boundaries of those adjacent parks. The changes made by the bill will bring those little parcels of land within the footprints of adjacent parks.

One of those areas mentioned for excise of land is the Lake Tyers State Park in my electorate. As I am sure many people would know, it is a particularly significant area in relation to Aboriginal heritage. We still have a large Indigenous population around the Lake Tyers State Park. It is known around the state for its very strong Aboriginal and local history, with the shipping trade being predominant in and around that area.

It would be remiss of me to speak on a bill relating to our parks system without touching on the magnificent parks network we have in my electorate of Gippsland East. Our area is home to parks that boast some unique environments and locations of extraordinary beauty. I would argue that they are among the most beautiful parks that can be seen not only anywhere around the state but also anywhere around the country and the world. I am very pleased that in just a couple of weeks, when Parliament is over, done and dusted, I will be spending a week away, camping with my family in the Croajingolong National Park, a great coastal park in East Gippsland just near Orbost and Marlo. I am very much looking forward to getting away on that annual trip in that beautiful area. I state again that we on this side are not opposing the passage of the bill through the Parliament.

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) — I am pleased to make a contribution on the delivery of another Andrews government election commitment through the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. In the first instance, as the Parliamentary Secretary for the Environment, I will also set in context this further delivery of an election commitment by the Andrews government. Labor has always protected our natural environment. When we have been in government, both in the past and in the past 12 months, we have made significant gains through the delivery of a range of election commitments that have included the expansion of the national parks estate here in Victoria. As some examples, under the Labor governments of both John Cain and Joan Kirner in the 1980s and early 1990s there was a major expansion of the parks system in East Gippsland, the Victorian Alps and the Mallee.

In 1989 we also saw a legislative prohibition on mineral exploration and mining, except for pre-existing rights, in national, state and wilderness parks. In 1992 there was a significant expansion of protected wilderness areas. In 2002 under then Labor Premier Steve Bracks there were established new and expanded box-ironbark parks and a world-class representative system of marine national parks. Great work was done on those by a former member for Bundoora, Sherryl Garbutt. Just yesterday I was up at Cohuna, in our wilderness areas on the Murray River, where Labor has done some great work on the protection of the river red gums. Back in 2005 the Great Otway National Park and the new Point Nepean National Park were established. They are further examples of the record of Labor governments on the environment, and in the past 12 months the Labor government has continued that work.

In 2005 the Labor government removed cattle from the Alpine National Park. We have delivered on our election commitment on the environment and removed cattle from the park for a second time. Back in 2006 the government established the Otway Forest Park and several regional parks.

Not only have Labor governments done that, but in this term the government has also scrapped 99-year commercial development leases in national parks. The government has scrapped the extra fees for camping and hiking that were put in place by the previous government. The administration of those fees was an impost on Parks Victoria, and they kept people away from our parks. We have also scrapped the commercial lease arrangements for the Point Nepean National Park that were entered into in the dying days of the Napthine government. That is just some of the record of Labor governments on the environment, and that work continues today.

I acknowledge the work of the member for Buninyong and his leadership in the Ballarat region of his electorate in relation to the Canadian Regional Park. I will touch on that further later in my contribution. The 640 hectares included in the Canadian Regional Park and the former plantation land at Mount Clear will permanently protect that part of Ballarat's important open space in the north-south wildlife corridor that it is critical to protect. It will also provide an opportunity for a wide range of recreational activities.

As the people at Parks Victoria have always said, healthy parks make for healthy people. We want people in our parks because if individuals and families understand the value of our parks they will become the greatest advocates for their protection and advancement. They will provide advocacy to

governments of all persuasions. The more people we have in our parks, the more people understand their value to communities, regional tourism, jobs and future generations; and the more experience people have in our parks in an affordable and accessible way, the greater will be the advocacy for a further watch on governments of all persuasions to make sure that they continue to protect those natural state and national assets for future generations.

The lead speaker for the opposition, the member for Gembrook, touched on the fact that the government was not fulfilling its specific commitment of establishing a state park but was working towards establishing the Canadian Regional Park. I quote from the second-reading speech by Minister Neville:

A regional park will provide opportunities for a wider range of recreational activities than would normally be accommodated in a state park, while still protecting and improving the environmental and landscape values of the area. Uses such as bush walking, dog walking, mountain bike riding, horseriding and prospecting will all be able to be accommodated in the new park. Revegetation of areas of the former plantation land will boost the park's environmental value over time.

The minister also said:

The government is confident that the park will be a lasting legacy for generations to come — a park which combines the opportunity for recreational enjoyment by lots of people with conservation outcomes — a 'people's park'.

When you have the support of groups such as the Friends of Canadian Corridor tirelessly pursuing their goal of protecting this land and making it a park to protect Ballarat's important open space, and when you have them commended in a minister's second-reading speech, that goes to the heart of a government that is determined to deliver on its election commitments, to listen to the community and to make sure that its members feel affirmed in what the government is delivering, as the government is doing today.

The member for Gembrook made some pernickety sorts of comments that need to be addressed. He said, 'If there's a commitment for a state park, that's what you should deliver'. He also said, 'Consultation was not done before the election commitment was made by the Labor Party in opposition'. Members need to understand that no commitment was made by those opposite when they were in government. When they had the tools of executive office in their hands to deliver protections for the Ballarat community and establish a state or regional park, there was no advancement of that agenda by the previous government. Its environment policy was simply captured and driven by The Nationals. We know that is

exactly how things operate — that it is always The Nationals tail wagging the Liberal dog on the other side of the chamber.

Let us be very clear that the consultation work on this bill, driven by not only the member for Buninyong but also the member for Macedon and other members, delivers benefits for communities. This legislation comes as a result of policies being affirmed at the ballot box. We got it right because of the leadership of Daniel Andrews on what was important to be delivered in the local community.

I also touch on what Joshua Morris, a member for Western Victoria Region in the Legislative Council, said when he accused the government of not quite delivering on its election commitment. I quote from a letter published in the Ballarat *Courier* of 2 December under the heading 'Failure to inquire the real issue over park issue':

We write to set the record straight.

Joshua Morris, MP, is barking up the wrong tree when he claims a promise was broken regarding the Canadian state park. This issue should not have been used to attack Geoff Howard, MP. It is Mr Morris's failure to inquire that is the real issue.

...

A regional park was requested in preference to a state park because the land itself is unsuitable for a state park (it is largely cleared ex-plantation land); as well, a state park would have barred the community from recreational opportunities — the community's will regarding these was carefully gathered through hundreds of open house and online survey responses.

We would like to publicly state our gratitude to Geoff Howard for his energy and effort in this matter and also thank Daniel Andrews, Premier of Victoria, for the current government's leadership and financial support for the venture.

The letter was signed Linda Zibell, Jeff Rootes, Bob Hartmann, co-convenors, Friends of Canadian Corridor, Mount Helen.

If members want affirmation from the community for the government's delivery of this election commitment through the legislation before the house, then we are more than happy to table that document. The Victorian Farmers Federation also acknowledged that the legislation protects its interest with regard to beekeepers. I quote the farmers federation beekeepers branch president, Ian Oakley, who said in a media release issued on 24 November:

To introduce this bill within 12 months of coming into government highlights the importance of the beekeeping industry to the Victorian economy.

I feel that the government has listened to the community, not only in forming its election commitment in the first place but also by being willing to make sure that the specifics of that commitment, as enshrined in legislation and with the support of those opposite, or certainly without their opposition, go to the heart of ensuring that the government delivers on community expectations and that the community is confident that they continue to be the guardians of this land. They will make sure that the government has delivered on its commitment.

I am also pleased that the government will investigate a suitable Indigenous name for the park which acknowledges its location in Wadawurrung country. That is very important, and we look forward to further information in relation to how that will be addressed. I know that funding of \$2 million to establish the park over four years and ongoing per annum funding of \$592 000 will be welcomed by the community. It makes a big difference to the cuts to Parks Victoria made under the previous government. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms SANDELL (Melbourne) — I rise to speak on the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. As others have already said, the bill establishes the Canadian Regional Park, the Hepburn Regional Park and the Kerang state game reserve. It adds 205 hectares to six parks and excises 4.7 hectares from three parks. It was disappointing to hear the shadow minister for environment having difficulty pronouncing Cobboboonee, which perhaps indicates the value and attention that was given to national parks over the last term of government. The bill also reforms the requirements for bee site licensing on Crown land.

The Greens of course welcome any measure that adds to public open space, adds protection for wildlife, parks and open space and also improves conservation outcomes. The Greens welcome the creation of the Canadian and Hepburn regional parks; however, we condemn the decision to sneak a duck shooting reserve into part of the legislation. I will be moving an amendment to excise the Kerang state game reserve component from this bill.

The effect of creating the Kerang state game reserve will be to create a permanent site for canned hunting at Fosters Swamp. The government should not even be contemplating having a duck season in 2016 because of the anticipated dry conditions, and certainly not in western Victoria. In fact the government should not be supporting duck hunting in this state at all. Duck shooting has already been banned in Queensland, New

South Wales and Western Australia due to the extreme cruelty to birds and the threat to native species. Many endangered species are often caught up in duck hunting.

It was incorrectly suggested to us by the government during our briefing that the Kerang state game reserve was recommended by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's river red gum forests investigation. In fact our reading of it is that the council recommended the exact opposite: that hunting actually be prohibited in Fosters Swamp, that 11 existing game reserves in the area be abolished and that a Kerang regional park be created where hunting would be prohibited.

Birdlife Victoria has not been consulted about this, despite Fosters Swamp being recognised for the density and richness of birdlife. The Victorian National Parks Association has also raised deep concerns about the establishment of these game reserves. It is very disappointing, and I urge the government to remove the Kerang game reserve from this bill. I will be moving some amendments to that effect, which I will speak about a little bit later.

Another important issue I wish to raise is that of native title. The creation of the Hepburn Regional Park in this bill is partly to facilitate the state government's plan to create Aboriginal title for the Dja Dja Wurrung traditional owner group, which we of course support. However, the bill extinguishes some traditional owner rights for the area covered by the Kerang game management reserve. We have spoken to Native Title Services Victoria, which has raised some very serious concerns with us, which I would like to raise in the chamber today.

The Victorian government was in negotiation with traditional owners until about a year ago in relation to a large joint claim over this area by three traditional owner groups. A commonwealth native title claim by the joint groups was struck out in July this year, but it was only struck out on a technical issue. The groups have not given up. They are still optimistic about getting an outcome for their community. The Federal Court failure does not actually affect their chances of negotiating an outcome with the Victorian government under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010. The removal by this bill of traditional owner rights in the Kerang area is not theoretical. It is a real issue for people who have real plans for their land. The government has not actually told the traditional owners about the fact that it is trying to extinguish their native title rights, let alone consulted with them in any meaningful way.

This bill would actually prevent a potential future state government from ever granting Aboriginal title in this area and from appointing a traditional owner land management board. I cannot really see why the government has done this, and I hope it is just an oversight. The traditional owners of the Kerang area are the Wamba Wamba and Barapa Barapa peoples, and the area of the proposed Kerang game reserve is listed by the government as an area of Aboriginal cultural sensitivity. That means it is a registered Aboriginal cultural heritage place, recognised because it is likely to or does contain Aboriginal cultural heritage. There are over 400 Aboriginal sites registered in the greater Kerang area.

Native Title Services Victoria wrote to the minister on 11 November this year, raising serious concerns about the failure of the consultative process in the development of this bill. It tells us that traditional owners were not consulted about the reclassification of the Kerang Wildlife Reserve as a state game reserve and not told about the ramifications of this with regard to their rights, interests and aspirations. It is a really unfortunate oversight. I hope the minister has remedied it or will do so immediately, since I have spoken to Native Title Services Victoria. I certainly hope that takes place before this bill is voted on.

The Greens will not oppose this bill in the lower house because we welcome the Canadian and Hepburn regional parks, but, as I said, I will move an amendment that removes the ability of the Kerang state wildlife reserve to be used for duck shooting. I also urge the minister to address the serious concerns relating to native title. The Greens amendment removes lines 1 to 5 on page 11 of the bill — these are the lines that reclassify the new wildlife reserve as a state game reserve, which is a type of duck hunting area where protesters are excluded — and it replaces those lines with a prohibition on ever turning the new wildlife reserve into a state game reserve.

Under standing orders, I advise the house of an amendments to the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015 and request that it be circulated.

Greens amendment circulated by Ms SANDELL (Melbourne) under standing orders.

Ms SANDELL — Since most of this area is currently available for duck hunting — in fact part of it is already a game reserve — the amendment would also have the effect of banning duck hunting in this entire area. Wildlife reserves are public land for the purposes of the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010, so our

amendment would also have the effect of ensuring that all rights under that act are available to the traditional owners — two birds with one stone, as one might say.

I commend the government for the work it has done on national parks to date. The Greens votes have helped pass bills to remove cattle from the High Country and ban large-scale development in national parks. I also commend the government for its moves to crack down on cruel puppy farms and for other animal rights and animal cruelty legislation — —

Mr Nardella — But!

Ms SANDELL — Yes, there is always a ‘but’. There is always a ‘but’ because you have not done what is necessary. There is still so much more to be done on the environment and animal protection. The government cannot on the one hand say it cares about the environment, wildlife, animals and animal cruelty while simultaneously expanding opportunities for duck shooting and duck hunting, which is a cruel practice that has real implications for animal welfare, wildlife and conservation. I urge the government to reconsider its support for this cruel practice, as other state governments have done, and also to consult widely with traditional owners and Native Title Services Victoria before this bill is passed.

Ms EDWARDS (Bendigo West) — It is a pleasure to rise to speak on the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. While this legislation creates the Canadian and Hepburn regional parks and the Kerang state game reserve as well as altering the boundaries of several existing parks, I point to the reform of the provisions relating to bee site licences on Crown land and specifically part 3 of the bill, which principally amends the Land Act 1958 to insert new provisions which modernise and streamline the legislation governing the licensing of bee sites on Crown land, managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and Parks Victoria, and which increases the maximum licence term to 10 years. Part 3 also includes transitional provisions relating to existing bee site licenses and consequentially amends several other acts.

I thank the member for Gippsland East for his contribution and his reflection on the importance of the bee industry to Victoria. As many members would know, I have spoken before about my and my family’s connection with apiarists. There are many apiarists in my family, including two uncles, my brother and my brother-in-law. Having grown up in a family of apiarists, I understand the importance of the bee

industry to Victoria. I have spent many hours with my uncle and my brother as they were making their own bee boxes, and I have occasionally been out with them as they put the boxes on their sites across regional Victoria, including in central Victoria and northern Victoria. I think my brother-in-law has sites right across Victoria, including Gippsland.

I correct a statement made by the member for Gippsland East: most apiarists in this state are actually small operators. They do not employ a lot of people. Most of them are family-run organisations, and they work extremely hard. One of the things we notice about beekeepers is that they are also great environmentalists. They have a great knowledge of our state parks and a great knowledge of the flora in our state parks. You only have to get in a truck with a beekeeper and drive around with them to their sites to be given a running commentary on the types of vegetation you are passing: 'The red gum is in flower. The ironbark is in flower. The yellow box is in flower'. As a kid I learnt very quickly the differences between all the different eucalypts because it was always pointed out to me where we were going and what sort of flora the bees were going to be on.

There is a gentleman in Bendigo by the name of Stuart Fraser who is a retired professional apiarist. He is one of Bendigo's most well-known environmentalists and has great knowledge of the local flora and fauna around Bendigo and the Bendigo state park. He has said this government is fantastic not just for the environment but indeed for the beekeepers. There has been extensive consultation with the Victorian Apiarists Federation and the Victorian Farmers Federation (VFF) beekeeper branch over the proposed new bee site licensing regime. I congratulate them on their input into this amendment in the legislation.

Apiarists across Victoria have been waiting for this legislation for many years. The bill that they were included in late last year did not pass the Parliament because the election was called, but this government is getting on with it and delivering the changes that will give apiarists using Crown land greater security and less red tape to deal with. An example of this is the ability to seek a 10-year licence rather than the current 3-month, 6-month or 12-month options. Most beekeepers, because they are on the road a lot travelling from site to site with their hives, do not have a lot of spare time to sit down and write applications for licences. Reducing this red tape is a real bonus for them because it means they can put in an application for a 10-year licence for a site fee.

As the member for Ivanhoe mentioned, the VFF welcomes this legislation. It has said that the future prosperity of the Victorian beekeeping industry will be safeguarded this week when this amended bill goes before the house because it will slash red tape. It has also mentioned that changes in this legislation will ensure the security of the Victorian beekeeping industry by cutting a huge amount of red tape from the licensing system for bee sites on Crown land and by reducing the burden on the public sector. While it acknowledges that it seems like a relatively minor legislative change, in context it is saying that this will result in the most significant regulatory reform for beekeepers in 60 years. Currently beekeepers have to apply for licences on Crown land around every six months.

There was significant engagement with the VFF, particularly the beekeeping arm of the VFF, in relation to these changes. The Minister for Agriculture acknowledges that the beekeeping sector is vital to the Victorian economy. The honey industry is worth \$90 million and is a vital part of pollination in Victoria's cropping areas in particular.

It is very important to the economy of Victoria, and it is very important to farmers, particularly when you think about the almond crops in the north of the state. Many beekeepers have sites up there to pollinate the almond trees in that region. There are about 4000 bee sites on public land managed by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning or Parks Victoria, including our state forests, national parks and state wildlife reserves. Historically beekeepers have had permits to operate on public land, including in state forests and national parks. This allows access to seasonal flowering resources across the state; they can move their hives from one area to another depending on where the trees are flowering.

Streamlining the existing legislation governing the licensing of bee sites is important because it provides greater security for beekeepers through access to licences of up to 10 years. It streamlines the administration relating to the issuing of new licences on expiry of old licences. More specifically the new provisions will mean that the minister will be able to grant a bee site licence over an area of up to 800 metres in radius for up to 10 years, subject to conditions. At the expiry of a licence a new licence will be taken to have been granted on the payment of the licence fee specified by the minister in the notice of offer of a new licence, and existing apiary rights will continue until they expire, are cancelled or a licence is granted under the new provisions.

In relation to existing licences for bee range areas which cover an area with a radius greater than 800 metres and up to 1.6 kilometres, the minister will be able to grant a 10-year licence under the new provisions to the holder of the larger licence with the licensed area continuing to have a 1.6-kilometre radius. The bill includes transitional provisions for these new licences, and it also makes consequential amendments to several acts relating to apiary licences as a result of the new provisions.

I think this is a great amendment bill, particularly for those who are in the apiary industry. The town of Maryborough, where I grew up, is home to Capilano where many beekeepers take their honey to be processed and jarred up ready for sale. Personally I am not too sure about honey blended from different sources. I prefer mine to come from one particular flora; for example, yellow box honey, ironbark honey or red gum honey, not a blend of all those different types. If you are a connoisseur of honey, you would easily understand that there are differences in the taste of honey from different varieties of flora. I commend the bill to the house, and hopefully the apiary industry will grow bigger and stronger as a result of this legislation.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Thomson) — Order! I look forward to the samples.

Ms THOMAS (Macedon) — It is my pleasure to rise to speak on this bill. In doing so I want to talk especially about the establishment of the Canadian Regional Park. This is a magnificent achievement, and I congratulate the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water on bringing this bill to the house. I also take the opportunity to congratulate the member for Buninyong, who has campaigned so hard on this issue and worked closely with local communities to deliver what local communities want.

I must say that Mr Josh Morris, a member for Western Victoria Region in the other place, would do well to take a leaf from the book of the member for Buninyong rather than embarrass himself the way he did with his pre-emptive letter to the editor exclaiming that the people of Ballarat and surrounds and stakeholders do not want what is being presented to the house. In fact the opposite is true. Again, congratulations to the member for Buninyong. He has fought long and hard for this, and it is a fantastic achievement. I talked about stakeholders earlier, and I might say that the Friends of Canadian Corridor and the Victorian National Parks Association are particularly supportive of the bill in its current form.

I have talked a little bit about the Canadian Regional Park, but the reason I wanted to speak on this bill is that elements of the bill affect my electorate. The exciting thing about this bill is that it creates the Hepburn Regional Park under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. This is an important and necessary step to enable the granting of Aboriginal title under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 to the Dja Dja Wurrung as the traditional owners of the land in north-central Victoria, including the Hepburn Regional Park. The formal creation of the park will enable Aboriginal title to be granted over the park to the Dja Dja Wurrung traditional owner group in accordance with a 2013 recognition and settlement agreement between the Dja Dja Wurrung and the state.

The management of the park is a very important issue to also consider. The Dhelkunya Dja Land Management Board has been established as a traditional owner land management board under the Conservation, Forests and Lands Act 1987 for the Hepburn Regional Park and five other parks and reserves in north-central Victoria over which Aboriginal title is to be granted. The board will be jointly responsible with the Secretary to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning for setting the strategic directions for joint management of the park. The board will do this by developing a joint management plan for the park with the secretary. Parks Victoria will continue to be the on-the-ground manager for the park.

Hepburn Springs, and the Hepburn Regional Park, is an area well known to many in this house as it is an extremely popular tourist destination. I was very privileged to be able to take some of my fellow caucus members on a day out there not so long ago to experience some of the great beauty of the Hepburn Regional Park and its surrounds. Earlier this year I had the pleasure of representing the minister at the 150th anniversary of the Hepburn Springs reserve. For 150 years the Hepburn Springs reserve has been a place that people have travelled to from right across our state, to take the waters as the saying goes. The mineral springs have endured as an iconic destination over that time and have now developed as the spa centre of Australia. Indeed they are well renowned nationally and internationally.

Mineral water, and in particular the Hepburn Mineral Springs Reserve, has been intrinsic to the development of the district and beneficial to the local community. The healthy environment, the sparkling waters and of course the reviving baths are all part of the many attractions in this part of the world, which, fortunately for me, is in my electorate. It is important to note that

for many thousands of years the land was settled and cared for by the Dja Dja Wurrung people, and I am very pleased that the effect of this bill is to hand back this land to the traditional owners.

In July this year the Hepburn Shire Council, under the terrific leadership of former mayor Kate Redwood, raised the Aboriginal flag at the shire offices, where it now flies permanently alongside the Australian flag. Actions like the flag raising and the handing back of the park are important steps forward in the ongoing business of reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. In relation to matters affecting the Hepburn shire, I wish to acknowledge Dja Dja Wurrung senior elder Graham Atkinson and Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation chairman, Rodney Carter. I look forward to an appropriate recognition of the milestone this bill represents in our path to reconciliation in this state.

The bill also makes a small amendment to add an additional 5 hectares of forested area to the Macedon Regional Park. This is an area which Western Water has transferred to the Crown. Once again, it is another beautiful park in my electorate, one that is well visited by not only Victorians but people from interstate and overseas. It is a well-renowned tourist area, so it is good to be receiving an additional 5 hectares.

I want to use the last few moments of my contribution to reflect on some of the points the member for Ivanhoe raised in his contribution. I take the opportunity to commend the Premier and the environment minister for the work they have done and to outline to the house what this government's objectives are for our parks. I note that Labor has always worked to protect our natural environment and our national parks. Key achievements in previous terms of office in relation to our parks include a major expansion of the park system in the 1980s and early 1990s, including in Gippsland East, the Australian Alps and the Mallee; a legislative prohibition on mineral exploration and mining, except for pre-existing rights in national, state and wilderness parks in 1989; a significant expansion of protected wilderness areas in 1992; new and expanded box-ironbark parks and a world-class representative system of marine national parks and marine sanctuaries in 2002; the Great Otway National Park and the Point Nepean National Park in 2005; and of course we will remember the removal of cattle grazing from the Alpine National Park in 2005 and the removal of cattle grazing in the Alpine and River Red Gum national parks in 2015.

This government — and the Labor Party — has always worked to protect our environment to ensure the right

mix of environmental and recreational purposes in our parks. There is consistency in our policymaking, which is in direct contrast to those on the other side of the house, who flip-flop on these issues all the time and allowed cattle to trample some of the most precious parts of our national estate. With those on the other side political expediency will win out every time over and above the best interests of our environment and our parks. On that note, I commend the bill to the house.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I am delighted to make a contribution on the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. The main focus of the bill, as we have heard, relates to parks. I want to commence my contribution by talking about the history of parks, in one sense, because parks as this bill envisages are a fairly modern-day construct. In ancient times, in Greece and Rome, parks were used as recreational places near major regional settings, but their numbers declined in the Middle Ages. One of the first modern parks was created at Alameda de Hércules in Seville, in Spain, in 1574, but as a Western concept, as we understand them, parks are more of a 19th-century entity. One of the earliest parks created in the United Kingdom — and those members who follow Carlton will be particularly interested in this — was Princes Park in Liverpool in 1843. It was funded privately, but it was turned over to the public for use.

Mr Richardson interjected.

Mr PEARSON — Indeed! The notion of having a place where people can engage in recreation was really born out of the industrial revolution, and it is much more something that has come out of the 19th century and the 20th century. Robert Moses was a very famous New York administrator. When he started working for the then Governor of New York, Al Smith, in 1922, New York City had virtually no parks at all, but by the time he left in 1968 there were 2 567 256 acres in New York, 658 playgrounds, 416 miles of parkway and 13 bridges. That is what Bob Moses did under Al Smith. Part of that was to try to use the potential for land beyond the urban fringe — beyond the urban sprawl — to provide a place where people could go to get away from the hurly-burly of industrialism.

This was seen as a way of getting people outside and walking. In many respects it reflects the need to provide people who live in dense inner urban areas with an opportunity to leave that environment and go to places where they can engage in leisure and other activities.

This bill is a piece of legislation that continues our great tradition of making sure that people have the capacity

to leave the environments in which they live and go to very different and more natural environments where they can try to distance themselves from industrial life. The reality is that overwhelmingly we live in an urban setting and an urban environment. Bills such as this are important because they set in stone that land will be set aside for the enjoyment of future generations, which is really important when we think about the fact that we are experiencing and dealing with population growth and will continue to do so for some time. This is an important piece of legislation.

I commend the member for Buninyong for his advocacy and his tireless work to secure this win on behalf of his community. Often we can find ourselves in situations where we say, 'I am just a cog in a very large piece of machinery. I have to work my way through the process, and my ability to shape and influence things is somewhat limited'. Days like today demonstrate the falseness of that argument. This bill shows that, where there is a powerful and committed constituency base and a committed local member who works tirelessly on behalf of his community, such outcomes can be achieved. The creation of these regional parks is welcome.

The bill also makes amendments to arrangements for bee site licensing on Victorian Crown land, which is an important and welcome initiative. I will finishing by saying that apparently honey is the only food that does not spoil. That is because the pH of honey is between 3 and 4.5, or more precisely, 3.26 to 4.48. On that note — I do not wish to spoil myself — I commend the bill to the house.

Ms HUTCHINS (Minister for Local Government) — I rise to speak on the Crown Land Legislative Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. I am very pleased to speak on this bill because it is these sorts of amendments that provide for the movement from land being Crown land across to the establishment of new regional parks, which is a good and exciting thing.

The previous speaker's contribution spelt out the historical significance of people being able to get away from the industrial environment of the day and to enjoy life. In the hurly-burly of life quite often we get caught up in the belief that we live to work when in fact we work to live, and our regional parks are a big part of that. It is important that we are able to get out and about in order to spend the day either in a local regional park or to take our families on a daytrip to a regional park. I have spent many a time bushwalking and camping with my family at various parks across the state. I look forward to visiting the Canadian Regional Park, as it

will be known after its transition from being a state park to a regional park once this bill passes.

The Friends of Canadian Corridor have worked tirelessly in pursuing the goal of protecting this land as a park, and I congratulate them. This is yet another great commitment which is being implemented under this Labor government. The commitment was made in the lead-up to the election, and it is now being fulfilled in the establishment of a new park for Ballarat. Following community consultation, the establishment of this park has come to fruition. Community members were quite clear and vocal when they said where they wanted this park to go and what they wanted to see delivered for the region. I acknowledge the great work undertaken by the Friends of Canadian Corridor and by the Wathaurong people, many of whom I have had the pleasure of meeting on country where I spoke to them about this very issue. I also acknowledge the work of the member for Buninyong, who has done a power of work in helping the creation of these parks to be a reality for us to debate today and going forward.

This bill not only touches on the Canadian Regional Park; it also alters the boundaries of several existing parks under the National Parks Act 1975 and the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, including those of Macedon Regional Park, Murray-Sunset National Park, Warrandyte State Park, Cape Liptrap Coastal Park and Steiglitz Historic Park, which is a great contribution along the Hay Track.

I will conclude my brief comments by restating that the bill will benefit the community and the environment and will improve opportunities for recreation for all those who enjoy the great outdoors across Victoria. I also acknowledge that the amendments in the bill before the house will extend arrangements relating to bee site licensing. The bill acknowledges the importance of the beekeeping industry to the state. I commend the bill to the house.

Mr NARDELLA (Melton) — Acting Speaker — —

Mr Morris — On a point of order, Acting Speaker, it is my understanding that the Deputy Speaker may only speak when the Speaker is in the chair.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Thomson) — Order! That is correct. Can we see if the Speaker is available? I thank Mr Morris for bringing that to my attention; he is so right.

The SPEAKER — Order! I call on the member for Melton.

Mr NARDELLA — I rise to speak on the Crown Land Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. I want to respond to the matters raised by the member for Melbourne. When one comes into this house and has the honour and the privilege of speaking in this house, one needs to be absolutely certain about what one is saying. It does not matter whether one is a member of the Australian Labor Party, a member of the Liberal Party, a member of The Nationals, an Independent or a member of the Greens political party, one needs to be absolutely clear, concise and accurate in terms of what one says and in terms of the information one has. Unfortunately the member for Melbourne has made a grave mistake because the things she has said and put to the house are absolutely wrong.

Let me give an example. She said that the creation of the state game reserves near Kerang came about because of a recommendation made by the Victorian Environmental Assessment Council. This is not the case. It is not the case that the Greens political party and the member for Melbourne have put to this house, so why would the member come into this house and put a position that is blatantly wrong, unless she is trying to create a situation where she is fabricating a position that supports her political party's position? That is what she has done in this case.

Mr Pearson interjected.

Mr NARDELLA — I do not know where she is because she is hardly in this house, but I will tell you, Speaker, that the member for Melbourne was not at the briefing that was given and that was open to opposition members and members of the Greens political party, at which this point was made clear to them. The member for Melbourne could have asked questions, but I am afraid that is too much hard work for her. It is too much for her to do the hard work and the hard yards and find out the reality of the situation.

The other thing she said was that there was that no consultation with anybody with regard to this bill and the establishment of the game reserve. Let me tell you, Speaker, that in 2009, maybe when she was getting some pizzas for the Department of Premier and Cabinet — she was the go-to girl for pizzas in the Premier's department — that Labor government negotiated with the responsible people, the people who we needed to discuss and negotiate with in these particular circumstances.

So the member for Melbourne is wrong. That is the second time she has been wrong. She was wrong again when she said, 'Oh no, there's no discussion; nobody

has been consulted'. The only person who has not been consulted is the member for Melbourne, who has not even been properly briefed or consulted with by her own people, who attended a briefing on her behalf. She has been standing here putting a false situation and a false position to this house and to this Parliament. That is disgraceful, because whenever one gets to speak in this house, it is an honour and a privilege, and one should be absolutely accurate in terms of what one says.

The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council made recommendations on the river red gum investigation, and after those recommendations the parties involved negotiated that through. That is how you get the best outcomes, not by having a philosophical, esoteric, partisan view that you cannot deviate or move away from. You have to have the real-life situation where you sit down with everybody affected, all the groups that use these reserves, and you negotiate the position through. But not the Greens political party and not the member for Melbourne, because when you are pure, when you never make mistakes and are never wrong, you never negotiate, you never put a position where you talk things out, where you consult with people.

That is where she is wrong. That is where members of the Greens political party come in here with a very false position. What are they trying to be? They are trying to be the sheriff with the white hat and six-shooter who rides into town to be the saviour of those people who the member for Melbourne did not even know we had negotiated with back in 2009.

Let us not have the rubbish from the member for Melbourne or the rubbish that will be promulgated by the Greens political party members in the other house in terms of the lack of negotiation. They are going to vote against this in the sense of putting up their amendment when the facts before the house are completely different to those that were put by the member for Melbourne. She is correct in that Aboriginal title cannot be granted in state game reserves, but if she had attended the briefing, and if she had had the gumption, the wherewithal and the intelligence to ask some questions, she would have been told that the creation of a state game reserve does not preclude, in relation to that land, the granting of native title under the commonwealth Native Title Act 1993.

That is not what she put to this house. She said it is extinguished forever — that no longer can that community make a claim on that land. Yet the fact is that it can under the commonwealth Native Title Act 1993. The Aboriginal community can go down the path

of entering into a recognition and settlement agreement, a land use activity agreement or a national resource agreement to achieve the recognition of traditional owner rights under the Traditional Owner Settlement Act 2010 in relation to this.

Parks Victoria is working with the traditional owners in the management of the reserve. That is what it is doing. The member for Melbourne said nobody is talking to anybody, yet we have Parks Victoria working with the traditional owners in the management of the reserve. You cannot give any credence to anything that the Greens political party representatives say, especially when they are lazy, especially when they do not go to briefings and especially when they are so busy being esoteric, self-righteous and pure when they are so indelibly wrong.

I urge members to reject the amendment before the house — the false amendment, the amendment that has been made out of air — because the facts just do not support it. I urge members to support this great piece of legislation by the Andrews Labor government.

Debate adjourned on motion of Mr FOLEY (Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

LAND (REVOCAION OF RESERVATIONS) BILL 2015

Second reading

Debate resumed from 21 October; motion of Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water).

Mr BATTIN (Gembrook) — I ask, as the member for Melton walks along, why did we not have one Greens member in the house when we were in government? It would have taken so much attention away from those rampaging speeches. If the member for Melton was going to describe himself as any tree in this community, he would definitely be a river red gum, judging by his speech on the Crown Lands Legislation Amendment (Canadian Regional Park and Other Matters) Bill 2015. It was fantastic, well done.

I rise today to speak on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. I state our position at the start: the opposition does not oppose the bill. The Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015 revokes permanent reservations over areas of Crown land. In Victoria permanent reservations of Crown land can only be amended via acts of Parliament. Bills of this kind, as we know, are routinely put through Parliament

when we find errors or parts of titles or boundaries that require amending to ensure that areas that are traditionally parts of parks or are being treated as parts of parks are officially put inside park boundaries. An example could be as simple as a road boundary where the road is in a triangular shape but the park is in a square shape — we would amend the boundary to make sure the road was brought into the park boundary.

Four of the seven items in this legislation were introduced by the former government in its own bill in 2014, although the Parliament did not proceed to debate that bill, including the areas of land in Ballarat North, Caulfield and Wedderburn. One of the new reservations to be revoked by the bill is Albert Park, which has been added to create a school site for a new South Melbourne Park Primary School, but I will talk further on this item in a minute.

The Ballarat North item, which was part of the former government's bill, refers to part of the North Ballarat Football Ground. Currently half the building is on Crown land, but the bill will mark that land as freehold for the club. That is a very important item. I note that members have spoken many times in this place about young people being involved in sport and about ensuring we have sporting facilities available for the future, so this is fantastic. The department has worked for this and both the former and current governments support taking away the concern the local community has for its football ground to ensure that the people involved with the committee are doing what all committees should be doing when they are involved with sports clubs, which is ensuring that players are on the ground, getting out there and keeping fit. That is very important to the future of sport.

The member for Caulfield will be speaking later in the debate to put forward more details about the item relating to Caulfield Park. This item was also part of the 2014 bill. The south-west corner of Caulfield Park was initially marked to have a public pool built on it but the pool was not built so the bill will bring that section of the land back in line with the rest of the park to ensure the effective management of that important park.

The bill includes the revocation of 0.3 hectares of land on the Murray River in Cobram. This is part of a house unknowingly built on Crown land. We want to make sure that when the current owners sell they do not run into legal trouble because part of the house was built on Crown land. We are trying to work with those locals — it is not something that was intentionally done but something that has happened over time, so we want to make sure that that is noted.

The bill revokes 0.115 hectares of Main Ridge Nature Conservation Reserve in Flinders to facilitate a track for practical and legal access for adjoining landowners. Again, it is important that governments listen and work with their local communities in relation to small things like this so that there is access for housing, particularly for people who were already there and want their prior rights recognised.

As was part of the former government's 2014 bill, this bill will revoke a permanent reservation over the old Wedderburn Mechanics Institute and temporarily re-reserve the site for public purposes. The Loddon Shire Council will be taking over the committee of management.

Talking about committees of management is very important, because obviously we have a large amount of land in Victoria and it is important that we have committees of management for them. We are very lucky to have a lot of volunteers throughout our communities who work on these committees of management, and they do such a wonderful job of ensuring that the land is open and accessible to the public. I know we have many in the Gembrook electorate. Members of committees of management put so many hours in to ensure that the community's assets are protected, and they work with the community to deliver an asset that is of benefit to them now and in the future. Some of these assets can end up having so many public uses, including for fitness, getting people out and active, and for tourism. If you travel along the coast, the committees of management have managed to manoeuvre and change their structures and roles to encourage tourism while protecting the environmental outcomes in their parts of land.

The main part of the bill we want to discuss today is in relation to Albert Park. The bill revokes the reservation of a section of Albert Park to re-reserve it for the government's election commitment to a new South Melbourne Park Primary School. We raise this because it is a bit of a concern. We have put some freedom of information requests in — —

Mr Foley — Oppose it, then.

Mr BATTIN — We are not going to oppose it; we have said that. The lack of transparency from this government is appalling. We have put in freedom of information requests, but all of them have been delayed until after this bill is passed. That is obviously so we cannot have an opportunity to discuss this with the facts on the table. An \$11.7 million commitment is not enough money for a primary school on a site with a heritage listing. There is nowhere near enough cash to

build that school, and the government has not taken into consideration the removal of the current Parks Victoria staff and office to somewhere else in Albert Park, which it is estimated will cost around \$2 million. Talking about education, the question will be whether that money comes from the school funding already put forward or whether it comes from funding for the management of the park and therefore from the community that needs it to ensure that Parks Victoria can deliver.

Albert Park is a very important park, and we need to make sure it is protected for the future. The government committed to building the new primary school there, but I am not going to win. We are not opposing the bill based on this, but what we are saying is that we need the information on the table when you have an \$11.7 million commitment. I am sure the former Minister for Education, the member for Nepean, will talk about the costs of building primary schools. You need approximately \$15 million to build a primary school on a greenfield site, yet here we have a site with heritage listing and with Orchestra Victoria on the land as well — the government wants to create a school that has a music influence — so we want to understand where the costings have come from and whether this is just another blowout and the money is being hidden somewhere else. There is no possible way to deliver a primary school on a heritage site for \$11.7 million unless the government intends on destroying that heritage site.

The other issue that concerns us is that this is also a former army site. The army reserve used to be there, so there is obviously a lot of clean-up that needs to be done. We know this government does not have a great record on asbestos in schools or telling the community what has happened with asbestos in schools, but while we have the army reserve there it might want to go in and clean it out, because that is the history of the site. It is vital that it goes in and ensures that it cleans up that site. The government needs to put on the record whether it is going to ensure that it will clean that site for the future before it puts students into that area. If we want to make sure of the safety of students who are going onto a site that has previously been used by defence force personnel, we need a guarantee from the government that this will be a site that will be safe for students in the future.

The reason the opposition has raised this concern is that there have been freedom of information requests, but the minister has delayed responding to those requests purely on political grounds and so it did not have the information before this debate. The government did not want that information made public. The applications we

put in were 100 per cent, with no issues, and the response we got back from the minister's office was basically that they could delay it or, if we did not give them an opportunity to delay it because we were asking for too much information, they would just say no to the freedom of information request.

What the government is saying to the community is: 'We don't have the right money'. There is obviously something that has been identified in these freedom of information requests that has caused genuine concern to the minister, and she is so worried about that that she would not release the information prior to this debate. I suppose the questions we want answered are: is she not answering the questions because she is willing to put children at risk when building a primary school in Albert Park? Is she willing to put at risk Parks Victoria staff and not tell them where their allocation or where their location is going to be? Is there a lack of funding which is an issue with this, which means the government will not be able to deliver it? Even after the bill to revoke the land passes in this Parliament, does the government not have the funding to actually construct the school and therefore will not deliver on its commitments?

Here is a government that is having a few issues with a lot of its commitments. Is it running short on funds after a few other issues, considering the amount it has had to pay out for east-west link? For a project cancellation on which there was going to be zero compensation, it has ended up paying out more than \$850 million. Is it trying to find these funds elsewhere? If it has not worried about this at all, then we ask the minister to put on the record why she is not responding to the freedom of information request. The freedom of information request is there so that the Victorian community can get a concept of what is happening at that site, but this government fails the transparency test on this because it will not release that information for the public to see.

We need to see that information going forward — the community needs to see that information going forward — and it is a shame that this government will not deliver it. Probably worse than that is that the minister at the table, the member for Albert Park, who purports to represent that area, will be getting up and saying that he 100 per cent supports the bill without that information. Or is the minister at the table saying he has that information and will not release it to the community either, and therefore he is hiding something from the residents of Albert Park? That is the other option. Maybe the minister at the table has something to hide from his community, or maybe he knows this is not going to be delivered.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr BATTIN — He knows this is not going to be delivered — he knows 100 per cent that this will not be delivered for the community — because the government does not have the funding available. We hear this government talk plenty about things it is going to deliver. We have had 12 months of talk, and absolutely zero action. The shovel-ready project, the western distributor, went down really well. Obviously it was scrapped. The government got rid of the western distributor, and now it has come out with a secondary program which it is going to charge the east for — to build something in the west.

We have a government that has failed to deliver on anything it has committed to so far. It is pretending to run a surplus, yet it is running a deficit. It is paying out compensation for contracts it said were not worth the paper they were written on, and now it will not release information in relation to schools that are going to be built in the future and about cleaning up a site to ensure the protection of students and young people going forward.

I think this sort of information must be on the table. The opposition is not opposing the bill. We believe the sites could be used for what the government is saying they will be used for. However, we are asking for openness and transparency in relation to what will happen with this in the future. We need safety for students. We need the government to put on the record its guarantee that students going to that school in the future will be safe, the site will be clean and the heritage will be protected, and we need the government to put on the record that it can do this within the \$11.7 million, including relocating the staff and offices of Parks Victoria.

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) — I want to touch on a couple of matters in relation to the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015, particularly the bill's provision for the revocation of some seven Crown land reservations, which will enable future appropriate use of that land consistent with the needs of the communities that are being affected. I recall being briefed on these matters — on some of the matters; probably four of the seven — by the now Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water when we were in opposition, not long before the last election. To give some context here I will draw on the minister's second-reading speech, in which she said:

In Victoria, permanent reservations over Crown land may only be revoked under the provisions of an act of Parliament. Acts for the revocation of permanent reservations are a normal part of government business, and Parliament has passed many of these acts over the years. Indeed, four of the

sites in this bill were included in a bill introduced by the former government in 2014, but which was not debated prior to the 2014 state election. These sites were Ballarat North, Caulfield, Waaia and Wedderburn.

I make that point because it was about the content of environment legislation that came before the house under the previous government. I would not refer to these matters as dots-and-dashes bills; they are important and significant, particularly because they enable the election commitments of the Andrews government to be delivered. They were brought in in the dying days of the previous government but never got to be debated in the house. That was particularly because after four years this was about the level of content, the level of context and the level of effort put into environment bills brought before the house by the previous government. This is about the sum total of what they could do after being in government for four years.

It is no surprise that on this side of the house in just one year in government we have successfully removed cattle from the high country, removed the significant camping fees and imposts put on Parks Victoria properties by the previous government to keep families and other members of the public away from our national parks, and revoked legislation around plans for the commercialisation of Point Nepean National Park and a contract signed in the dying days of the previous government without any mandate to do so. And of course who could forget the arrangement for 99-year commercial leases to be entered into in national parks, which we scrapped when we came to government? That is legislation that affects future generations and protects the national and state parks of Victoria and our heritage. There is a hell of a lot more to talk about on this side of the house when it comes to environment legislation than what we were left by the previous government to pick up, which is in part covered by this Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015.

I will touch on a couple of examples of what this government is picking up on, particularly around Albert Park. It is revoking the permanent reservation over Crown land at Albert Park, allowing, with this bill, for the re-reservation of that site for education purposes. That will assist the Andrews government to deliver on its election commitment to establish the South Melbourne Park Primary School at Albert Park. I commend the minister, who is at the table, the member for Albert Park, who has fought tirelessly to ensure that the government's election commitments are delivered for families, particularly in relation to schooling. Albert Park is such a great place to live. Many people are moving there, including young families, and they want to be sure they have the services they need. They have

affirmed that they have confidence in the minister to deliver those services, and this bill activates his election commitments.

A media release of 19 October from the member for Albert Park headed 'Architect appointed for South Melbourne Park Primary School' states:

The Andrews Labor government is one step closer to delivering on its election commitment to build South Melbourne Park Primary School in Albert Park.

Member for Albert Park, Martin Foley, today announced that Gray Puksand will be the architect for the project, with construction expected to get underway in mid-2016.

Clearly the legislation in the house today helps enable this election commitment made by the member for Albert Park to be delivered. On 19 October, just this year, architects have been appointed after funding was allocated in the budget this year. Work will be underway some time in the next six or seven months, a clear indication that 18 months into government shovels will be in the ground in Albert Park, fulfilling one of the government's election commitments in relation to schooling.

That is just one aspect of the \$15.5 million funding for projects in the inner city in the 2015–16 budget. Oh to be a Labor member in the inner city, with these sorts of resources coming their way as a result of the great advocacy of those inner city Labor members of Parliament! The government is not only delivering a year 9 campus for Albert Park College, which received some \$2.3 million for a second campus, but also fulfilling a range of commitments made in the inner city under the Andrews government due to the great advocacy of the members for Brunswick, Richmond, Albert Park and other inner city electorates represented by government members. I also say that the bill provides for the revocation of permanent reservations over two Crown allotments totalling some 0.1 of a hectare at the North Ballarat Football Club ground, also known as Eureka Stadium.

I am pleased to see the member for Wendouree in the chamber, She will be following on the government side in relation to this bill, and she would be very pleased about the delivery of the government's election commitment of some \$15 million to redevelop Eureka Stadium; as too, I am sure, is the member for Buninyong, who is a key driver of the Canadian Regional Park bill. Both government members in the Ballarat region were resoundingly returned by their communities because they continue to deliver on the projects and services that matter to those communities. Again this legislation enables that election

commitment — the government's \$15 million commitment to Eureka Stadium — to be delivered.

What is that all about? It is about providing something like \$9 million towards redevelopment of the Wendouree Sports and Events Centre, \$5 million for an upgrade of the showgrounds and \$2.5 million for stage 1 of the C. E. Brown Reserve pavilion. I am sure the member for Wendouree will elaborate on some of these commitments that have seen her resoundingly re-elected in Wendouree, because the people of Ballarat are very keen for the opportunities that are going to be provided from the partnership between the City of Ballarat and Western Bulldogs to bring AFL games to Ballarat from 2017. It will bring economic benefits to the region and opportunities for families in Ballarat to attend AFL games in their home town. I thought, given we will soon get on to the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015, that it was all happening in Geelong, but there is also plenty happening in Ballarat under the Andrews government.

The revocation of permanent reservations over Crown allotment on some 2 hectares from the south-west corner of Caulfield Park and ensuring its re-reservation for purposes consistent with the current use of the park is also part of the legislation. The bill also provides for the revocation of a permanent reservation on a small area of land, some 0.3 of a hectare, on the Murray River near Cobram to facilitate sale of that land. That is to address the longstanding and inadvertent encroachment of part of a private dwelling. The bill also provides for the revocation of a small part of the Main Ridge Nature Conservation Reserve at Flinders totalling some 0.15 of a hectare. This is being done to provide practical legal access to adjoining freehold land. The bill also provides for the revocation of a permanent reservation of a small area of land of 0.2 of a hectare on the Broken Creek east of Nathalia to support the sale of land. That will address a longstanding and inadvertent encroachment of part of a private dwelling.

Finally, the bill provides for the revocation of a Crown allotment totalling some 0.2 of a hectare at Wedderburn. That is the site of the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute, and the bill will temporarily re-reserve that site for public purposes. That will provide flexibility for the use of that site for public purposes. In particular it will ensure that Loddon Shire Council will be the committee of management for that land under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978.

This bill goes to a range of issues right around the state. This type of bill comes before the house from time to time, but really such bills are about the sum total and not what we saw from the previous government in the

past four years when it came to the legislation it attempted to bring before the house in relation to environment policy and legislation. This was about the sum total of it, but the former government could not even get it into the house to be debated. It is an indictment of the former Minister for Environment and Climate Change, the member for Warrandyte, that we really all know it is The Nationals tail that wags the Liberal dog on the other side of the house when it comes to environment policy.

That is the way environment policy is developed on the other side of the house. It is why we saw no substantial gains for the environment in Victoria under the coalition government. It is why we have had a very busy year of legislation and today two bills that include a commitment in the previous bill around the delivery of the Canadian Regional Park and the fact that this bill will enable the redevelopment of Eureka Stadium and a number of school facilities in Albert Park. This bill will enable those works to happen and will deliver on election commitments for the government. This is in addition to the range of environment legislation that has cut fees for entry to national parks, got the cattle out of the high country and made great and significant changes to support our environment for future generations in Victoria.

Mr CRISP (Mildura) — I rise to speak on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. The Nationals in coalition are not opposing this bill. The purpose of the bill is to revoke permanent reservations over seven areas of Crown land. In Victoria the permanent reservations over Crown land can only be amended by an act of Parliament. Bills of this kind are a regular and routine part of government business. Four of the seven items in this bill were introduced by the former government but did not proceed to debate, so it is good to have those here today, and in particular those that are in the country.

Going to the detail, the revocations involve Albert Park. The bill revokes a section of Albert Park to re-reserve it for the government's commitment to South Melbourne Park Primary School, and it is the site of the Parks Victoria offices that has been earmarked for relocation. This site has some history. I think it has had a military use, it has had a parks use and it is going to be renovated for school purposes. Perhaps I could suggest that there are a number of TV programs about renovations in which it might be very useful to include this project, because I am sure it will be a challenging renovation.

Part of the former government's bill dealt with the Ballarat North Football Club ground. Currently half its

building is located on Crown land and the other half is on freehold land owned by the club. The re-reserved land will be sold to the club at market value to facilitate the redevelopment of the building, and hence the important need for this bill. Known as Eureka Stadium, it is a piece of land that I think all of us are familiar with as it is part of the Ballarat Showgrounds complex, as I remember it from my short stay in Ballarat many years ago. The land is about 7.6 hectares in total.

Ms Knight — Come back to the footy ground.

Mr CRISP — I wish I could take up the interjection about playing football while doing my tertiary education there, only to find that some of those ovals were constructed using quartz leftovers, and even in the dirt you slid around and got up scratched. It was not one of the highlights of my life, I can tell you.

Ms Knight — They are much better now. Come back.

Mr CRISP — However, the recovery sessions afterwards were more than adequate for the pain that one had endured.

That is enough about my life a long time ago. The land at Caulfield was reserved for a swimming pool and now it is going to be part of a park, which is very important.

Now we move to the country areas. These are accidents of history where small parcels of land have been built on and this has encroached onto Crown land. In some cases these buildings have lasted a very long time. The land in Cobram is on the left bank of the Murray River. It became public land in 1881, which was a long time ago. As I said, these are accidents of history, and they can be explained. This is a very small piece of land — 0.03 of a hectare.

Something that has been a challenge in my area is the surveying of the Murray River. When Victoria seceded from New South Wales the boundary was a three-chain reserve from the spring high-water mark. At that time there were not many settlements along the river, and certainly nobody within several hundred kilometres of Mildura banged a peg in to note where the spring high-water mark was in 1851.

Rivers change their courses as well. The placing of a house in a particular location may have been well intentioned. We also have to take into account surveying standards of the day. But the course of a river can change by a few metres over time, and then when you resurvey it you can have issues. I am not saying that is necessarily the case here, but an issue in my

electorate is working out where that 1851 three-chain reserve begins and ends.

At Flinders there is a small part of a nature reserve to be dealt with. There is also a small parcel of land on the Broken Creek east of Nathalia, which is 0.02 of a hectare. Part of a house was built on the land during the 1930s. Now with modern surveying and the owners wishing to sell the house there is a need to remove the reservation of this land and sell it to the owner so they can sell their residence.

The land at Wedderburn, which was also part of the former government's bill, was set aside in 1862, which was probably the height of the gold rush in that area. The purpose of that reservation was a mechanics institute. Particularly in country Victoria mechanics institutes have a great deal of historical importance. They were the first libraries in many of those areas. However, time has passed by mechanics institutes. That land will now be controlled by the local council. Its committee of management will manage that site in the best way possible for the people in Wedderburn.

We are not opposing this bill. It is routine business for governments to make these changes. I wish the bill a speedy passage.

Ms KNIGHT (Wendouree) — I am pleased to be able to speak today on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. Revocation of permanent reservations can only happen through legislation. From time to time permanent reservations are revoked. In this case, the bill before the house today revokes permanent reservations from seven parcels of Crown land. These sections of land are in Albert Park, Ballarat North, Caulfield, Cobram, Flinders, Waaia. Is that right — Waaia?

Ms Sheed interjected.

Ms KNIGHT — And Wedderburn. I did know it before; I just lost it. I thank the member for Shepparton. I bet I will trip up again now.

Revocation of the permanent reservations of a number of these sites was proposed in a bill put forward by the former government, and I note that the opposition is not opposing this bill. These were the sites at Ballarat North, Caulfield, Waaia and Wedderburn. However, the legislation put forward by the former government was not debated prior to the last election. I mention this solely by way of showing that the revocation of permanent reservations is a matter that is generally a matter of agreement and a demonstration of common sense.

The revocations put forward in this bill relate to a very wide range of land areas. As we have heard, in Albert Park it involves the revocation of a reservation and the subsequent re-reservation of the land for educational purposes. This will facilitate the building of the South Melbourne Park Primary School, which is an important election commitment of the Andrews government. I congratulate the member for Albert Park for his advocacy on that issue.

There is also the revocation of a reservation and subsequent re-reservation of land in Caulfield Park. This will match up the reservation so it is consistent with the current use of the land. In Cobram the removal of a permanent reservation will enable the sale of a small parcel of land. The land will be sold to the owner of an adjacent property because a wall inadvertently encroaches on Crown land. This is a very common-sense approach.

A parcel of land in the Main Ridge Nature Conservation Reserve will have its permanent reservation revoked. This will allow practical legal access to adjoining freehold land and will have a lower environmental impact than the designated but unmade government road nearby. East of Nathalia, in Waaia — I must go there — a small area of land that is inadvertently encroached upon by a private dwelling will have its permanent reservation revoked. This will allow the small parcel of land to be sold to the adjoining landholder.

In Wedderburn the land on which the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute building is situated will have its permanent reservation revoked. There will be a temporary re-reservation of the site for public purposes, which will allow for the establishment of a formal management structure for the site.

The section of this bill I wish to focus on relates to the revocation of the permanent reservation of land in Ballarat North. We just heard from the member for Mildura about the good times that he had in Ballarat North back in the day. I sincerely invite him to come back and visit us once again. The minister's second-reading speech clearly outlined the rationale behind this revocation. It will allow the sale at market value of two Crown land allotments, one of 34.5 square metres and the other of 905 square metres, which are currently leased to the North Ballarat Football Club. These two allotments are on the northern side of the oval and the club's main building is constructed partly on them.

At Eureka Stadium, which is a great football venue that is in the process of becoming even better thanks to the

Andrews Labor government, the North Ballarat Sports Club has great facilities. I have been there many times, as have a lot of my friends. The facilities include clubrooms, a bar, a restaurant, gaming facilities and the club's administration offices. I encourage every member of this chamber to go to the North Ballarat Sports Club for a meal and in the footy season to go to Eureka Stadium to watch a great game.

As the minister noted in her second-reading speech, it is proposed that, following the revocation of the permanent reservation, the land be sold to the sports club. As I said, I have been at the club many times. I have spoken to the general manager, Mark Patterson, who has often said how important this piece of legislation is for the club and the Ballarat community in general.

The minister also noted that the sale of this land to the club is timely given the Andrews government's \$15 million commitment to the upgrading of Eureka Stadium, a project I am very passionate about. When it is completed the stadium will be one of the very best facilities in Victoria. It will be a great place for the Roosters to play and a great place for the Central Highlands Football League grand final. Locals will get real value from the new playing surface and the very best in spectator facilities. This project will also be terrific for the local economy. There are many jobs in its construction. The oval is currently being realigned and reduced in size; it will be the same size as the playing surface at Etihad Stadium. In the new year a new surface will be laid, and construction will begin not long after on the new grandstand.

The jobs involved in this work are very important for my community, but more significant will be the economic impact of AFL games being played in Ballarat year after year. The Western Bulldogs Football Club is engaging with the Ballarat community. The club has demonstrated a commitment to our city and the broader region. It has recently employed Brett Goodes as its Ballarat engagement manager and it will be setting up a permanent office in Ballarat. The CEO of the Western Bulldogs, David Stevenson, was quoted in the *Courier* of 17 November as having noted:

Brett not only understands the club and our values, being a Ballarat local he also has existing relationships with the community ...

This will be a really important and valuable appointment for Ballarat, and I congratulate the Western Bulldogs on the club's commitment. When the Bulldogs play in Ballarat we will see a real boost to Ballarat's economy.

I am really looking forward to the release of the AFL's 2017 fixture at the end of next year, where I hope to see regular season games scheduled at Eureka Stadium.

There is a great deal of work going on at Eureka Stadium right now. I was there just a week ago and saw some of that work, which is going along at a cracking pace.

It is also really important to look forward and to look for opportunities to develop facilities in the future. The revocation of the permanent reservation over the land on which the North Ballarat Sports Club is located and the proposed sale of this land creates such an opportunity. With ownership of the land on which the club's building is located, opportunities are being opened up for the club to extend and redevelop its already fantastic facilities. Any such redevelopment would be great for the club and all its patrons, and of course any future redevelopment would also be great for local jobs, so I commend this bill to the house and wish it a speedy passage through both chambers.

Mr DIXON (Nepean) — It is a pleasure to join the debate on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. I want to speak on just two aspects of it, on the revocation of first the land at Flinders and then the land at Albert Park. In Flinders, which is obviously in my electorate, we have a win-win situation with a common-sense revocation and the Crown land that will become available being of even better environmental value. That is a great outcome, and I congratulate all those who have been associated with it. I take the opportunity to thank the people in the minister's office. Before the bill came to Parliament they contacted my office to ensure that I was happy with the situation and to offer any briefing I wanted regarding the land, which I appreciate. As I said, the revocation is a simple and common-sense outcome.

As for the land at Albert Park, obviously this revocation has been included to help the government fulfil an election commitment, and I certainly respect that. But that is only part of the story. When people look at the provision of education facilities in the Albert Park electorate, they see an area that has an incredibly fast-growing population. When we were in government, with me as the Minister for Education, we looked at that and made a number of provisions to meet that need. The short-term provision was to provide those lovely double-storey portable or relocatable classrooms for the immediate primary schools. We also spent about \$10 million purchasing land for a new primary school in Ferrars Street, South Melbourne. In a subsequent budget I think there might have been \$6.5 million provided to demolish the existing building, plan a new school and remediate the land on which that

school was to be built. If we were elected, construction was to commence this year with an allocation in this year's budget.

We also provided funding for the year 9 students of Albert Park College, which is a great college, to go offsite to what was the Circus Oz site. That provided more room and allowed more students to attend that college.

The bill addresses the revocation of land for the new Albert Park electorate primary school. As I said, there is an urgent need for education places in Albert Park. I remember the member for Albert Park, who is the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing, and members of his local community saying that it was urgent, that we had to have a new school in that area of Albert Park or South Melbourne — in the electorate — immediately or as quickly as possible. As I said, if we had been re-elected, we would have had construction underway at the Ferrars Street site.

I was incredibly disappointed when in this year's budget no money was allocated for the construction of the primary school at Ferrars Street. If it is in next year's budget, it will take a good 18 months to construct that school, so there will not be children in the school until at least 2018. That flies in the face of the commitment made by Labor. Those opposite said they would be constructing schools and providing extra schooling places in the area of Albert Park as soon as possible and they were lamenting the fact that children were not going to arrive at that school until 2017. Now we are not going to see children in a new school at Ferrars Street until 2018 at the very earliest.

As the member for Gembrook said, there is a freedom of information request in about the Albert Park site. It had been mysteriously held up before this legislation came into the Parliament. The sorts of questions that are asked in that request are: what is the real cost of relocating Parks Victoria out of its current building? Where will that relocation happen? Will there be a loss of parkland for the people in that area — in fact, for all the people of Melbourne and Victoria who use Albert Park? What will be the cost of remediating the building that Parks Victoria is currently in? And what will be the actual cost of completely building a school?

The government has put aside I think \$10 million or \$11 million. The bottom line is that on a greenfield site when you own the land a primary school costs about \$15 million to build, so nowhere nearly enough money has been allocated for building that school. All those questions remain unanswered. The total cost of the project will actually be tens of millions of dollars. We

have no answers to the very important questions that the member for Gembrook posed to the government through an FOI request. The government has chosen not to reveal that information as yet. As I said, I think it was a cruel hoax on the people of Albert Park when Labor made promises to have that school up far quicker than the coalition was ever going to do it. The earliest any new places will be available in any new school in that area will be 2018.

It must be remembered that only 32 per cent of people actually voted for Labor in the recent election, and I know the member for Melton was in here having a go at the Greens, and of course he can throw stones at the Greens because he has, I think, a 90 per cent primary vote where he comes from. However, I note that the member for Albert Park, with his 32 per cent primary vote, relies very heavily on his very good friends from the Greens who gave him his position in this place, so he is not likely to throw stones at them.

As I said, this school has got to happen. It is a government commitment, and I respect that, but the less than truthful disclosure of the cost and all the work that has to go into this new school is very disappointing. The member for Albert Park owes his community an apology for making false promises. I hope that this bill today means that the first of a number of steps has been made towards fulfilling the commitment made by the Labor government.

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) — I thought the former Minister for Education might have had a little bit more to say about this bill, but anyway here we go. I might be able to fill him in on a few of his questions. The purpose of the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015 is to revoke permanent reservations over seven Crown land sites at Albert Park, Ballarat North, Flinders, Caulfield, Cobram, Waaia and Wedderburn. From my experiences in local government, in government and indeed as a teacher at a school that was sold off by the Kennett regime, I must say that making a decision to sell or rezone land is not something that governments take lightly; it usually indicates that there is a really strong preferred need for the site or that the land is in fact no longer needed.

I understand that in all these cases there has been a concrete study of the needs of the area and how the land can be used or how the proceeds of the sale of the land can be used in a different way. Crown land is highly regarded by the community. People think it is important to keep it as long as you can in government hands, so the decision to sell off Crown land is something that, as I have already indicated, governments do not take lightly.

I am going to speak about two parts of the bill. I will start with the education department land in Albert Park. As we have heard from previous speakers, this has been the topic of some debate in the house. I put it on the record just how important it is that these two new schools in Albert Park are established. As other speakers have indicated, this was an election commitment, and the government is striding forward to make sure that it will happen sooner rather than later. This bill is part of making sure that these election commitments are delivered. I notice that the former Minister for Education has left the house, and I know that he would like to be standing here, but the truth of the matter is that his legacy will be that in 2016 — despite the fact that there are 100 000 people coming to Melbourne every year, despite the growth in the outer suburbs and the population growth in the inner suburbs, and despite the absolute stress and strains in our education system to make sure that every child gets the best education in a quality classroom — the legacy of the lazy, crazy Napthine and Baillieu governments will be that not one new school will be opened in 2016. There is not one new school, despite the pressure on the education department to provide access to a quality education for all Victorian children.

I notice that the South Melbourne Primary School in Ferrars Street is due to open in 2018, and South Melbourne Park Primary School in Albert Road will open in 2019. For the information of those opposite, the key elements of our election commitment around these schools, especially the one in Albert Park — the South Melbourne Park Primary School at the current Parks Victoria depot site in Albert Park — makes a total funding commitment of \$11.5 million. There will be no net loss of open space in the Albert Park Reserve. In the design of the building the architects are working very hard to make sure that we have not just a great educational space but also a great community space and that the school design integrates the heritage building.

Also at this school a music program will be incorporated into the curriculum. It has been developed in partnership with the Australian National Academy of Music and the Victorian College of the Arts and Conservatorium of Music at the University of Melbourne. So we are not only going to build a quality school on this site we are also going to make sure that we have an innovative curriculum. For those who have been following our education state policy, as a government we have said that creativity is one of those key performance indicators.

We want to make sure that every child in a Victorian school gets a holistic education — an education that allows children to do the stem subjects that are so

wanted by future employers but also to make sure that our kids are resilient and creative as well. The music program at the South Melbourne Park Primary School will have that very strong emphasis. I am sure that parents in the area will be very much in support of that. There has been consultation with the residents, the school community and parents to ensure that the curriculum at the school will be something that every local parent will want their child to experience.

We have also heard talk about what is going to happen to Parks Victoria and Orchestra Victoria. I am told they will either be co-located with the new primary school or transitioned to a new site. Whatever outcomes are achieved, we know that neither organisation will be disadvantaged by the development of the new school. This is a win-win project for the Albert Park community and also for Parks Victoria and Orchestra Victoria.

The department has not taken these decisions lightly, as I said. Revoking land and putting it up for sale requires high-level reviews. The department has completed a high-level review of the site to identify issues that will need to be addressed to facilitate the development of the primary school. That is just another way of saying that this government is getting on with the job of delivering on its election promises and making sure that things are done properly and that the school community will get a quality school that will be fully integrated.

An honourable member — Finally in this area.

Ms GRALEY — Finally. Other parts of the bill refer not only to the Albert Park area but also to an area I am growing fonder of every day — the Ballarat area. That is where my beloved football club, the Western Bulldogs, will be playing some matches in the future. I know the Dogs are not the first team of the member for Wendouree, but I am sure she will become increasingly fond of the great contribution the Western Bulldogs will make to the Ballarat area in the redevelopment of Eureka Stadium. The revocation of the land in Ballarat North is supported by the Ballarat North Football Club and the City of Ballarat, and the Eureka Stadium project will be bigger and better because of this.

It is a great decision of the Western Bulldogs Football Club to move into regional Victoria. This will not only be good for the people of Ballarat but it will also develop a strong relationship between the west of Melbourne and the regional city. We each have things we can bring to the party to benefit both communities in Ballarat and the western suburbs. One of my favourite players, Marcus Bontempelli, and the captain, Robert Murphy, of whom the Minister for Health is the

no. 1 fan, will be up there promoting Ballarat as well as winning games for the fantastic Western Bulldogs. We might even beat the Tigers — which would cause some consternation for the member for Wendouree, but we love beating the Tigers.

This bill is very well timed. It is the result of consultation with a number of communities, and it will deliver on some of the government's election promises, especially in the field of education, which we on this side of the house know was neglected by the previous government. Things came to a standstill: kids in Victoria were at a disadvantage, especially kids in Albert Park who were not able to access quality education facility. This bill is a step in the right direction to make sure of the education state agenda of ensuring that every kid in Victoria has access to a quality education irrespective of their background, their experiences or their postcode. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms SHEED (Shepparton) — I rise to support the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. This bill deals with seven pieces of land in Victoria. It is the law in Victoria that permanent reservations over Crown land may only be revoked by an act of Parliament. It is a usual part of government business for revocations of permanent reservations to occur, and Parliament has passed many acts like this in the past to deal with the sorts of anomalies that arise. It is a relic of our history that in the past land was permanently reserved for particular purposes and usually public purposes, predominantly in the 19th century. In modern times land is now reserved for public purposes and there are detailed planning laws that exist in relation to the uses of land in our state.

Four of the sites referred to in the bill were in a previous bill of the former government in 2014, which was not able to be finalised because of the intervention of the 2014 election. There are obviously a couple of very significant sites referred to here, one being the Albert Park land which will be used for a school. We have heard much about what will happen on that land from the previous speaker. The other is the Ballarat North land. It is a very significant event for an AFL team to come to Ballarat and make connections. The relevance of my speaking on this bill is in relation to one very small bit of land that is in my electorate at Waaia. The piece of land in question occupies only 0.2 of a hectare on the Broken Creek, east of Nathalia. The legislation will revoke a permanent reservation over this small area of land.

More than half of the house on a farming property purchased by Mr and Mrs McCreadie in 2007 was built

on Crown land in the 1930s by the then owners. The current owners were unaware of this fact when they purchased the land in 2007; it subsequently became known to them when a survey was undertaken for other purposes in 2011. They are an older couple and wish to sell the land eventually. The current irregularity needs to be fixed, and this legislation will have the effect of providing a solution for the McCreadies. With the removal of the status of permanent reservation over the land, it will be possible for Mr and Mrs McCreadie to purchase the 0.2 hectare required by them at market value.

The staff of my electorate office have been in touch with Mr and Mrs McCreadie, who are naturally very pleased that they will be able to proceed to regularise their ownership with these arrangements. I take the opportunity to thank the minister and the minister's staff for their assistance in briefing me and providing me with information in relation to the McCreadie's situation. They have been in regular contact with me about this issue and will be very pleased when this legislation is given royal assent and they can proceed to regularise their situation.

It should be noted that in making this decision the government took into consideration the fact that the land is not normally accessed by the public, the encroachment was not intentional, there is evidence of a genuine error and the owners have dealt entirely appropriately in trying to rectify the situation by leasing the land in the meantime. Crown land is very important to us. It is part of the public space that everyone generally has access to but of course in this case it was not. It was considered that any alternative courses of action would indeed result in undue hardship for the current owners of the land.

The land at the North Ballarat Football Ground and the Cobram land fall into similar situations as the McCreadies' land in that the revocation of the permanent reservation means that the current occupiers will be able to buy the land for their own purposes. The bill will similarly revoke permanent reservations over three other sites and re-reserve them. In the case of Caulfield Park and Wedderburn Mechanics Institute the new reservation will be consistent with the current use of the two sites, and a further reservation will provide for the future use of the Albert Park land as a primary school.

The remaining revocation of permanent reservation is for the purposes of providing legal access to freehold which has previously been achieved by using a track over the current reservation. The land is at Main Ridge Nature Conservation Reserve, and the negotiations

surrounding this circumstance are such that there will be a net gain for the adjoining conservation reserve in the process of providing appropriate legal access to freehold land. Again, in that case there will be no detriment to the Crown landholding. I commend this bill to the house as it certainly solves a whole lot of small issues for some people and indeed sets up some big projects for others.

Ms HALFPENNY (Thomastown) — I also rise to speak in support of the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. As many other members have said, this legislation is about providing in particular cases and for particular parcels of land a revocation of reservation in order that the land can be used in different ways or managed in different ways, say, for example, by committees of management rather than trustees. As the previous speaker mentioned, in some very limited cases land could be sold off where doing so would not impinge on any other people's rights or concerns.

Firstly, I want to talk about this legislation in general. I will not go through all the details that have already been gone through by previous speakers. This bill shows how the need for legislation is constant. There are always changing circumstances, changing arrangements and changing expectations within the community that require legislative change to keep them in line with community expectations and the requirements of government. In terms of planning it is always important to reserve land for specific purposes to ensure community wellbeing and to ensure communities have the facilities they require currently and into the future. In a planning sense land is designated for certain purposes. In the case of Crown land it is a legislative requirement to protect the land for particular purposes. This protects people in terms of the current use of that land, and in a planning sense, it protects the land for future generations.

We have heard a lot about where planning and designating land for use can go wrong. We have discussed in this place many times the terrible dilemma of Fishermans Bend, where no planning, thought or ideas were put in place to allow for specific parcels of land to be designated for community use to enhance the wellbeing of residents who may live in that area in the future. There is now a massive problem where government has to buy back land at a huge premium because there was no vision or proper responsibility taken. It was negligent not to take into account that if you are going to have a whole lot of homes being built there and families living there you also need to have things such as schools and parks and land put aside through the planning process to allow for future use.

Looking at this legislation one can see how things are not always simple. When governments are faced with issues that arise, there is often a lot of detail. The community, including me before I came to this place, wonders why it takes so long for things to happen. Sometimes there is no reason for things to take so long, but in other cases there is a reason. An example would be the one piece of land we are talking about in this bill. That land will be put aside for the South Melbourne Park Primary School, but it is not just a matter of securing the land and going off and building a school. In this case, because it is Crown land and part of Albert Park, you have to legislate to allow for the purchasing or possession of that land before you even start building on it. This shows some of the very intricate details that governments have to contend with in doing anything that they need to do.

Another example in my area is the O'Herns Road interchange, which has been budgeted for and will be happening we hope very soon — as soon as we get the okay from the federal government to put its share in. Of course we wonder, 'Why can't it be done straight away?'. However, the business case has to be done because the government has a responsibility to make sure it is the thing that is needed and that the costings are what is expected. That is then put to the federal government for it to consider and so that it has all the details and cannot argue it was in the dark. This takes time.

Once the business case is done, we would expect the federal government to consider it very quickly, and then we could get started on building that interchange to reduce the massive congestion and traffic problems in the area. For four years under the previous government not one cent was spent on any infrastructure or road support.

I have spoken generally about the South Melbourne Park Primary School and the need to legislate to provide for different educational uses of that piece of land and also to allow the Department of Education and Training to manage that land. Another example of where this legislation is being used to provide for different management is at the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute. Mechanics institutes were working people's learning spaces. I suppose they were the forerunner to adult education facilities. Many of these mechanics institutes buildings in the metropolitan area and in regional areas are still there, but they may be used in a slightly different way. That is the case at the Wedderburn institute, which is used to conduct a lot of theatre and art activities. It can also be hired out as a venue. It is not used so much as an educational space

but more as a space for the community to use for whatever purpose benefits the community.

In this situation it is good to legislate to designate the land for the purpose for which it is actually being used. There was also the problem that mechanics institutes were run by trusts of working people to make sure that they did what they were there to do. In this situation, however, there is only one trustee left. It is not really the way to manage this modern facility, so as part of this legislative change the council will form a committee of management to facilitate the management of this mechanics institute. The institute will continue to do some of the things that it currently does, but it will be all about community use and what benefits the community.

In terms of land changes, while this is slightly different, I would just like to mention the Metropolitan Clay Target Club in the Epping area that has some land. This is another case where you can look at how land has been nominated to be used — how the planning system has determined what the use of a particular parcel of land will be — and how sometimes, looking back, it may not have been the right area for that designated use. In the case of the clay shooting club, it is looking for land around the Epping area. It wants to build, with the support of the peak bodies for the shooting clubs in Victoria, an Olympic-standard shooting facility. I think everybody in the area would like to see something like that, particularly in a place that is away from residents and anyone else who could be concerned about a shooting range or things like that.

It will certainly be good for Epping to have an Olympic-standard shooting facility, because there is not one in the whole state of Victoria, but one of the problems is getting the land and the perfect land is designated for a use that means it could not be used for an Olympic-standard shooting facility. Of course those in the club and those who want to do these really visionary and really good things for the area say, 'Why shouldn't we be able to use the land? Why can't it be rezoned? Why can't be changed?'. There are always these problems that come up.

I hope that something can be worked out for the club, considering that for the first time ever all the peak organisations have come together in support, but of course this is something that requires planning, a lot of forethought and a lot of thinking about how it is going to work if there is a change. Hopefully something can be done in this space, but in the meantime it is good to see that this legislation tidies up a whole lot of loose ends and makes sure that election commitments are continued with.

Ms KAIROUZ (Kororoit) — I rise to contribute briefly to the debate in relation to the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. This bill seeks to provide for the revocation of permanent reservations over seven areas of Crown land and, where applicable, the re-reservation of land and the appointment of committees of management. Should this bill be supported and pass into legislation it will enable these sites to be used for other purposes or to be sold.

Revocation of permanent reservations of Crown land in Victoria may only be effected under the provisions of an act of Parliament. Such acts are a normal part of government business, and the Parliament has passed many of these bills over the years. As the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water pointed out in her second-reading speech, four of the sites which are the subject of this bill — in Ballarat North, Caulfield, Waaia and Wedderburn — were included in a bill introduced by the former government in 2014, but it was not debated prior to the 2014 state election.

A key component of this bill, and one which is clearly this government's initiative, is the revocation of a permanent reservation over Crown land at Albert Park and the subsequent re-reservation of that site for educational services. This is an example of Labor keeping its election promises. Passage of this bill will enable the establishment of the new South Melbourne Park Primary School at Albert Park, something I know the member for Albert Park has campaigned for strongly over the years and which was a commitment made to the community at the last election. Analysis of enrolment data shows pressures on existing schools in the Southbank, South Melbourne and Port Melbourne areas, and the development of the South Melbourne Park Primary School at Albert Park will ensure that the capacity for school places in the area is increased in a timely manner and that local children of primary school age in Victoria can begin their education in the best possible environment. Importantly, the proposed primary school will be developed within the footprint of the old Albert Park signal depot and drill hall and will incorporate the re-use of existing buildings.

As a bit of a history lesson in relation to this site, it was used for defence purposes since before Federation and until 1979. The original drill hall, constructed in 1880, was destroyed by fire in 1930. At the outbreak of war in 1914 that building, described as the 51st drill hall, was at various times used by soldiers from a number of military units, including elements of infantry and artillery. Indeed the 5th battalion of the First Australian Imperial Force used the building prior to sailing for Egypt to fight in the Great War 1914–18. The heritage-listed drill hall that remains was built in 1935

for the signal corps. It is exciting to see a building with such a rich history being revitalised and put to such a significant new and important use — that is, educating primary school children in that area. Once the land has been reserved for educational purposes the Minister for Education will be administering the site under the Education and Training Reform Act 2006.

Other revocations within the bill include two Crown allotments in Ballarat North, situated at the North Ballarat Football Club, also known as Eureka Stadium. These allotments are legally occupied by the North Ballarat Football Club and constitute the site of the North Ballarat Sports Club building. The revocation of these reservations and the sale of this land to the club will support the proposed redevelopment of facilities at the North Ballarat Sports Club and Eureka Stadium. Eureka Stadium is another Andrews Labor government commitment, and \$15 million has been committed to redevelop the Eureka Stadium precinct.

There are also other areas. For example, in Caulfield an allotment of nearly 2 hectares of land at Caulfield Park was reserved for use as a swimming pool and associated facilities, including car parking, in 1966. That development never eventuated, and the land is now occupied by a children's playground. The bill will revoke the current reservation purpose, and subsequently we will permanently reserve the land for the purposes of a public park, gardens and recreation. This bill will better align the reservation purposes with the existing use of the site and the rest of Caulfield Park.

Also included in this bill are revocations to address inadvertent encroachment on small parcels of land in Cobram and Waaia, both of which appear to be common-sense solutions to address encroachment on Crown land by parts of private dwellings.

Further, this bill addresses an issue of access to a freehold property at Flinders, where practical access to the freehold land is currently provided by a vehicle track in that reserve rather than on the designated and unmade government road adjoining the reserve that provides the legal access to the property. The suggested remedy for this will enable a better environmental outcome, provide for an increase in the size of the conservation reserve and enable legal access to the freehold property.

The final revocation in this bill relates to a Crown allotment totalling approximately 0.2 hectares at Wedderburn. The site is the location of the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute. The bill will subsequently temporarily re-reserve the site for public purposes, will

provide flexibility for the future use of the site and will deem Loddon Shire Council to be the committee of management for the land under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. The actions proposed in this bill will ensure that the land continues to be used for public purposes.

In summary, this bill applies a common-sense and a good public policy approach to the future uses of a number of parcels of land which previously had been the subject of permanent reservation. In each individual case the outcomes proposed are practical solutions and should be supported. This is another piece of legislation which will enable the community to access Crown land. I wish the bill a speedy passage.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I rise to speak on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. As previous speakers have indicated, the bill will provide for the revocation of permanent reservations over seven areas of Crown land and, where applicable, the re-reservation and appointment of committees of management. This will enable the sites to be used for other purposes or to be sold.

This is a very important piece of legislation, because what is at the heart of this bill goes to the better management of state assets. The reality is that, as a state, we hold anywhere between \$130 billion and \$145 billion-worth of assets, according to the recent annual financial statement. We actually do not know what we own, nor do we know how well what we own is being managed and whether it is being managed appropriately. For most people, conversations about economics and finances cause the eyes to glaze over, and people think, ‘This is pretty boring; what’s it to do with me?’. If we can more efficiently manage the assets that we own, then we can increase the dividend yield that those assets repatriate to the Consolidated Fund, which will mean that we can increase the amount of money we can use to service debt for major infrastructure projects, or we can use those proceeds to improve the quality of service provision in the state.

I refer to Dag Detter and Stefan Fölster’s book *The Public Wealth of Nations — How Management of Public Assets Can Boost or Bust Economic Growth*. The Swedish government vested all real estate assets into holding companies. Akademiska Hus is the specialist real estate manager for university properties in Sweden. By making sure that the university assets in Sweden were properly managed by proper and professional management, the value of those assets increased from 7 billion kronor to more than 64 billion over 20 years purely through professional management and development. The company also leased out

140 million square feet of property, and returning rents increased from 36 per cent from 1998 to 2008 compared to a CPI increase of 17 per cent.

Bills like this are important because we are looking at trying to increase proficiency and improve the way in which public assets are managed. To quote Detter and Fölster:

Our common resources are limited. It is therefore imperative that they are managed responsibly. Public commercial assets that remain hidden, without a transparent economic value, risk being misused without anyone paying much attention. An understanding of value, both current and potential, is fundamental to the development of any commercial asset. Transparency is also crucial to prevent waste, misuse, and corruption of public assets.

This bill is important because the government is trying to put a real focus, and the focus of the Parliament, on Crown land to make sure that it is properly utilised, that we have appropriate committees of management to oversee it and that there is an appropriate mechanism whereby assets that are surplus to requirement can be adequately disposed of. This bill is very important.

I turn to part 8 of the bill, which relates to land at Wedderburn which was reserved as the site for a mechanics institute. Firstly I congratulate Luke Mitchell, who I know quite well and who was recently elected as the secretary of the Mechanics Institutes of Victoria. The Mechanics Institutes of Victoria is a fascinating organisation. I remember hearing of Felix, a perfumer who spent some time in a house of ill repute in Pompeii in 79 A.D. It would be unparliamentary to report to the house exactly what Felix wrote, but he wrote about his certain attributes and skills. A perfumer was an artisan, a working-class person, yet Felix could read and write and understand the context of what he was saying.

The reality is that those skills and attributes really died away with the fall of Rome, and it was not until the Scottish Enlightenment of the early 19th century that a decision was made that it made sense — with the increasing skills and proficiencies required to have labour to service the industrial revolution — to have places of learning for working-class people, for people who had a trade but who may not have learnt to read or write. That was why, through the Scottish school of the Enlightenment, that they established the first mechanics institute in October 1821, the school of the arts in Edinburgh. Edinburgh was an amazing city at that point in time, and still is. Just look at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe.

There was a recognition that there was a gap in the skill set of society of that time and that no longer could

people be punished by denying them the right of education. There was a recognition that the appropriate skill sets needed to be in place to service the machine of the industrial revolution. It took until the 19th century for the penny to drop and for that to be realised — 1500 years from the fall of Rome. People thought the establishment of mechanics institutes was a very good idea and that they would skill up and increase the capacity of working people. It was thought that society would no longer have master-servant relationships and that the economic yield of society could be increased by having highly skilled and highly knowledgeable workers tending to the machines that were the bedrock and the foundation of the economic wealth of prosperity that underpinned the industrial revolution.

Clause 20 revokes the permanent reservation referred to in item 7 of schedule 1 of certain land in Wedderburn as a site for a mechanics institutes, and that is revoked in full. I notice that the member for Murray Plains is at the table. He will know that as one drives through many regional towns, one will see that there are still mechanics institutes. In terms of Victoria, the very first mechanics institute was created in the Athenaeum and was known as the Melbourne Mechanics Institution. The bill plays an important role in terms of recognising the importance of mechanics institutes. The bill also deems Loddon Shire Council to be the committee of management for the land under the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978. The Wedderburn mechanics institute land was vested to trustees by a restricted Crown grant in 1862, and the Mount Korong Miners Literary Institute building was subsequently constructed in 1863. Obviously while the Wedderburn institute is not as old as the Athenaeum, it has played a significant role. I also understand that the Ballarat Mechanics Institute was one of the early mechanics institutes.

As a consequence of the gold rush, Ballarat became an area of significant economic prosperity, so measures and initiatives were put in place to ensure that people could broaden their skill sets and their knowledge base by becoming literate and numerate and developing the technical skills that were required.

Although the existing reservation will be revoked, what the bill seeks to do in relation to the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute is to ensure that it is properly managed and continues to benefit the community of Wedderburn into the future. Again, this comes back to thinking about the ways in which we can more effectively utilise our assets. Trying to make sure that local communities can be engaged to work out the best use of — the highest purpose for — these assets is very important. Making sure they have access to good, professional advice and intelligence as to the way in

which they can be harnessed and utilised most effectively is also important.

Bills like this are important despite the fact that they might seem, on first reading, fairly mundane or pedestrian. They go to our core responsibility as legislators in this place — the more effective utilisation of public assets along with recognising our past and our history in terms of the important role that education has played in making sure people can get a decent education, participate fairly and equally in the market, make a good contribution and achieve their potential. It is an important piece of legislation for those reasons. Anything we can do to understand what we own, make sure it is properly managed, maximise return and increase the dividend yield from these state assets is a very good thing. I commend the bill to the house.

Ms WARD (Eltham) — I echo the member for Essendon in saying how delightful it is to see you, Acting Speaker, in the chair today. I also rise to speak on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. Like the member for Essendon, I want to acknowledge that it is an important step in ensuring that people have access to good local public schools, and this is especially important in an area like the Albert Park district, which is increasing in population. There is definitely a need in that electorate for a new primary school.

Mr J. Bull — What about Fishermans Bend?

Ms WARD — It is interesting that you mention Fishermans Bend and the lack of planning that occurred in that area. It is good to see that this government is forward thinking, planning ahead and putting in place the schools that are needed by those within our inner city suburbs as well as our outer suburbs and even our rural and regional communities. I commend the member for Albert Park for his strong advocacy in this area. He has fought long and hard to improve accessibility to public school education in his electorate. He has worked incredibly hard, and it is great to see this government responding to his work and to the needs of his community.

This is an exciting development. It is exciting to see the building of new schools. It is exciting to see a government that is committed to the education of young Victorians, a government that is putting words into action — that is actually making things happen. It is great to see this legislation, a first step towards building this new school, which will be a redevelopment of the old Albert Park signal depot and drill hall. What a fantastic place to redevelop — how exciting will that

building, and the possibilities, be. I really look forward to seeing that unfold.

This is one commitment that the government is again honouring, just as it is in my own electorate. There are fantastic things happening in my electorate. The rebuilding of Montmorency Secondary College is well underway, with an architect appointed as well as a project manager. Also we see it with the sporting precinct that is being developed at St Helena Secondary College. Again, there is a project manager signed on, we are well underway and we hope to be turning sod very soon. We also see the government's commitments with St Francis Xavier Primary School, Montmorency. Of course the Catholic sector is not forgotten by this government; nor is the independent sector. We are building on the millions of Labor dollars that we have invested in electorates across the state, and we are also building on some really good policy.

I note the history lesson that the member for Essendon gave us on mechanics institutes, and I share his fascination with these buildings. I think it is a fabulous thing that in days gone by education was so well understood by people that they wanted to create institutions of learning that were accessible to all, including, may I say to the member for Essendon, working-class men. I do hope that working-class women such as my great-great-grandmother, who was born in Wedderburn, were able to access the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute and partake in some of the knowledge that was no doubt found there. I am sure there were other members of my ancestral family who were able to be there.

Mechanics institutes were a great thing, and they are a great thing to emulate in terms of that accessibility of education and knowledge. We must do what we can to make sure people have access to the knowledge and skills they need, which is what mechanics institutes provided and what this government is providing. This will not only be evident in the school we will build in Albert Park; we are making a fantastic investment in education, in skills and in training across the state.

It is especially important to note how we are restoring this state to the leading education state that it should be. This state has a fantastic tradition of forward thinking, progressive thought, innovation and skills development. It is great to see that the government is continuing this trend, a trend which I am sorry to say was put on pause over the last four years when the previous government, as we have heard in this chamber today, did not provide for the building of a new school in 2016. There will not be a new school built.

It is interesting to note the comments by the member for Nepean, who said around \$15 million is needed to build a new primary school. I found that an interesting sum, because in my electorate over the last few years we had the rebuilding of Montmorency Primary School, which included the demolition and the removal of asbestos, including asbestos that people did not even know existed, and getting rid of all the rubble, rubbish and everything else, and the amount spent was \$3.6 million.

My question to the member for Nepean is: has he ripped off the community of Montmorency? If it costs \$15 million to build a primary school, why was only \$3.6 million spent at Montmorency Primary School? Where was the former government's commitment to Montmorency? We can see that the Liberals lack a commitment to Montmorency, because the Leader of the Opposition is a former student of Montmorency Secondary College — or Montmorency High School, as it was known then — and where was he in the last four years of that government? Where was he in 2010 when the Labor Party promised to commit \$10 million towards rebuilding Montmorency Primary School? He was not to be seen.

It was only when Labor stood up in 2014 and said that it would spend \$14 million to develop Montmorency Primary School that the Leader of the Opposition suddenly had a road to Damascus moment and decided that he would get on board and also support Montmorency Secondary College. As we can see, it was too little too late — well too little too late. I am glad to see the fantastic developments happening at the college. It is going to be an absolutely fantastic state school when it is rebuilt. It is great to see that work is underway on what will be an absolutely fantastic state-of-the-art facility, because we have an absolute commitment to our community, an absolute commitment to education and an absolute commitment to, as the member for Sunbury is often is fond of saying, getting on with it.

It was really good to hear the member for Wendouree talking about the fantastic stuff going on at Eureka Stadium — we have committed \$15 million to develop this precinct. This is a fantastic investment in our regional communities, it really is. It will not just be the City of Ballarat that will benefit, it will be all of those satellite communities and towns around the area that will absolutely benefit from this redevelopment — they will benefit from having AFL games played there and from the jobs the construction work will create.

The opposition bangs on about us not caring about regional and rural communities — but, I am sorry,

\$15 million at Eureka Stadium is a pretty good investment. I dare the opposition to find anybody who lives in the Ballarat area who will say they do not want that investment and that money. You will not find them, because what do the people of Ballarat want? They want skills, they want jobs, they want education and they want a good footy ground. That is exactly what they want, and that is exactly what they deserve. They deserve to have people come and play world-class AFL football there. They deserve to have an investment in their community, and that is exactly what we are doing.

I really wish those opposite would get on board — that they would get on board and stop trying to talk down this state and the great things that are happening in our communities and our economy. There are fantastic things happening in the state this year. This state is absolutely getting on with it — it is moving forward, it is revved up and it is ready for action. The state is going forward, and I really wish members opposite would catch up, because they are dragging their heels.

I was very surprised to see that the member for Caulfield did not come in here today to talk about the site included in this bill that is in his electorate. Everyone is talking about their communities; I am talking about communities across the whole state, but where is the member for Caulfield? He is not here. Yet again there is dead silence. Yet again we see members opposite missing in action. I am looking, and I can see just one opposition member in the chamber. That is the commitment this mob has to this Parliament and to this state.

Mr Edbrooke interjected.

Ms WARD — There are more Hansard people than opposition members in here, as the member for Frankston says. This is an absolute shame, because it is time for the Liberal Party and The Nationals to get on board and get engaged with what is happening in this community, what is happening with the legislation and what is happening in the state. It is time for them to get their bottoms of the seats in their offices or hidden away wherever they are and start getting active, getting functional and working. Let us get working — come on! The opposition should get on board. I commend this bill to the house.

Mr NARDELLA (Melton) — I support the bill before the house. It is a very important bill because it puts in place a number of things to make sure that we look after the great people of Albert Park and South Melbourne. At Albert Park we are putting aside some land for the South Melbourne Park Primary School. It is

that particular site we are looking after. As some people may recognise, I have been here for a while. I am old, bald, fat and all that kind of stuff, and I have a bit of a memory. I am like an elephant, they would say — I am as bald as an elephant — because I remember. One of the great tragedies when I was first elected to the Parliament in the other house was that 327 schools were sold by the Kennett government. It was one of the most appalling things to have occurred in this state, especially when you look at the growth that has been occurring in a number of areas, when you look at the future of where those school sites were, even at that time, and when you look at the future those schools had in looking after those communities.

In South Melbourne we now have to look at putting aside some really serious money to deal with the people who are moving into those new areas in the Fishermans Bend precinct. The South Melbourne Park Primary School site is not only about taking pressure off a lot of the existing schools but is also about this new provision. One of the really sad parts about having to deal with the mess that was left not only after the seven long and dark years of the Kennett government but also after the four long and dark years of the Geoff Shaw government is that we now have to find inordinate amounts of money to provide for schools in these areas.

If we look at Fishermans Bend, and this particular site we are looking at will service part of Fishermans Bend, we need to find something like \$180 million to buy the school sites because the previous Minister for Planning did not do the work. What he did was rezone everywhere so that when the education department had to go in and buy the site — —

Ms Thomas — Windfall profits for his mates.

Mr NARDELLA — Yes, the honourable member for Macedon is right, it was a windfall profit for the mates, for the donors of the Liberal Party, but the taxpayers of Victoria will now need to find around \$180 million to buy those sites back to build schools. That is one of the great problems. Imagine what you can do with \$180 million to rebuild schools and build the new schools of the future instead of just having to buy the sites. In my particular electorate I have Eynesbury. I have Exford Primary School, which has about 400 kids in it.

Ms Kairouz — Rockbank North.

Mr NARDELLA — Rockbank North, absolutely, and Woodlea. We need to buy sites out there. Depending on where a site is, it is about \$3 million, give or take a couple of cents. I can be corrected on

that — somebody can nod this way or that way — but it is about \$3 million.

Ms Thomas interjected.

Mr NARDELLA — I cannot work out the maths. There are about 50 sites that we could buy in the normal spread in Victoria for schools, and then we could build schools on those sites.

Mr J. Bull — It is 60.

Mr NARDELLA — The honourable member for Sunbury is my numbers man down here; he says it is about 60 school sites, at \$3 million each. That would do more than buy the site at Eynesbury for the new school that we were planning in 2009. As honourable members have said, the other side was then in government — the four long, dark years of the Geoff Shaw government — and its members fell asleep. If you listen to the honourable member for South Barwon, they bought not one, not two, not three, not four — they bought five school blocks of land.

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr NARDELLA — They were the land bankers, not builders; that is right. It was because Barwon South was a Liberal marginal seat that they bought them. They bought them at Armstrong Creek, Torquay, but there was nothing in Eynesbury, nothing in Werribee or Wyndham or Hume — —

An honourable member — Frankston.

Mr NARDELLA — And Frankston. Yet we now have to make these provisions, and that is why we have this bill before the house. We are working in with the Metropolitan Planning Authority to try to work out what the school provision should be, and that is really important. When we look at the precinct structure plans and at the municipal strategic statements, we see that that provisioning is done way before rezoning and before any other decisions are made so that the education department and the taxpayers of Victoria get value for money. The sad part about this bill is that that is not part of it. This government has put aside about \$15.5 million to provide schools in the inner city Melbourne metropolitan area. Again, that is because of the change that is occurring within our community and our society.

I want to talk about Wedderburn and the mechanics institute at Wedderburn. I was talking to my honourable friend from Essendon about mechanics institutes earlier. I have one in Melton, the Melton mechanics institute, along with the one at Wedderburn. Mechanic

institutes provided a serious local base and a way for working-class people to build schools, get jobs and look after their families in those communities. It is no different in Wedderburn, in Melton or with other mechanics institutes throughout the state. I think the honourable member for Essendon talked about that history in his contribution to the debate. Mechanics institutes were an important part of Victoria's working-class history.

Lastly, I refer to the Ballarat North football club. The last time I was at the Ballarat North football club was at the Ballarat Regional Trades and Labour Council's annual dinner. That was about a month ago. Mr Edgington — 'the Edge', they call him; he is the secretary — —

Mr J. Bull — Brett.

Mr NARDELLA — Brett Edgington, the Edge, is a very good local trades and labour council secretary. He ran a fantastic function. But again it is important that we support and develop those local facilities. The Ballarat North football club is an institution within Ballarat. It is also important that we build on that leverage through AFL games and through developing sports to get the AFL better connected to Ballarat and also to develop tourism. This bill will assist in that development. I support the bill before the house. It is very important. It is just very sad that we will be wasting nearly \$180 million because of the previous government.

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — I rise to speak on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. I will make some comments particularly around the Caulfield component of this bill, dealing with Caulfield Park. Caulfield Park is a well-used park in my electorate. Many would call it the jewel in the crown of Caulfield. It is used for many different activities, including recreation. A lot of cricket, football and soccer is played at the park, and even lacrosse, so it is a well-used park. There is also a strong component of passive activity in the park. I particularly make mention of the Friends of Caulfield Park, a group that has been involved in ensuring that the preservation of the park is maintained. It runs a very active program. I am proud to say that I am a member of the Friends of Caulfield Park. It does things like — and this happened just last weekend — running a bandstand series of concerts in the old Caulfield bandstand. They promote jazz and kids activities to encourage people to come to the park.

The reason I mention the Friends of Caulfield Park today is that this bill looks at taking a component of the land, which was initially designated for a swimming

pool, and giving that back to the City of Glen Eira to look after and maintain. In 1966 the site was permanently reserved for public purposes. A swimming pool and other associated facilities, including the car parking, were put in the *Government Gazette*. The swimming pool was never developed, and in fact the land which was designated as a swimming pool is now occupied by a kids playground area. That playground area is indistinguishable from the rest of the park itself. It is a very active park, and it would be fair to say that a swimming pool would not be fit for purpose in the park as it currently sits. In Glen Eira we have the Glen Eira Sports and Aquatic Centre, which is known as GSAC and is a very active pool, so this particular site really needs further maintenance as a park, as a passive and active space.

Another reason I mention the Friends of Caulfield Park is that a master plan was done back in 2001. The master plan in 2001, specifically on the use of the park, refers to the use of the park, as part of a survey, including 31 per cent of walking; 18 per cent of dog walking; exercising, 18 per cent; meeting people, 12 per cent; and relaxing, 12 per cent. I am not sure if those figures include the active sports that are played within the park itself, but I know that takes a big part of the activities, and certainly a big part of the land of the park proper.

There are problems in terms of shortage of playground equipment. Certainly a number of representations have been made to me about shortage of shade and seating which could be better utilised at the park. I think there having been a plan done in 2001 specifically at that park, it is probably time for an upgrade of that plan. As part of this revocation bill and giving this space back to the City of Glen Eira, it is important that in future planning the municipality look at doing a specific plan for Caulfield Park.

I would like to put on the record that the previous government funded a master plan for all of the open spaces in the City of Glen Eira. We provided that funding, and that was very useful to indicate the use of the various parks. One of the highlights of that plan was to say that we needed more passive open space, and we provided significant funding — approximately \$600 000 — for the Booran Road Reservoir site to help make that a park. I believe it will be opened next year. That came as a result of a lot of work looking at what was needed for open space. I have said many times in this Parliament that Glen Eira has one of the lowest amounts of open space of all municipalities. We certainly do a good job in terms of having quality parks, but we could do with more and we could always do better.

In conclusion, as I mentioned, the Friends of Caulfield Park do a great job. There are many members who are involved in maintaining the park. There are things such as a tree walk. A number of trees have been labelled as part of a walk where people can go around and look at some of the great species we have within the park proper. Glen Eira City Council has a working group that meets two or three times a year that helps frame part of the activity of the park. It is my understanding that Friends of Caulfield Park are not part of that group, and it would be a good opportunity to look at including such groups in discussions about how Caulfield Park could be better utilised. Obviously this is an important time to be able to use it better, to get more community consultation and to ensure that we continue to progress Caulfield Park as the jewel in the crown in Glen Eira. It is one of the most used parks in the electorate of Caulfield. I would like to see better use of and better outcomes for this great park.

Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) — It gives me great pleasure to join in the debate on the Land (Revocation of Reservations) Bill 2015. The purposes of the bill are to revoke the permanent reservation of certain land in Albert Park and provide for that land to be taken to be permanently reserved for education purposes. I will just refer to that purpose for the moment.

Earlier we heard the member for Nepean try to make a case that he had been forward-looking during his watch as the Minister for Education in the four years of the previous government. When I think of the member for Nepean being the Minister for Education it is almost like what happens if a tree falls in the forest and there is no-one there: you can ask whether it actually happened. Could you hear the sound? Under the previous government education ground to a halt in this state, as did the forward planning for the needs of our growing population, particularly in the inner city, where we have lots of people moving in and regeneration occurring, with infill developments and apartment living that has not traditionally been seen as a place where families reside but where there are now families residing. Not only has it breathed life into some schools that were struggling; it has now meant that many of those schools are bursting at the seams.

Also in the outer suburbs we saw in electorates like mine complete neglect, particularly in relation to the provision of secondary education in the 3754 postcode, which has a population the size of Shepparton's but actually a much younger population — one of the youngest populations of its size in the state. Because of the neglect of the previous government and its dithering, we actually only have up to year 7 in secondary school provision. It is creating all sorts of

problems because it breaks up sporting teams and breaks up friendship groups of people who have been to local primary schools. They are having to go as far north as Wallan, Kilmore and up to Whittlesea and down to Diamond Valley College at Diamond Creek, to Eltham, to Montmorency, to Greensborough, to Mill Park, to South Morang and to Epping — to absolutely every point of the compass.

We have been left with a travesty of disgraceful disorganisation of school transport as well, so I am really glad to see that the lobbying by the member for Albert Park has resulted in this reservation now being taken up for future educational purposes. The member for Wendouree mentioned some of the changes of land use in Ballarat North, but I would like to particularly mention the component of the bill that refers to permanent reservation of certain land in Wedderburn. This relates to the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute. I am holding a fabulous book that I have borrowed from the parliamentary library entitled *If the Walls Could Speak — A Social History of the Mechanics Institutes of Victoria*, by Pam Baragwanath. The member for Essendon gave us a great little lesson on the history of mechanics institutes and how they were the libraries and sites of education for working men. The member for Eltham said that her grandmother having been born in Wedderburn, she hoped she got some benefit from it; but I also have family located in that area.

My dad was born in Dunolly and used to go to mass in Inglewood, just up the road from Wedderburn, and there are hardly any little towns across this state that do not have these fantastic pieces of our history. Still many are operating to this day, some with similar uses, some with completely different uses.

Pam Baragwanath's book refers to the Wedderburn Literary Institute and Free Library, formerly the Wedderburn Mechanics Institute. It was established in 1859, and the date of the present building is 1863. The book states that:

The Korong Miner's Literary Institute was founded —
in 1859 —

when the committee of 22 applied for a government grant of Crown land. This was successful and the land was permanently reserved on 27 November 1863. Temporary premises of a small slab and bark building were purchased and subscriptions were received. The institute struggled on when the Inglewood and surrounding gold rushes took the local population from the town: the building was becoming dilapidated and the books were wearing out. A building was planned on the same site in 1863, built of brick in 'ionic' style, with granite foundations and seven large plate glass windows.

It is quite amazing that so early in Victoria's colonial history working people were thinking about their education and had a yearning for learning. On the same page in Pam Baragwanath's book there is a reference to the Waterloo (Ripon) Mechanics Institute. A couple of pages on, the Whittlesea Mechanics Institute is mentioned, which is in my electorate. There is also one in Wallan, as well as Warrandyte and Warburton. They do not all begin with 'W', but this is an amazing book.

I got off the train at Flinders Street in recent weeks and ran into a former constituent of mine, a resident of Christmas Hills. He has written a chapter in the updated version of this book about the Christmas Hills Mechanics Institute. I would recommend both the book that is in the current library collection and the updated one. Mechanics institutes really were across Victoria. I know I sound like a bit of a history nerd, but this is a fabulous book. I have asked the parliamentary library to get the updated version so we can all learn about our mechanics institutes.

An honourable member — We can buy it for Christmas.

Ms GREEN — That is a great suggestion — to buy it for Christmas — because there are not enough people reading books, except for children during the Victorian Premiers Reading Challenge. Even grown-ups like us should get away from our fixation with the internet — the interweb — and get back into some good old reading of books.

Collingwood and Collingwood East had their own mechanics institutes. Who knew? There was also Cooramook, Corryong, Condah, Creswick and Cowwarr.

Across the state, mechanics institutes have played a great part in Victoria's history. As well as commending the bill to the house, I commend this fabulous book as a Christmas gift. I suggest to all members that at some stage they should borrow this book and learn about the history of mechanics institutes in their own electorates across the state.

Debate adjourned on motion of Ms GARRETT (Minister for Emergency Services).

Debate adjourned until later this day.

KARDINIA PARK STADIUM BILL 2015*Second reading***Debate resumed from 11 November; motion of Mr EREN (Minister for Sport).**

Mr WALSH (Murray Plains) — It is a pleasure to rise to speak on the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015. The bill establishes the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust, which is tasked with increasing the number and quality of events that are held at Kardinia Park by taking responsibility for the administration and maintenance of the stadium. The bill sets up the framework for the trust to be established. The trust will have the usual functions and responsibilities of trusts that oversee similar sporting grounds, such as the MCG and the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The trust will comprise between five and nine members, including a chairman, who has already been announced as former Premier Steve Bracks. The members will be appointed for three-year terms and can serve a maximum of three consecutive terms. The trust will appoint a chief executive officer who will in turn be responsible for recruiting further staff. The trust will establish and maintain a fund called the Kardinia Park Trust Fund, and this fund will enable the trust to manage its financial accounts in the usual manner.

The Kardinia Park Stadium Trust will control the land set out within the schedules — and there are maps attached to the bill — which effectively means the main oval of Kardinia Park, the associated grandstands and the car parking areas, which are part of the trust land. However, on game day the trust will also take over the management of the entire Kardinia Park complex as it is now known by the people who are there. The day-to-day management of the area outside the stadium will remain with the City of Greater Geelong. This will avoid clashes between other user groups and will allow the best use of the space available for hosting AFL matches and other major events.

The bill also establishes the Kardinia Park advisory committee, which will advise the trust on the management and improvement of Kardinia Park. The members of the advisory committee will be a combination of members of the trust, the CEO of the trust, representatives of the Geelong Football Club, two representatives from user groups within the Kardinia Park precinct, two people nominated by council and other ministerial appointments. The trust will have the power to grant leases of up to 50 years for various tenants that exist within the trust area. There are quite a

range of sporting organisations that hold sporting events in the Kardinia Park area.

For the sake of clarity, I should put on the record that I am a Geelong Football Club member and have been for a number of years. I have been a lifetime supporter of the Geelong Football Club, as has my mother. If I go back to my youth, Polly Farmer and Doug Wade were my football heroes at that time. A lot will be said about the Geelong Football Club in relation to this bill. In recent times the 2007 grand final win was a pleasure. It was the first grand final win after I think 44 years of not having won one. In 2009 the club won the grand final again. Because my mother is elderly and cannot travel well, I sat down and watched it with her. It was a great thrill for her, because she was actually there as a supporter at the 1951 and 1952 grand finals that Geelong won. Fred Flanagan was the captain and Bob Davis, who was known as the Geelong Flyer, was one of the stars. He went on to be an absolutely outstanding character and part of the *World of Sport* team with Lou Richards and company. Geelong has a long history with our family.

The important match that I personally enjoyed going to was the 2011 grand final. I was sitting up in the Southern Stand. As Geelong got further and further in front of Collingwood, it was just fantastic to watch all those Collingwood supporters, who are such poor losers, leave the ground early. From three-quarter time on, half the Collingwood supporters had left the ground. It was really good to beat Collingwood, as everyone loves to, but also to watch those who went away early at that time.

The Geelong Football Club has a very proud and long history. It was formed in July 1859, so it is the second-oldest football club here in Victoria. The Melbourne Football Club is older by only a few months; it was formed in early 1859. Geelong originally played at Argyle Paddock. In 1878 the club moved to Corio Oval, and then in 1941 it moved to Kardinia Park. That was a very challenging time in the history of the club. The Second World War was a challenging time for all of Australia. In 1942 and 1943 the club withdrew from the competition. Because of travel restrictions on people, the club's fans could not come to Melbourne to the football and obviously Melbourne teams could not travel to Geelong. Also, with a number of players overseas serving in the armed forces, the club did not have teams. Apart from those two years, the club has a very long and proud history in the Victorian Football League and the Australian Football League.

Two former Geelong players have had distinguished careers in this place. The first was Neil Trezise, who was known as Nipper. He was part of the team in 1951 and 1952 when my mother went to watch the grand final matches. He served as an MP here for 28 years and 10 of those years as a minister. His son Ian served in this place for a number of years during the time that I have been a member. Nipper played 185 games for Geelong and kicked 272 goals between 1949 and 1959 and, as I said, he played in the 1951 and 1952 premiership teams. Following his retirement in 1959, when he was captain of the team, he went on to serve the club as a coach of the reserves side and he became the club president in 1974. He had a proud history with Geelong, and he served in this place, as did his son. They have been an outstanding family in the Geelong area.

The other notable member of Parliament who played with Geelong is currently a member of the upper house, Damian Drum, a member for Northern Victoria Region. He played 63 games with Geelong between 1982 and 1989 and kicked 34 goals. He started out with the no. 43 jumper but ended up with the no. 29 jumper. I suppose one of Drummy's famous stories is that he would have been in the 1989 grand final against Hawthorn, which we sadly lost, but he did a hammy in the preliminary final and could not play. We all know the jokes about pulling a hammy and not being available, but I am sure that Drummy would have been absolutely determined to be in that team if he could have been. After his career with Geelong he went on to take up a coaching position with Port Melbourne. Then he moved to Sydney as assistant coach to Ron Barassi for a number of years before going on to Fremantle as a coach over there for three years. After his three years at Fremantle he came back to Bendigo to coach the Bendigo Diggers, and that is where we recruited him from to be a politician, the role that he now fills so outstandingly.

It is always interesting to look back at the history of what we are talking about in a bill, in this case Geelong and the Geelong Football Club, but especially the people involved and those who have connections with this place, because in a lot of ways Parliament is a microcosm of the society that people come here to represent.

The bill provides for the appointment of people to the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust. As I said, one is Steve Bracks, a former Premier of Victoria, an outstanding representative of the state and a very passionate Geelong supporter. If you think about the people who have been in this place and could equally serve in the role of chairman of the trust, I suppose you would think

of Ted Baillieu, another former Premier who is also a very passionate Geelong supporter. Ted used to talk about his father going down the old Melbourne-Geelong Road years ago, when he was a little tacker, and taking him to the football down there, and he is always going to the football there. Former Premier Denis Naphine is also a Geelong supporter, as is Terry Mulder. Robert Doyle, who was a Leader of the Opposition in this place, is a supporter. If you go to the Labor side of politics, you see Rob Hulls quite often at the football down there, and Tim Holding is also a supporter.

If you look at the recent history of the Geelong Football Club, the developments at Kardinia Park and the evolution into Skilled Stadium and now Simonds Stadium, you see a couple of constants involved there who are very important to acknowledge. They include Frank Costa as the president of the Geelong Football Club; Brian Cook, who was recruited and has now been a long-term CEO of the club; and Colin Carter, who is now the president. Frank and Brian brought a lot of the football success and also a lot of business success to Geelong. The development that we have seen at Kardinia Park and the new development that was funded by the current government is a testament to the success of that team and what they have been able to achieve over that particular time. Those who have been to a night match at Simonds Stadium will know that the lights are fantastic. They certainly stand out on the Geelong skyline when a night game is being played there.

The opposition is obviously not opposing this particular piece of legislation.

Ms Asher interjected.

Mr WALSH — Coming from an Essendon supporter!

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr WALSH — There is nothing like those who do not barrack for Geelong, is there?

The issues into the future will be the challenges. The MCG trust outsources the management of the MCG and Yarra Park to the Melbourne Cricket Club, and there are leases for the Melbourne Football Club and other users of the oval. I suppose for the members of the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust the challenges will be who they appoint to manage that area and how they attract additional events to make sure they have the money to do the things they want to do into the future. There is a small budget allocation for the management of the trust, but there will obviously be a need for a

greater income into the future. There will be some challenges for the members of the trust as to how they make sure the area is successful and continues to grow.

As I understand it, the council is putting \$6 million into stage 4 of the development so that it can go ahead, but that also means that it will withdraw from contributing to any recurrent expenditure in the Kardinia Park Stadium precinct. It will retain the maintenance and the operation of the areas outside the defined area on non-AFL and major event days.

The trust members will have a big job in making sure they raise the additional revenue and that they get other major events there, apart from Geelong home ground games. There is talk about T20 cricket matches and soccer matches. Obviously there will be talk about rock concerts and other public events. We wish them well in their role in the future to make sure that precinct maintains its pre-eminent position in the Geelong community. I wish the bill a speedy passage.

Ms COUZENS (Geelong) — I am pleased to rise to speak on the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015. The bill fulfils the government's commitment to establish a state trust to manage and preserve Kardinia Park's Simonds Stadium. I congratulate the Minister for Sport for the work he has done to make this happen. The bill's underlying objective is to contribute to the economy, community and livability of the Geelong region and the state through the improved use of the stadium. The stadium has been under-utilised, and with a fast-growing population in Geelong we need to have these facilities far better used than what they have been. We have had a lot of missed opportunities and we want to try to avoid that. I think the trust will see things flow much better than they have in the past. The bill also provides added job opportunities for people in Geelong. As I said, we are a growing community, so those job opportunities will be welcomed by the people of Geelong. The establishment of the trust will ensure a more strategic approach to the development and use of the stadium and will increase opportunities to attract events to the Geelong region. The bill facilitates a long-term objective for the trust to control all of Kardinia Park, except for Kardinia pool and the senior citizens centre.

Kardinia Park was first proclaimed a public park in 1872, so it has a long history. Kardinia is an Aboriginal word meaning 'sunrise'. Kardinia Park is of course home to the mighty Cats, of which Geelong is very proud. Geelong Football Club was established in July 1859, making it the second oldest continuously existing club of any code in the world. Geelong Football Club has not always been based at Kardinia Park. The club

experienced a number of changes, moving to Corio oval from the Argyle paddock in 1878 and becoming known as the Pivotonians. Prior to this the Geelong Football Club had been known as the Seagulls, with the dark blue-and-white striped uniform representing the blue water of Corio Bay and the white seagulls that inhabited the area. The club moved from Corio oval to Kardinia Park at the start of the 1941 season. We all know that a past member of this place, Nipper Trezise, was also a Cats player. We heard a bit about that earlier in the debate.

What we now see today at Kardinia Park is the development of a state-of-the-art stadium, with a \$70 million upgrade which has now begun and which will include the Sunrise rehabilitation centre. This of course brings economic activity into Geelong and more jobs not only in construction but also at the ongoing Simonds Stadium.

Of course Kardinia Park is not just home to the Cats. It is also home to many other sporting and community groups with a long history. Kardinia Park also has an open-air public swimming pool, the Kardinia Senior Citizens Centre, the Geelong Netball Association, the Geelong Cricket Club, St Mary's Football Club and the Geelong Umpires League. Community groups also have access to the community centre that was built as part of the Bracks and Brumby governments' commitment to Simonds Stadium. All of these groups play a vital role in our community. They have all been consulted about the introduction of the trust.

Concerns were raised by community sporting groups about what impact it would have on them and whether they would be moved or there would be some sort of change in their use of the facilities. However, they have been consulted and are now happy with what has happened. The trust will be of great benefit to them, and their concerns have been allayed at this point. Kardinia Park is a valued asset to the Geelong community. However it has been under-utilised and has great potential to provide more events and activities in Geelong, which again will create jobs and improve our economy. There have been many missed opportunities. I believe the trust will provide a lot of benefits for local sporting clubs and the local community.

The bill creates a new principal act and establishes the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust with appropriate functions and powers. This will ensure better community access and greater opportunity for major events. The trust will be required to provide a business plan each year, which will include information about how its planned activities will contribute to the economy, community and livability of the Geelong region and the state.

Sport plays such an important role in our community. We know that young people need to be engaged in the community, and sporting clubs do a pretty amazing job in that area. But if we are holding major events, it is important that young people are included; they deserve to be a part of them. Too many young people are disenfranchised. We need to encourage them to get involved in their community and their community sporting clubs. By the time we are finished with Kardinia Park, hopefully young people will feel a part of it and will be able to participate in some of the major events that occur there; they may never have had that opportunity before.

The trust will support major events, not only AFL games but also events like the T20 big bash, the National Rugby League, Super XV Rugby, A League soccer, concerts and all sorts of other activities. This is an exciting opportunity for Geelong, and I know that the people of Geelong are feeling very excited about the opportunities that are coming their way.

Tourism opportunities will also provide an enormous boost for Geelong. With Jetstar at Avalon Airport running flights from Sydney and the Gold Coast and, as announced today, from Hobart and Adelaide, this will provide real opportunities for people to come to Geelong from those different states for not only AFL games but also major events. I am sure that at some stage in the future Jetstar and Avalon will be looking at packaging some of those opportunities for people to fly into Avalon and get a bus or train down to Kardinia Park for events, concerts, AFL games or for whatever is happening there at the time. That is going to create lots of opportunities. It will bring people into Geelong. I know we have more people going out of Geelong on holidays with the introduction of the new flights, but bringing people into Geelong is just as important, and perhaps more so, because we can package some of those opportunities and have people travel down to Kardinia Park to attend those events. Of course they will use our motels, our restaurants and all the facilities in Geelong that help keep jobs in Geelong and also create jobs.

The bill provides for the trust to take control of further areas of the park on event days through event management declarations made by the Governor in Council. This will ensure that events can be delivered in an efficient, integrated and safe way, consistent with current practice. Being able to have parking facilities, for example, available on the day is really important. People do drive to Kardinia Park and there are buses going into it. We need to provide safe parking and pedestrian facilities, so the bill allows the trust to take

into account all those facilities that are required when a major event is occurring.

The bill will revoke the permanent reservations over all parcels of land in Kardinia Park that are permanently reserved and temporarily re-reserve the land for the same purposes. This will facilitate extension of the trust land in future. The trust will be responsible for the Kardinia Park trust land, which is defined as the Kardinia Park Stadium land and any land set out in a Kardinia Park trust land order. The Governor in Council, on the recommendation of the minister administering the Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978, will be able to make an order specifying that the land shown on plan 504 is Kardinia Park Stadium land. This land comprises the stadium and adjacent land, including car parking areas. The Governor in Council will also be able to make one or more orders specifying that further land in Kardinia Park is Kardinia Park trust land.

This is an exciting time for Geelong, and I am pleased that the Andrews government is delivering on this important commitment. I know that the people of Geelong appreciate what the Andrews government has done in putting the trust in place. It takes the responsibility away from the Greater Geelong City Council and puts it in the hands of a more independent trust that can not only run Simonds Stadium — —

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms Edwards) — Order! The honourable member's time has expired.

Mr KATOS (South Barwon) — It is my pleasure to rise this evening to make a contribution in the debate on the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015 and to continue the tradition of all speakers on this bill being Geelong supporters, as all three have been so far. I cannot see who is speaking next for the government, but I hope it is a Geelong supporter.

Kardinia Park, as most people would know, has been known as many things over many years. It has been known as Shell oval or Shell Stadium, from memory, and then Skilled Stadium. Simonds is now the sponsor but everyone in Geelong always knows it as Kardinia Park. Back in the days when I was a boy you were allowed to play in the foundations of the new stand being built on game day. You would not be able to do that now, but I remember playing in the foundations of the Reg Hickey Stand when it was under construction. That stand was recently knocked down to make way for the new Players Stand.

The ground has seen significant investment over the years from all governments, which has been fantastic for the stadium, with the new Reg Hickey Stand on the

Moorabool Street side, the Players Stand that I have mentioned, the Premiership Stand and the lights that the federal government contributed to. Stage 4 has seen the old Brownlow Stand, or the second reincarnation of the Brownlow Stand, being knocked down with the social club. I am not displeased to see the old social club go. It had some of the most tired and dated facilities at the ground. I was previously a member of the social club, but as my boys grow up they want to come along to the football. The social club is not really appropriate for 10 and 12-year-olds so I now have some seats in the new Players Stand.

There has been significant investment in the ground over the years, and the present government made a commitment to establish the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust. As previous speakers have said, the stadium and what was Kardinia Park as a whole was previously managed by the City of Greater Geelong, and I will touch on that a bit later in my contribution. The stated purpose of the trust is to increase the number and quality of events. The bill provides for a framework to establish the trust, which will continue the usual functions of a trust, much like the Melbourne Cricket Club or the Sydney Cricket Ground trusts, for example, where the trust has responsibility to oversee the running of the operations of the ground.

The trust itself will comprise between five and nine members appointed for three-year terms for a maximum of three consecutive terms. As has been said, former Premier Steve Bracks has been appointed as the inaugural chair of that trust, and I am sure he will do a good job. He is another Geelong supporter. It is good to have Geelong supporters running the show. We do not want to let in any of the heathens who barrack for other clubs. I have just offended half the Parliament! Anyway, Steve is very well respected and I am sure he will make a good chair. The trust will also appoint a CEO and that CEO will in turn be responsible for recruiting staff.

As I said earlier, the City of Greater Geelong was previously responsible for the maintenance of the entire ground. Now what will happen is that apart from on match days, when obviously the ground and the car park need to be under the control of the trust, the trust will be responsible for the area that basically goes along the line of the stadium, although it goes along the fence line of Kardinia pool and includes the car park on the western side of the Premiership Stand, up towards St Mary's Oval and back around the northern end of the ground. The trust will be responsible for the maintenance of that area, including the maintenance of the stands and obviously the playing surface.

The City of Greater Geelong will have the Geelong Cricket Club, the netball courts, the St Mary's football ground and the Kardinia pool. The senior citizens centre on Moorabool Street has been excised, and rightly so. It is fair that the City of Greater Geelong maintain that much. It is quite logical. At first there was an attempt to make the City of Greater Geelong contribute a bit more than it needed to. There was a request that the city contribute towards the maintenance of the stadium, but in the end common sense prevailed. It was very unfair to ask the City of Greater Geelong to maintain a stadium that it was no longer the landlord of. It was not responsible for the stadium, so the attempt to get the city to pay for it was a bit cheeky. Common sense prevailed after a bit of public pressure. Basically the stadium will now be maintained by the trust and the City of Greater Geelong will maintain the surrounding infrastructure, which is quite logical.

Mr McGuire interjected.

Mr KATOS — The member for Broadmeadows interjects, but that is what was originally put. There was an attempt to get the city to pay for more and for the upkeep of the stadium as well. With the stadium not being the city's responsibility anymore, it was only fair that the trust maintain the stadium but that the remainder of Kardinia Park — which includes the netball courts, the St Mary's football ground, the pool and the cricket ground — is maintained by the City of Greater Geelong. Just as it would have been illogical and unfair to ask the trust to pay for those facilities, it would not have been fair to ask the City of Greater Geelong to pay for the maintenance of the stadium itself.

I note there are some budget allocations for the trust — \$600 000 in the 2015–16 year; \$1.1 million and \$1.3 million rising to \$1.4 million — so there will be some taxpayer money going in for ongoing costs. But the whole point of the trust, and how it will pay for itself, is that it needs to start attracting events. That is the stated purpose of the trust. It perhaps needs to start attracting other AFL teams to play there. It might make Geelong supporters cringe to have another AFL team playing on our home ground, but if taxpayer dollars are going to be invested in the ground, then it is logical to use the facilities more extensively. If we were to get another AFL team, a T20 side —

Mr McGuire — Which team?

Mr KATOS — The member for Broadmeadows asked, 'Which team?'. No-one has made that decision yet but that is something for the trust. If you are talking about proximity, probably the most logical team would

be Footscray — or the Western Bulldogs as it is known these days — which would have the next closest fan base to Kardinia Park, but that is something for the trust to go out and actively pursue. That is what it needs to do.

Whether it is another AFL side, recruiting a T20 side, getting A-league soccer, getting Rugby Union or Rugby League games played, and also potentially hosting concerts and other events, I think it will be incumbent on the new trust to actively go out and pursue these other activities for the stadium. Basically the trust will need to start paying for itself. I do not think taxpayers would expect to be continually subsidising the operations of the ground. The trust should start paying for itself by actively seeking out and attracting new events and new teams to Kardinia Park, but more so to Simonds Stadium, which the trust is now responsible for.

Mr McGuire interjected.

Mr KATOS — I am pleased that the member for Broadmeadows is in agreement with me; I do not often get that from Frank. I thank him for his support of this bill. This was a commitment that the Labor Party took to the state election, so it is fulfilling its election commitment. As the lead speaker for the coalition, the member for Murray Plains said we are not opposing the bill. I just wanted to ask those few questions. Perhaps some of the government members could enlighten me about where the future funding will come from and what events it will attract. With those comments, I commend the bill to the house.

Mr CARBINES (Ivanhoe) — I would like to start with a quote from the second-reading speech of the member for Lara, the Minister for Sport.

Kardinia Park Stadium is an important sport venue in a great Victorian city — Geelong — and the home of an outstanding football club, the Geelong Football Club.

The government made a commitment to establish a state trust to manage and preserve the stadium, and elevate it to a more fitting status where it can officially stand alongside the Melbourne Cricket Ground as one of Australia's great sporting arenas.

The Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015 delivers on that commitment —

along with the government's \$70 million contribution.

The trust will not only meet an election commitment from the Andrews government but will also meet a commitment from the Andrews government to grow and to invest in Geelong's economy and livability and in significant sporting, cultural and community

activities that can be at the hub of Kardinia Park. That is what we want to grow in the Geelong region. This bill gives effect to the government's commitment to invest not only in Kardinia Park but also in the legislative framework for the trust, an election commitment that has been affirmed very broadly by the people of Geelong.

For the trust to have broader control of the Kardinia Park precinct has been a long-term objective and will provide a lot of benefits, which I would like to outline. Firstly, I acknowledge the chair of the steering committee appointed back in January of this year, the Honourable Steve Bracks, a former Premier. As a lifelong Cats supporter and club member, Steve Bracks is known for his commitment to consultation and to picking up, delivering and affirming the support that he had in the Victorian community election after election. He could not be a more fitting choice. He has come back ahead of the time that was set for him by the government earlier this year to recommend to the government legislation introduced into the house this year.

Mr McGuire — He would've been better in New York than Joe Hockey.

Mr CARBINES — That is true. He would make a much better representative in New York than former federal Treasurer Joe Hockey, as the member for Broadmeadows said. When stage 4 of the stadium is complete, it will have a capacity of some 36 000 people. That of course is too big for a local council to administer. That is in part why the trust is being created. Consistent management practices are required, as is improved communication with stakeholders and better coordination on days when major events are held at the stadium. There need to be very clear lines of accountability. The council acknowledges that effectiveness and efficiency and has been part of the decision around one entity managing all of Kardinia Park. Before that happens, however, there needs to be agreement between other stakeholders on a range of issues, and I will go to those issues in my contribution.

Among many other commitments that the government has made, this project — the commitment to stage 4 of the Kardinia Park stadium redevelopment — will see the creation of some 90 jobs during construction and 320 ongoing positions. I would like to speak more broadly to place in context my comments in relation to support for this bill that sets up the Kardinia Park trust. Speaking broadly we have a long history with community development, the stakeholders in and the development of Kardinia Park. I put on the record and

declare my interest as a Geelong Football Club social club member for the past 24 years. I was a junior member for many years before that. I certainly look forward to the redevelopment of the Jennings stand for social club members. I am showing my age, but I remember back to around 1992 when the Brownlow stand, which we recently saw being pulled down, was first opened by Geelong AFL premiership player and legend, former member for North Geelong and sports and recreation minister, Neil 'Nipper' Trezise. I remember being at a game when he, along with former Premier Joan Kirner, opened the Brownlow stand. We remember their contribution not only to the Kardinia Park redevelopment as it was then, but also to Victoria more generally. We remember them today.

I am a lifelong Geelong supporter, and I remember — everyone has their memories of these things — that our ancestors came off a boat from Cornwall back in the 1800s to set up and establish an undertaker's business in Geelong. One of my great memories — —

Honourable members interjecting.

Mr CARBINES — It was always a thriving industry. Let me assure members of that. Having three generations of our family at Geelong games at Kardinia Park has certainly been a memorable highlight for me over the years. As a former journalist at the *Geelong Advertiser* I remember reporting many times on the redevelopment phases at Kardinia Park. I remember between 1995 and 2000, when I worked at the paper, the former member for South Barwon, Michael Crutchfield, who was also a former City of Greater Geelong councillor for the Kardinia ward as it was then, certainly led a lot of the redevelopment consultation work at Kardinia Park in those days.

In fact my father, Shane Carbines, in his role as chair of the Geelong Football Umpires League, which shares space at the Kardinia Park precinct, has also worked with consultation committees that have been involved in redevelopment at Kardinia Park. The Geelong Football Umpires League provides officials right across the three Geelong leagues.

The point I make is that decades on and for many years there has always been great redevelopment of the Kardinia Park precinct, and it has always been critical that there is strong consultation so that all members of the sporting and cultural institutions of Geelong have an opportunity to contribute and to see the Geelong Football Club not as Big Brother but as a leader in such a way that all clubs, big and small — as the member for Geelong mentioned — can benefit from the work at Kardinia Park. We need to make sure their voices are

heard, considered and represented in the Kardinia Park trust.

I also put on the record that credit needs to go to the Cats CEO, Brian Cook, past president Frank Costa and the current president, Colin Carter. I well remember the Geelong Football Club being on its knees back in more difficult times, when not only were we losing CEOs — a revolving door of those — but we even lost a club captain. Times were very difficult, but we have come a long way, and three premierships in modern times is not the end of that story.

Redevelopment at and investment in Kardinia Park and the success of not only the football club but the whole Kardinia Park precinct brings cultural and community benefits for everybody in Geelong. A strong football club in Geelong and a strong, well-managed governance plan for leadership, community inclusion and development at the Kardinia Park trust will go a long way towards ensuring that future developments at Kardinia Park benefit the people of Geelong for a long time to come.

I also acknowledge the G21 in Geelong and its CEO, a former member of the other place, Elaine Carbines, for their work and great advocacy right across Geelong to secure ongoing funding for the Kardinia Park project and also for their work to make sure that the Kardinia Park trust and the way in which that has developed will ensure that the people of Geelong have a voice.

Keeping on a positive note, you cannot miss the fact that recent reporting by the *Geelong Advertiser*, that great journal of record that recently celebrated its 175th anniversary — Victoria's oldest regional daily morning newspaper — touched on the fact that there have been some strange moves from the City of Greater Geelong. There were a fair few pea-and-thimble tricks early on, where it tried to work around, obfuscate and bring uncertainty to this project. There have been many headlines in relation to these projects. On 29 July an article had the subheading, 'Cash deadline — Cats say council must pay up or stadium upgrade goes on hold'. Another article from 3 August described it as a matter of survival for the Geelong Football Club, with the club stating that there would be cost blowouts of up to \$3 million if the project were delayed by one year. But I am very pleased that the *Geelong Advertiser* of 2 September reports:

Cats chief Brian Cook declared the project a goer last night after securing the final \$6 million needed for the \$89 million project ...

Councillors voted unanimously to amend conditions they imposed last week when they first promised to chip in \$6 million to the project.

I think it is a fitting tribute not only to the member for Geelong but certainly also to the member for Lara, who is able to serve as the Minister for Sport in the Andrews Labor government and to deliver a project in his community, along with the member for Geelong and the member for Bellarine. It is a fantastic contribution they are leading in that city, certainly with the work that has been done to make sure that this trust delivers a voice for Geelong into the future.

Mr HIBBINS (Prahran) — I rise to speak on behalf of the Greens in the debate on the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015. I am the first Greens speaker, but unfortunately I am the first non-Cats supporter to speak on this bill. I barrack for the Bombers — third generation. Before I start, I will mention that the member for Ivanhoe reminded me of a story. I could very easily have been a Geelong supporter. My grandfather lived in the Geelong area and started off being a Geelong supporter, but he eventually moved and worked at a factory in Abbotsford which was owned by the director of the Essendon Football Club, and many of the Essendon players worked there. Essentially you did not have a social life with your workmates unless you went to the Bombers' games. That is how we became Bombers supporters, and I am very supportive of them.

As has been outlined by previous speakers, this bill establishes the Kardinia Park Stadium Trust to take over the operations of the Kardinia Park stadium and surrounding areas from the local council. We are broadly supportive of the principle of having independent state management of that stadium. As mentioned by the member for South Barwon, there are funds for the trust from the government, but it is important that the trust be self-funding and self-sufficient in that regard.

We have a very good history of world-class sporting facilities and sporting stadiums in Melbourne. I love sports and new stadiums, and it is great to see that Geelong now has games under lights, but it seems as though with every election, state and federal, we see money being poured into the Kardinia Park stadium. I really think it is time we had a critical look at how we fund sports and sports infrastructure in Victoria. We need to make sure we are getting the balance right between our major sports, our league sports, our community sports, participation, which sports get funded and which facilities get funded.

Just having a cursory glance through this year's state budget, I note that there is \$70 million in it for Simonds Stadium, and I note that there is a community benefit element there, with, I think, a disability service being

housed there. There is \$15 million for Eureka Stadium. There is the Junction Oval upgrade. There is the grand prix, which of course costs us about \$60 million each year. If we look at community side of things for new initiatives, there is about \$100 million for the Community Sports Infrastructure Fund and then some other programs for another few million dollars. I am sure there are probably some other things in there I have missed out.

I just point out these things. We have around \$100 million for community sports. We have these other programs totalling up to \$100 million plus for major sports. I just question whether we are getting the balance right, and I really do think it is time for us to have a real, critical look at how we fund sports in Victoria.

In 2009 the Independent Sport Panel, chaired by David Crawford, published a report on the structure and programs of the elite sport system and recommended an increased focus on participation and physical activity. Although the Crawford report was made at the federal level, there are lessons for the states. The report was controversial at that time because it questioned the medal-tally focus of how we fund sports. The panel argued for a greater focus on lifetime participation and sport's health benefits.

A number of studies in the public domain question the purported economic benefits of major events and sporting stadiums. A case in point is the Formula 1 Australian Grand Prix, which now costs taxpayers over \$60 million a year, or half a billion dollars over its lifetime. The grand prix corporation refuses to count or publish attendance figures, and Victorians have never seen a benefit-cost analysis of the event, so we have to question the economic and other intangible benefits of some of the funding for sports and not necessarily take them as a given. I think we have to take a rigorous and critical look at those areas.

When determining infrastructure funding and recurrent sports funding we need to look at the shift towards community sporting infrastructure. Community sport is an absolutely vital plank in preventative health, in keeping people healthy and active and in supporting the community.

Speaking as the member for Prahran and from an inner city perspective, my electorate has a problem with population growth. People are moving back into the inner city, but there is no space for new sporting facilities and existing facilities are at breaking point. As a case in point, there has been an increase in the number of people playing netball in Prahran but there are only

two courts, one of which is undersized. It is a real challenge trying to find the space for full-size netball courts that can serve the community.

I was a bit disappointed that inner city netball funding does not include the City of Stonnington, so I urge the government to widen the scope of that program. I suggest that we need to have needs-based transparent funding for community sports, just as we have for health and education, so that we know where the demand is so that funds flow to where they are needed.

I have raised another issue about sporting funding — that is, the need to diversify major sports infrastructure and elite sports. Having visited the Victorian Institute of Sport in Albert Park, I know that there is a case for greater recurrent funding for the institute and for support for elite athletes, who have to rely on scholarships and support to fund their endeavours.

When I look at the Toorak Park precinct in Prahran I see a precinct with men's district cricket, women's district cricket, the biggest junior footy club in Victoria and some netball teams. That area is ripe for a facility which would not only serve elite sportspeople but facilitate the movement from community sport all the way up to elite level and lifetime participation.

There is another issue we need to look at in terms of sports funding — that is, support for women's elite sport. There is a huge pay disparity between men and women in sport. I was shocked to find out that netballers who play at the highest level are not fully professional.

Ms Ward interjected.

Mr HIBBINS — I admit it was incredible. I felt a bit silly at the time when I was talking to them when they said, 'By the way, we still have to work for a living'. They are playing in front of big crowds, but they still have to work to support themselves. We have seen the Matildas go into battle with Football Federation Australia to receive better pay.

Women cricketers have started the Women's Big Bash League, which has to be played over a longer period of time because games have to be played on weekends because women cricketers have to work during the week.

Hopefully a women's Australian football league will start up soon. My hot tip is that it will be the sleeping giant of Australian sport; I can see it really taking off. At present women footballers have to pay to have their games broadcast, so we really need to look at the disparity between women's and men's elite sport. For

all the issues that I have raised, I am not suggesting that we pull out a chequebook and say, 'Here's the money to solve the problem'. Again, we need to have a critical analysis of how we fund sport in Victoria.

The AFL is certainly the leader in Australian sport, if not international sport, in how it runs things, but this bill shows that the state government is contributing a lot to support the AFL, which in turn supports community sports facilities. I would like to see the Victorian people get a real dividend for that support.

Around grand final time this year I raised the fact that AFL club members only get a 30 per cent allocation of tickets for the grand final. At the start of the footy season a lot of time and effort is put into convincing supporters to sign up to be AFL club members. The clubs rely on members financially, so there is a lot of emphasis put on membership at the start of the year. But come the end of the year, if you are lucky enough for your team to make the grand final, suddenly you are left high and dry without a ticket or having to spend inordinate amounts to get one of the 25 per cent or so of tickets that are available for corporate packages.

Some people end up having to pay \$1000 or so, if they can afford it, which I think is very disappointing and particularly galling. The game may be sold out or the allocation exhausted, yet there are still advertisements up saying, 'Buy your tickets! Buy your corporate package!'. I would like to see the AFL step up and come into line with other major sporting events, such as the Football Association Challenge Cup and the Champions League Final, and have a majority of their tickets available to club members. I would like to see the sports minister use his powers under the Major Sporting Events Act 2009 to ensure that the ticket scheme for the grand final increases by over 50 per cent — if not doubles to 60 000 — the number of tickets available to AFL club members.

The Greens are not opposing this bill, but I suggest that we need to have a critical look at how we fund sport in this state. The Greens have a number of issues that I have outlined about community sport, elite sport, the demand for local sportsgrounds and supporting elite sportspeople and what the state of Victoria gets in return.

I note that the sport and recreation strategy is due to expire in 2015. If we are looking to have a new strategy, then we could develop open, transparent and needs-based funding arrangements for both community and elite sports in Victoria.

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water) — It is a real pleasure to have an opportunity to make a contribution to the debate on the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015. It may come as a surprise to everyone in the chamber, but I am fully supporting this bill — surprise, surprise! It is interesting to listen to the member for Prahran, who spoke about pouring money into Geelong. Absolutely! Something that I have been very proud of over the whole time that I have been in Parliament is being able to secure funding for all stages of the stadium rebuild, and \$70 million will provide a significant addition to the Kardinia Park Stadium.

This is much more than just a football stadium. This is an opportunity to ensure that we continue to have a regional footy team in Victoria, and that is critical. It is an opportunity to make sure that we have not built a white elephant, because unless we finish this stadium, ultimately we will always risk the AFL pulling the games out of Geelong. It is such an important asset for the community, whether it is for football, whether it supports opportunities for further sport to be played and further events to be held on the ground — all the junior finals get held there and kids get to play on it all the time.

We have got the Sports House there, and that plays a really important role. My son was lucky to be picked to be part of one of the programs there, for golf. It runs development programs to support young people throughout Geelong, whether it is in soccer, basketball or individual sports like golf, because we know that one of the biggest issues for people in regional Victoria is their ability to access elite sport support. If you are in Melbourne, you do pretty well. You have a whole lot of competitions you can be part of and a much clearer structure in terms of training and coaching, and that has been one of the issues that regional Victoria has struggled with. So the support programs that are run out of and based in the stadium have been an important contribution towards assisting a number of sportspeople from Geelong and the region to have an opportunity to compete nationally and also internationally.

In addition to that, this part of the development will see the Sunrise rehabilitation centre, which will be a significant contribution, given that Geelong is now very well placed in terms of the national disability insurance scheme, the Transport Accident Commission and WorkCover to play a leadership role in rehabilitation support and recovery services. Sunrise rehabilitation centre will provide practical support as well as being in a position to develop and grow best practice across the rest of the state in relation to rehabilitation support and services.

As I said, it is much more than just supporting a stadium for football. This is an asset for the Geelong community that you can see from almost anywhere. That says it all about how significant this stadium is to the Geelong community. Whether you are in Leopold or you are coming in from the city — although unfortunately occasionally the Geelong Library and Heritage Centre, which looks like a soccer or golf ball, blocks the view of some of the lights — the lights in this stadium are such a critical part of the culture of the city of Geelong and its future. This is an investment in the future of Geelong and in confidence in Geelong as well.

Because this is a major project, we have also said there will be requirements around local procurement and content in the building of it. Again, a community that has suffered significant job losses has an opportunity through big projects like that, but also through the rebuilding of the Geelong Performing Arts Centre — another \$30 million project. These projects will assist in keeping the economy moving and growing in Geelong, and that is so important as well.

When we made the announcement around this \$70 million package, we announced both the football stadium and the Geelong Performing Arts Centre, because we think both of these things — sport and the arts — are so critical to a regional city like Geelong. Really in a sense it was a statement to say both are critical, each is as important as the other and we want to support the soul of Geelong as much as the culture of Geelong. Both of these announcements go to doing that.

On top of that we have also made some significant commitments to sports in our local communities. Just in my area, for example, when we were last in government we funded the rebuilding of the football stadium and the clubrooms at the Queenscliff Community Sports Club, and we have provided the funding to the Borough of Queenscliffe. We are now looking at supporting both cricket and netball, including improving the netball facilities, which left a lot to be desired. I have spent a bit of time there with some of the netballers from Queenscliff, and they are absolutely thrilled that they will get new courts and new clubrooms as a result of our commitment.

We committed to the Barwon Heads Cricket Club, and we committed to the Barwon Heads Football and Netball Club. Again, the primary use of that will be for the netball facilities, which are massively important in a town like Barwon Heads and becoming more so because of the development of Armstrong Creek. We committed to an Ocean Grove sports facility, which is

almost complete. The commitment we have made is to a particular enhancement of those facilities for both netball and football, so again trying to support the range of sports and communities in that area.

Yesterday I announced the bringing forward of our money for the Drysdale sporting hub, which will see a home for soccer and a potential home for netball and also additional training grounds for footy, cricket and soccer — a great announcement. Another election commitment was to the Leopold Football Netball Club, and again the priority there is improving the netball facilities at the club.

We have made significant contributions to local community sporting clubs because we know how critical they are to those local towns. Particularly in a seat like Bellarine, each individual town is very competitive. The Drysdale versus Ocean Grove footy fight is well attended each year, and the Barwon Heads versus Ocean Grove match is pretty competitive as well, as they cross over that bridge. That is one of the highlights of the year, and it is similarly so in netball. Sport is really important to those local communities, and these investments we are making in keeping football alive and recognising the importance of the Kardinia Park Stadium through this legislation will ensure that both at a local and regional level sport and culture will remain critical parts of our community in Geelong.

This is an important step forward towards making sure that this stadium is well managed and has the capacity to reach out and provide other activities to a broader range of people in the community. Unfortunately it has been under-utilised. Establishing the trust is all about how we use it not just for footy but also for other opportunities and to drive this redevelopment. It is going to be a really exciting day. You may have seen, Acting Speaker, that the stand is all gone — your members' stand has disappeared completely — and they are moving really quickly. We are getting jobs on the ground, we are starting the process of building this part of the stadium and we are starting the process of rebuilding in our local communities as well. It is really good news, and I am really proud that we are pouring more money into Geelong, because it is really important to support our regional communities.

Mr PEARSON (Essendon) — I would like to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Kardinia Park Stadium Bill 2015. I note that in his contribution the member for South Barwon questioned the financial viability of the trust beyond the forward estimates. He seemed to have some concerns about how the trust will function in the future. It is clear that the trust has been

funded over the course of the forward estimates, but the reality is that, as you would expect with any trust entrusted with the obligation to run a solvent, viable, strategically focused organisation, it will work on a business model and financial model to attract more events to the region and thereby strengthen its financial future. You would expect that the trust would do that in consultation with the Department of Health and Human Services as well as Sport and Recreation Victoria and other relevant stakeholders.

The bill is important because it was not that long ago that there was a great deal of chatter about the idea of the Geelong Football Club relocating to the Docklands stadium and no longer playing home games in Geelong. If that had occurred, it would have had such a crushing impact on the town of Geelong. The only reason it did not happen was the work of three great people inside the organisation in the first instance. They were Frank Costa, the then president, Brian Cook, the CEO Frank recruited, and Stuart Fox, who headed stadium operations. Those three gentlemen worked together assiduously to try to get the club back in the black and to focus on its vision and to create a narrative with which they engaged the government. That was the foundation of the original investment by the Bracks government, which was supported by the then Liberal opposition.

I have known Frank Costa for 15 years, and he is an outstanding man. I think he is the nearest thing I have seen to Cosimo Medici. Frank Costa is the Cosimo Medici of Geelong. Here is an outstanding man. He is a true leader. He is self-effacing. He is passionate. He is determined. He is focused. He is outstanding. He is a great man. When you get to know a person for a length of time, and when you meet with them in different settings and at different events, there are times when you come away and think that they were a bit flat, they were off their game or that maybe you were wrong about that person. The wonderful thing about Frank is that in my dealings with him I have always come away uplifted.

Frank believes in hope. He is always optimistic and passionate. He is passionate about his town, he is passionate about his club and he is passionate about his family. He is passionate about his faith. I am an atheist so a lot of that stuff did not resonate with me, but I respect the fact that he is extremely passionate about his Catholicism. He is a great man. You could say in one respect that he should be draped in purple, hoisted aloft in a sedan chair and carried triumphantly around the ground, and then we should rename the ground the Costa-sseum.

There is the question of why the government should be investing in this sort of infrastructure. The reality is that it is a key economic driver. By making this sort of investment, rather than having the club being mendicant towards Colonial Stadium as it then was, or Etihad Stadium as it is now — ‘Please, sir, can I have a greater share of the gate takings?’ — Geelong became the master of its own destiny. As a consequence it has greater and stricter control over the revenue aspects of the ground and its operations, so it can increase the yield and therefore increase the solvency of the operation.

The reality is that for a while it was touch and go as to whether the Geelong Football Club would survive. If the government had not stepped in, what we would have seen was Geelong no longer playing at Geelong — it would have gone to Melbourne, and that would have had a very bad impact on the club. It is also important to note that it would have concentrated the benefit of that investment in postcode 3000 — that is, rather than try to spread the economic benefits across a wider area, it would have had them further concentrated. The rich in postcodes 3000, 3004 and 3006 would have become richer and people in places like Geelong, the Bellarine Peninsula and Lara would have missed out.

What we see before us today in the bill is an appropriate mechanism to properly manage and preserve the stadium and to make it work more along the lines of the MCG, because with the amount of taxpayer funds invested into the facility, it is only fair and reasonable that as legislators and as a government there be a level of oversight of the way the ground operates. That is one of the reasons the government when in opposition committed to looking at creating this trust to provide a level of interest in the way the ground operates. I note the member for Prahran in his contribution rambled about the evils of putting money into competitive sport or professional sport or something like that — he lost me I must say.

The reality is that this is a beachhead. Yes, it is a beachhead for professional sport, but so many ancillary benefits for other sports will flow from this initial investment. That goes back to the original Sports House concept which was championed by a former Premier. Steve Bracks was clear that he was very happy to make an investment of this nature in a facility like this but that it was going to be for that broader community benefit. There is the benefit of the local economic impact of this investment on the Geelong region rather than it being concentrated in Melbourne and there is the broader societal and community benefit of people who are living in Geelong being able to access a world-class

facility. That is what comes when a government is prepared to make a very smart and strategic investment. It is a case of putting in that seed investment and of the government enabling that level of economic growth and the societal benefits to occur.

If we look at something like preventative health and encouraging people to have healthy lifestyles, being able to go down to an elite training facility and access a gym and associated sporting facilities at that venue will ensure that people are taking appropriate and active steps to lead healthy lifestyles. That occurs through strategic investments made by the government. People might turn around and say, or the Institute of Public Affairs might say, ‘Don’t invest in these sorts of facilities; that’s a waste. Pocket your money. Lower taxes, provide tax cuts to business’. But when you do that, when you abandon communities and leave them to fend for themselves, they are left behind. Cities like Geelong would have been left behind but for the actions of the previous Labor government. This is about making a strategic investment to make sure there are key economic benefits that can be derived in the region, to ensure that people have broader societal benefits so they do not end up dying from preventable diseases at early ages but rather become fit and healthy and have positive lifestyles.

Bills like this are really important. I again want to place on the record the great contribution of Steve Bracks in deciding to make this initial investment. I pay tribute to my predecessor as the member for Essendon, the Honourable Justin Madden, who was heavily involved in these initiatives as well. This is a great piece of legislation, and it will do great things for Geelong and the community. It is again proving Labor’s credentials in building essential economic infrastructure not just in Melbourne but also in the regions, growing all the state, not just part of it. I commend the bill to the house.

Business interrupted under sessional orders.

ADJOURNMENT

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The question is:

That the house now adjourns.

Ms Staley — On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, on 23 June I raised an adjournment matter for the Minister for Emergency Services about new fire stations for Charlton, Ararat and Inglewood. I have yet to receive a reply to that matter. On 20 October I asked a question on the adjournment for the Minister for Public Transport about making public documents, business plans et cetera for the passenger services for the Maryborough and Ararat rail lines. I have yet to

receive an answer to that adjournment matter. I ask that you request the Speaker to ask the ministers to respond to my adjournment matters.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! I will pass on that point of order to the Speaker, and I am sure he will take the appropriate action to get those ministers to reply to the honourable member for Ripon.

Carlisle Street, Balaclava, traders

Mr SOUTHWICK (Caulfield) — I wish to raise a matter for the Minister for Small Business, Innovation and Trade. The action I seek is that the minister meet with the traders in Carlisle Street, Balaclava, to look at the possibility of establishing a traders association and to consider the possibility of such an association receiving some sort of financial support to help market the shopping strip. The Carlisle Street traders have gone through an interesting time of late. They have certainly benefited from the recent Balaclava railway station redevelopment, which was funded and launched by the former government. However, there was a period during which the shopping strip had to go through a number of closures to ensure that the train station was redeveloped. There was also talk of a tram super-stop being put in the middle of Carlisle Street. Again, the traders came together and worked to ensure that their amenity would be protected.

The latest challenge for the Carlisle Street traders is the Hank Marvin Markets. This new market, which has been established in Alma Road, attracts some 4000 people on a Saturday, which is great in terms of another opportunity for locals to attend, but it has taken a number of people who would normally frequent Carlisle Street to the market. That has left the traders with an almost empty shopping strip.

This is a great shopping strip. It has a great history of vitality — some people call it the bagel belt of Melbourne — but it really does suffer, particularly on Saturdays. It has had an informal traders group which has included traders such as Vainer Optical and has run a number of different activities. Individuals from Las Chicas, the Little Hen, the Lava bar, Wall Two 80 and a number of others, including the local pharmacy — there are a couple of pharmacies — have all been really active in a cooperative manner. But it really does need a properly organised and established traders association.

Issues like the Hank Marvin Markets have shown that a coordinated effort is needed. I think this would be an opportune time, and I do call for this in a bipartisan manner, for the minister to come down and meet with these traders to hear about some of the issues firsthand

and hear what they are experiencing. I would be happy to introduce the minister to many of these traders, who work very hard to keep these small businesses alive, and to look at ways to restore the vibrancy of Carlisle Street to make it a continued great hub of trade and ensure continued vitality in the Carlisle Street shopping strip.

Frankston railway station precinct

Mr EDBROOKE (Frankston) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Public Transport, and the action I seek is for the minister to announce that the Frankston transit precinct master plan delivery board has approval to, one, proceed with the stage 1 Young Street works as recommended by the task force, and two, proceed with the train station design process as recommended by the task force. The minister visited Frankston last week to see the plans and be briefed on the master plan delivery board which will oversee the implementation of the \$63 million Frankston railway station precinct redevelopment. The board is chaired by me and includes a range of prominent local representatives, and we would be very much appreciative of the minister's response.

Bushfire preparedness

Mr T. BULL (Gippsland East) — I wish to raise a matter for the attention of the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water. The action I seek is for the minister to ensure that all fire access tracks in asset protection zones in my electorate will be maintained for use this fire season. The last serious fire impacts in my electorate came in 2013–14, when many blazes raged out of control, destroying homes, stock and other assets.

As a result of that, the inspector-general for emergency management undertook a review which was concluded just before the election last year. Among his findings were that effective initial attack and utilisation of resources are vital to controlling fires in the early stages. Taking this on board, if we are to have rapid responses to stop fires spreading, we need to have access tracks cleared for firefighters and machinery.

I recently toured a bush area north of Bairnsdale in my electorate of Gippsland East where an experienced bushman highlighted the poor state of strategic fire access tracks located in the asset protection zone, which is the zone nearest to public assets and given the highest priority. Many tracks had not been maintained for clear access, with sections washed out and overgrown, making them inaccessible and certainly not tracks you

could take emergency vehicles down in responding to a bushfire.

While there has been a great deal of promotion around having more firefighting aircraft for this summer, which is good news, I believe one of the most basic and important fire protection measures is being overlooked. Firefighters have explained to me that lack of maintenance on fire access tracks is becoming one of the biggest impediments to successfully fighting fires.

Recent fire events have shown what can happen when fires are left to burn and conditions change. In the 2012–13 summer decisions were made to put remote fires on a watch status, waiting for the fire to come out. However, as occurred in that instance, when it came out, it was in conditions that made it unstoppable, and homes and assets were lost. That is why the basic fundamental of clearing tracks and ongoing maintenance needs to be done, particularly in asset protection zones around populated areas.

Each year Victoria allocates a large budget to firefighting, and we fight what are now called ‘campaign fires’ when they are out of control. I believe more of this budget could be put towards prevention in this important area. We do need to do more fuel reduction burning in areas around our assets and maintain bush tracks for early attack.

I do not raise this matter for political purposes or to point-score. I raise it only to seek the minister’s support in relation to a community safety issue in what is one of the most fire-prone areas in the world. I ask the minister to ensure that important fire access tracks in my region are maintained, especially those within the asset protection zones around the communities of East Gippsland, and that they receive urgent maintenance attention as they are not ready in their current state.

Malmsbury Primary School

Ms THOMAS (Macedon) — The adjournment matter I wish to raise is for the attention of the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is that the minister intervene to halt the removal at Malmsbury Primary School of a portable classroom which is currently utilised for the school’s successful French and music programs. I understand that the minister is in an unenviable situation as a consequence of the previous government’s disgraceful neglect of our government education system, and I note that the former Minister for Education is here in the house tonight. He should hang his head in shame at the chaos he has left and the fact that not one single new school is on line to open in 2016. It is an absolute disgrace.

I know that in his first year the current minister has organised for the purchase of more portables than the previous government managed in its four years in power. The May budget included a more than \$24 million investment in my own electorate of Macedon, for which my community is grateful. However, due to the previous government’s neglect we are now left with a situation where we have a shortage of portables across the state and, as I said, not a single new school is on track to open in 2016. That is a disgrace. Schools like Malmsbury Primary School — small country schools — are left to pay the price of the former minister’s incompetence.

During a visit to Malmsbury last week I was greeted with a wonderful musical performance by the children, showcasing what can be achieved with a dedicated music space and some fantastic percussion and woodwind instruments. In this artistic community the music program is highly valued and a key reason that parents choose to send their children to this wonderful primary school. As I am sure the minister would understand, it is not possible to run such fantastic programs in open-plan learning spaces.

I advise the minister that I have received letters from the children, an online petition has been established that has attracted some 900-plus signatures and my community is running an innovative social media campaign. Again I ask that the minister intervene to stop the removal of the Malmsbury Primary School portable, an action that has come about as a direct consequence of the failure of the Napthine government.

Bushfire preparedness

Mr DIXON (Nepean) — I wish to raise a matter for the Minister for Energy and Resources.

Ms Thomas — Apologise.

Mr DIXON — I will never apologise for record education funding and being the only government that was prepared to fully fund Gonski. Labor in Victoria and Labor federally have abandoned Gonski. The coalition government was the only one to do it.

I have an adjournment matter for the Minister for Energy and Resources regarding faulty aerial bundled cables, known as ABC, and the action I request is for the minister to work with United Energy to urgently replace the faulty cables before this fire season. Aerial bundled cabling is a recommendation of the bushfires royal commission — the electrical wires are bundled together and covered with insulation, which is a way of

mitigating fires starting from powerlines, which we know have been a major cause of fires.

Unfortunately a faulty batch of this cabling was placed in the Main Ridge and Red Hill areas of my electorate, which are very heavily wooded. The Main Ridge Country Fire Authority brigade and a number of the house owners in that area have come to me because the insulation around this bundled cabling is melting away, falling to the ground and starting fires. This has happened in winter and in spring, so you can imagine in the summer season with high winds — and there has been no rain basically for two months in the hills in my electorate — those fires could very quickly get away. United Energy has recognised this as an issue and has said it will replace the cabling, but this will be done over 10 years. I really think that with the fire season approaching, the lack of rainfall and the fact that fires have already been starting as a result of what is a recognised issue, this needs to be addressed urgently.

I have written to the minister regarding this issue, but I think it is very important that I raise it at every opportunity, given the urgency. Since I wrote we have had no rain, and the issue will not go away. Rather than wait for an ongoing replacement over 10 years, we really need that cabling replaced as quickly as possible and before the fire season is fully upon us.

Aberfeldie main drain renewal project

Mr CARROLL (Niddrie) — I raise a matter for the Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water, and I note that the minister is at the table tonight. The action I seek is for the minister to ensure that Melbourne Water's Aberfeldie main drain renewal project proceed as originally planned in line with the initial community consultations that have taken place.

I have met with Melbourne Water twice this year to discuss the Aberfeldie main project upgrade. I have appreciated being briefed on the project by Melbourne Water and the sensitive information it has provided to me and my constituents. Although my last meeting with Melbourne Water was in July 2015, I was not aware of a subsequent proposal which was given to the City of Moonee Valley that month suggesting the installation of a bubble-up pit in the northern area of Aberfeldie Park instead of what was previously agreed, which was the drain that would traverse the park. Indeed I was not consulted on this significant change to the project.

The use of a bubble-up pit will result in the pipeline terminating at Aberfeldie Park rather than the Maribyrnong River, as was originally proposed and as originally the suburb of Aberfeldie was letterboxed on.

This would mean untreated stormwater would be directed in and around the sporting reserve. Aberfeldie Park is home to several sporting clubs and plays an important recreational role in the local community. Moonee Valley City Council has recently commenced the construction of a \$3.3 million cricket pavilion in the park for the benefit of the Essendon Maribyrnong Park Ladies Cricket Club, which is only 75 metres away from the proposed location of the bubble-up pit.

I believe the proposal to install a bubble-up pit in the immediate vicinity of Aberfeldie Park where there are sporting clubs would disrupt accessibility for many in the park, with a potential increase of surface water soaking around the pavilion and the playing area. In addition, it would be greatly detrimental to the safety and visual amenity of this beautiful, picturesque park right on the banks of the Maribyrnong River. I appreciate the minister's assistance on this project so far, and I welcome the minister helping me to ensure that Melbourne Water proceeds with the original project as planned.

Public housing

Ms SANDELL (Melbourne) — I ask the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing to write to me outlining the government's plans to house the 34 000 people who are languishing on Victoria's public housing waiting list. My electorate of Melbourne has a large amount of public housing, and people in Melbourne really value it. People in public housing are a diverse, interesting and vibrant community who help make Melbourne a great place to live. We do not want to become a city where only the very wealthy can afford to live. Every person deserves a safe place to live, and having people of different backgrounds living side by side makes Melbourne a stronger community.

However, Melbourne is becoming increasingly a less livable city for those who live in or need public housing. Every week my office is approached by people seeking help with their housing needs. I see people living in significantly overcrowded houses. I see people who tell me their children's health conditions, such as asthma and eczema, are exacerbated by poor ventilation, overcrowding or the extreme temperatures that high-rises reach in summer. I see families who fear for their safety due to inadequate security and the fact that non-residents can come and use communal areas for drug use. I see residents who are left in dire circumstances when maintenance takes months to be addressed, despite the fact that the department's guidance says that it should only take 14 days.

I regularly write to the Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing on behalf of my constituents, but most of the time I get a very brief response, if any. I recently wrote on behalf of a number of my constituents from one public housing estate, who had a long list of complaints. All I got was a five-line response from the minister's chief of staff referring me to the Department of Health and Human Services website. A constituency question that I asked over two months ago on this very issue remains unanswered.

This says to me that public housing is not a priority for this government or this minister. I did not expect public housing to be a priority for the coalition government, but I expect more — and the community expects more — of Labor. Labor has been in government for over a year now. It is time to stop blaming the previous government for the dire state of public housing. It is time to act. Labor cannot let public housing continue to deteriorate and use this as an excuse to sell it off. Labor cannot let waiting lists continue to blow out, as it has over the past year. Labor cannot turn a blind eye when there are nearly 10 000 people on the so-called 'early housing' waiting list who can take five years to find a house. If Labor cares about people, after 12 months of inaction it must start to take responsibility for public housing. We need serious investment in public housing, in both existing stock and new builds. The public housing system is in crisis. It is time for Labor to fix it.

Mordialloc electorate sports facilities

Mr RICHARDSON (Mordialloc) — I raise an adjournment matter for the Minister for Sport. The action I seek is that the minister visit two sporting precincts in my electorate, Gerry Green Reserve and the Edithvale Aspendale Sporting Club precinct, to hear from club representatives about the future needs of the sporting clubs that use these facilities. Gerry Green Reserve is located in Parkdale and is home to three major clubs: the Parkdale Vultures, an amateur football club in division B; the Parkdale Cricket Club; and the Parkdale Tennis Club. It is a wonderful precinct and has significant use. It is housed next to Parkdale Primary School, so it is an activity centre in our precinct. The clubrooms and facilities at Gerry Green Reserve are wanting. We need to think long-term and work with the Kingston City Council to try to address those facilities. We need to put a future plan in place to give these clubs certainty for the future. I particularly want to put on the record my thanks to the president of the Parkdale Vultures, Kris Little, and vice-president Mick Meyers, and to the cricket president, Shawn Dougherty, and the tennis president, Colin Crawford, who have been a pleasure to work with.

The Edithvale Aspendale Sporting Club is a club that I have mentioned in Parliament a number of times. The support it provides goes beyond its community. It has had a fundraiser this year for Yarrabah School, raising \$40 000. It has a wonderful plan to establish netball courts at its facility. Currently the netball team, led by Helen Hollis, has to go all the way to Dingley to compete. We want to establish a club identity in Edithvale-Aspendale. I hope the minister can come and talk to the club about its future needs and we can look to working with council to establish a facility there.

In conclusion, I ask the Minister for Sport to visit Gerry Green Reserve and the Edithvale Aspendale Sporting Club.

Ripon electorate schools

Ms STALEY (Ripon) — My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Education. The specific action I seek is that he intervene to stop the forced removal before Christmas of portable classrooms from the Ripon electorate's schools. Like the member for Macedon, I recognise that the Andrews Labor government is at fault here and is responsible for ripping assets out of country schools. The government needs to act. Ripon's schools have suffered under successive Labor governments, which, let us not forget, have been in power for 12 of the past 16 years.

On being elected, the first report I commissioned from a parliamentary intern was to consider Ripon's educational outcomes. That report, *Failing Our Future — Rural Education Outcomes and the Electorate of Ripon* by Ashley Coleman-Bock, is an outstanding piece of work. Ms Coleman-Bock set the scene of education in Ripon. She said:

With a median weekly income at \$998, the second lowest in the state, it has the state's highest proportion of low-income households.

The report also states that in 2011 Ripon:

... had the third highest proportion of people finishing at or before year 10, at 41.1 per cent of the student population
... Ripon has the second-lowest proportion of students attending university in Victoria ...

Given these poor outcomes, driven by very low incomes, low expectations and a long-term history of policy failure, it is crucial that schools in the electorate of Ripon are not further disadvantaged by having their needed classrooms removed.

I will mention only two specific cases, but my adjournment matter relates to all of the proposed removals. Natte Yallock Primary School is a very small

school, and its portable is the newest school building. The rest are in pretty poor condition. St Arnaud Secondary College is losing one of its portables. However, it is not the dilapidated old portable that is only used occasionally. The Andrews Labor government is ripping out the most modern building — a building the school community has added a deck to and built around a courtyard. This portable is an integral part of the school, a school with one of the most disadvantaged student populations in Victoria. These portables are not surplus; they are not unused. Their removal is further evidence that the Andrews Labor government does not care about education in Ripon. It is a disgrace.

Victorian Multicultural Commission

Ms GRALEY (Narre Warren South) — Another rewriting of history!

My adjournment matter is for the Minister for Multicultural Affairs and concerns the Victorian Multicultural Commission's community consultations. The action I seek is that the minister visit the City of Casey as part of a community consultation with the Victorian Multicultural Commission (VMC). Just recently I had the great pleasure of hosting a community forum for local multicultural groups with the new chairperson of the VMC, Helen Kapalos, who is an outstanding appointment. Ms Kapalos took a real interest in what people were saying, displaying genuine compassion and warmth as she took the time to meet and hear from everyone.

Our forum was a fantastic opportunity for members of our local multicultural groups to speak up about their concerns and the issues that are most important to them. We heard about their fears of radicalisation, their concerns about savage funding cuts by the federal government to translating and interpreting services, the portrayal of the Muslim community in the media and the need to engage with young people. We spoke about the many fantastic grants available through the VMC that many of these groups rely upon to do their great work. Many also raised their concerns about the difficulties they face in working with and securing assistance from the City of Casey.

Our community is wonderfully diverse and home to people from more than 150 different nations and faiths. We have 26.7 per cent of local residents who were born in non-English-speaking countries and 29.9 per cent who speak English as a second language. We are an amazing mix of faiths, backgrounds, cultures and languages. Yet there are many issues that are unique to our community and must be addressed. All the

members of the multicultural community groups who attended my forum wanted to speak up and do their bit to build a more inclusive and tolerant community. They want to work together with the VMC to address the issues our community faces. I have women who speak little or no English and struggle to find the help they need. There are young men who feel isolated and disengaged from their families, their school and the local community. There are older people who struggle to do the day-to-day activities that many of us take for granted. They all need our help.

A community consultation in Casey would ensure that members of our diverse local community had the opportunity to speak up and stand together to strengthen that community, a community that deserves to have its voice heard. There is so much we would like to share, from sharing the amazing food and culture to enjoying the beautiful singing and dancing we could all do together. I do hope that the minister will join with the VMC in visiting Casey.

Responses

Ms NEVILLE (Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water) — The member for Gippsland East asked me about maintenance of the fire tracks in his local community. Certainly Gippsland East is a fire-prone community and is subject to wildfires. It is important to point out that in the last budget the government put in an additional \$100 million — \$50 million a year — to try to rebuild the capacity of our parks and also for Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning staff to be able to do some of this and keep up with it.

One of the important changes that has come out of the inspector-general's report is how, when we talk about a risk-based system, we need to focus not just on the planned burn component of it but also on fire track maintenance, clearing and all those sorts of things. I think that will give us a really important opportunity to enhance the program so that we are not just measuring how much we are burning but also how effective all the bits of work we are doing are. I will take this matter back to the department and ask the staff to provide me with some specific advice on the capacity in Gippsland East around fire track maintenance and provide further information to the member.

The member for Niddrie raised the issue of the Aberfeldie main drain. I can only say that the member for Niddrie was absolutely dogged in his representation of his community on this issue, and he was certainly not going to accept a no for an answer. I am really pleased that as a result of the representation by the member for

Niddrie, and following conversations with Melbourne Water, council and the local community, the decision has rightly been made to go back to the original design, in line with what the community consultations recommended in the first place. I thank the member for raising those issues, I thank the community for being involved in those discussions and I also thank Melbourne Water for taking account of the community's views.

In relation to other matters, a range of issues have been raised by a number of members. I will refer those matters to the relevant ministers.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER — Order! The house is now adjourned.

House adjourned 7.27 p.m.

