

**PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA**  
**DEBATES OF THE HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

**DAILY HANSARD**

**Tuesday 11 August 2026**

**Preliminary Transcript**

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# UNCORRECTED PROOF

**Tuesday 11 August 2026**

The Speaker, **Mrs Petrusma**, took the Chair at 10 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People, and read Prayers.

## STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

### Members' Behaviour in the Chamber

**The SPEAKER** - Before I give the call to the honourable Leader of the Opposition, I first of all want to welcome you all back from winter recess because I, for one, have certainly missed seeing you all.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - I honestly have. It's great to be back.

Over the recess, a few members raised some concerns with me about members' behaviour in the Chamber, especially towards each other. As members are aware, the provisions in the code of conduct for members states that members are entitled to be safe and respected in the workplace. The code does acknowledge that differences of opinion and belief are part of normal political discourse, but that those differences should at all times be expressed respectfully.

Members are reminded that their behaviour, including both verbal and non-verbal gestures, is on public display at all times when they are in the Chamber. It is also recorded and is readily accessible by the public. As set out in the code of conduct, public confidence in the parliament is impacted by the behaviours modelled by members, so I remind all members to please conduct themselves in a respectful and worthy manner whilst in the Chamber.

## QUESTIONS

### Bell Bay Aluminium - New Power Agreement

**Mr WILLIE question to MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN**

[10.03 a.m.]

Labor governments built a thriving economy by investing boldly in hydro-electric power to bring manufacturing and secure jobs to the island. Hydro Tasmania's job is not simply to maximise its next dividend. It has an obligation to act in Tasmania's long-term interests. Your job is to make sure it does that. Bell Bay Aluminium needs a new power agreement now. More than 550 Tasmanian jobs and a major regional employer are depending on it. Will you direct Hydro to honour its obligation to the state and secure a power agreement for Bell Bay Aluminium by the end of the month?

**Mr Abetz** - What about federal Labor?

**The SPEAKER** - Order. The only one who has the call right now is the Minister for Energy and Renewables.

## ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the question, and, of course, take the opportunity to recognise the long, storied history of Bell Bay Aluminium here in Tasmania and the importance that that business plays in Tasmania, northern Tasmania particularly. Work is currently underway, as it has been for a period of time -

**Mr Willie** - Like at Liberty, where you lost 200 jobs?

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr DUIGAN** - to secure a long-term energy contract with Bell Bay Aluminium.

For members' information, there is a structured negotiation taking place between the Tasmanian government and Bell Bay Aluminium Rio Tinto. Hydro Tasmania obviously has a role to play in that. What we are experiencing is certainly a gap between what Rio Tinto says it needs by way of a power price and what Hydro Tasmania is able to offer at a commercial level. When I say a commercial level, my interaction with Hydro Tasmania is absolutely insisting that it is delivering energy consistent with its charter, and that is to deliver the lowest power prices for Tasmanians, and to support jobs and economic growth in our state.

**Mr Willie** - You were really effective at Liberty.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Those are the riding instructions for Hydro Tasmania and I am adamant that Hydro contract on those bases. However, it is important that we understand that if Hydro is providing energy below commercial levels, that is simply a transfer of cost onto the Tasmanian taxpayer.

**Mr Willie** - What's the cost of that?

**The SPEAKER** - Order. Honourable Leader of the Opposition, the only one who should be speaking now is the honourable minister. If you're not interested in his answer, I will call on the next question. I do ask that the minister -

**Mr Willie** - Businesses are tanking.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. I ask that all members be silent when I am speaking, please.

**Mr DUIGAN** - We are at the table and understanding what the quantum of that gap is. It is substantial. As we stand at the moment, the likely gap is somewhere in the order of \$60 million a year, which is a big number, and when you look at a 10-year contract, that becomes a substantial number.

The question here is where is the Commonwealth Government? Where is the Prime Minister of Australia, who has made a commitment to Tasmania, to northern Tasmania -

**Mr Willie** - These businesses have been here for generations. They're going to be lost on your watch.

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr DUIGAN** - When it comes from the mouth of the Prime Minister, you can take it to the bank, or that's how it used to be.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. Sorry, minister. I ask all interjections to cease on both sides in the remaining one second. I remind all members, 'hear, hear' and 'shame' are the two allowed interjections. The biggest number of interjections is not a KPI in this parliament. I ask all honourable members to allow the ministers to be heard. I remind the House you do have other forms where you can ask more questions. You have supplementaries, MPIs, Adjournment and you can make a substantive motion. But I do ask that question time is conducted in an orderly way.

### **Supplementary Question**

**Mr WILLIE** - How is the minister going to ensure Hydro takes a whole-of-state view, not just maximising profits at a commercial rate?

**Mr DUIGAN** - Hear, hear.

**The SPEAKER** - He 'hear, hear-ed' himself.

**Mr DUIGAN** - I appreciate the supplementary. That's absolutely the intention of its charter, to look at that whole view. But Hydro Tasmania isn't the instrument for industry policy. It is one of the levers we have but this is beyond the realms of Hydro Tasmania. We're talking about a large -

**Mr Willie** - For generations we have done this. And on your watch -

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable Leader of the Opposition, this is your first warning.

**Mr DUIGAN** - You're asking - well, certainly the deputy leader of the opposition is asking Tasmania to offer a blank cheque. This is a \$60 million a year potential cost to taxpayers. We need now the federal government to honour its commitment, as it has done in Queensland with the Boyne smelter. Close to \$1 billion of Commonwealth taxpayer money has gone into that smelter. As it is working to do at Tomago in New South Wales - hundreds of millions of dollars of Commonwealth money. The commitment that was made to Tasmania, I will quote the Prime Minister -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable minister's time has expired.

### **Bell Bay Aluminium - Future**

**Mr WILLIE** question to **MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN**

[10.09 a.m.]

Liberty Bell Bay collapsed on your watch and 200 Tasmanians in your electorate lost their jobs. Families lost their livelihoods and the region is still dealing with that blow. Now more than 550 people at Bell Bay Aluminium are facing the same uncertainty. Bell Bay Advanced Manufacturing Zone CEO and former Liberal candidate, Susie Bower, said:

Having the hit with Liberty was bad enough. It's catastrophic for the Tasmanian economy if we don't get a power deal with Bell Bay Aluminium.

What have you changed since the failure at Liberty? How will you make sure Bell Bay Aluminium does not suffer the same fate?

**ANSWER**

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. It's really important that we don't seek to conflate these issues. It's really serious. This is people's livelihoods and longstanding businesses. I stand alongside those Liberty workers who have lost something. But it is completely errant to say that the failure of Liberty is at the feet of the Tasmanian government. We threw everything -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order, sorry minister. Honourable members to my left, I appreciate that we're all very keen and enthusiastic, we've come back after the winter recess, but I remind all members that if somebody's on their feet talking, it is disorderly to be making constant interjections, from all members. I will start issuing warnings very fast and suspend honourable members from this House because we have to remember that our behaviour in this Chamber impacts the public as well. I ask that the honourable member be heard. If you're not satisfied with the minister's answers, there are other forms in this House that you can use instead of being disorderly.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Thank you, Speaker. As I was saying, you know, I think it's very important we all recognise that Liberty has had an energy contract - a 10-year, long-term energy contract - and the government's position that it is very happy to novate that contract -

**Ms Finlay** - The new owners want that transferred to them. Will you transfer that existing deal without amendment to the new owners?

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable member for Bass. That is too long an interjection. I suggest 'shame' would have been better.

**Mr DUIGAN** - As I say, Liberty Bell Bay had a long-term energy contract that was negotiated commercially in 2024. Subsequently, as part of the liquidation process, those interested in buying the smelter are very, very interested to secure the novation of that contract because of the value that it offers. It is millions of dollars to the good of the potential operator of that smelter. So, we are happy to do that and give that business the best opportunity to restart. Liberty Bell Bay has/had a contract for energy.

In terms of getting a deal done for Bell Bay Aluminium and the 550 direct jobs there, we are working on that and I'm very confident we'll get it done, but it's a big number and, as we've seen elsewhere, and as we have had from the Prime Minister of this country, a commitment -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable minister's time has expired.

### Supplementary Question

**Mr WILLIE** - After losing 200 jobs at Liberty, how is the minister going to protect the 550 jobs at Bell Bay Aluminium? There's a lot of concern in the community right now and he's not helping.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Thanks for the supplementary. As I say, we are working to get that deal done.

**Mr Willie** - By the end of the month?

**Mr DUIGAN** - As I say, there is a scheduled negotiation agreement agreed to by all parties. The Tasmanian government is at the table, we have Rio Tinto at the table, and we're working on it. What we need is the federal government at the table. The federal government who, up until a few weeks ago, had a green aluminium production credit scheme that it was pointing us to as being the -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr DUIGAN** - When you talk about protecting jobs, you're sitting here protecting federal Labor.

**Mr Willie** - We have done this for generations and jobs are being lost on your watch.

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable Leader of the Opposition, this is your second warning. The minister may continue.

**Mr DUIGAN** - We will work to get the job done. It is important and we will continue to do that work and engage.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable minister's time has expired.

### Macquarie Point Stadium - Updated Cost Estimate

**Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.14 a.m.]

The \$1.13 billion stadium cost estimate was made before the war in the Middle East. Construction prices since then have soared further and industry experts have warned pre-war budgets won't be accurate. Parliament flagged this concern to you in May and passed a motion calling for an updated cost estimate. Your government voted against it. Last Friday, in the

Public Accounts Committee, your Treasurer admitted that stadium costs will likely rise. The Treasurer was telling the truth, wasn't he, Premier? Why don't you be honest with Tasmanians, too, and admit that you're prepared to spend whatever it costs and definitely more than the \$875 million of taxpayers' money that you promised you wouldn't spend a cent more of?

### ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for your question. I believe you're verballing the Treasurer in that question, in actual fact. And, can I say, we are getting on with the job of delivering the Macquarie Point stadium. It was great to be there, just a few weeks ago, turning the first sod with the honourable Treasurer, the member for Franklin, Julie Collins, and other federal Labor representatives. It was very positive to see movement at the station, in many respects. The diggers have arrived, of course, and progress is happening, and this transformative infrastructure, which is on the nation's minds at the moment at the moment, excited about it, as I travel around the state. I've been to 35 towns across Tasmania in the last few weeks, 98 community visits and events and business visits, which has been fantastic; I almost cracked the tonne there - and people are excited about the prospect of what the stadium will bring I in terms of growth, jobs and opportunity.

We won't be deterred by the Greens' game playing, whose only objective is to spite this project at every opportunity. Despite the fact, of course, that it went through both Houses of parliament. The member for Clark belled the cat - if that's the right terminology - and we know your gameplay in many respects for this, or all respects, and that is to ensure that the project does not go ahead. You'll do everything to destroy jobs and destroy the dreams of Tasmanians.

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Honourable Speaker, Standing Order 45, relevance. We're 2 minutes into a 3-minute question and the Premier hasn't got to my question about the \$875 million. It will be more than that, won't it Premier?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - We are in a live procurement process. This has been well outlined to you and, my understanding, the Public Accounts Committee. The Macquarie Point Development Corporation (MPDC) will share further details as soon as they are available to do so, as the chair, Kim Evans, outlined to the PAC on Friday. So, there will be information provided, but we're not going to provide information that will damage a procurement process, okay. I know the Greens don't want the stadium, but you do like process, I'll grant that.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

### Supplementary Question

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Honourable Speaker, the Premier didn't answer the question. Will he be honest like the Treasurer appeared to be at the Public Accounts Committee last week when he flagged it will likely to be costing more than the \$875 million? Will the Premier be honest with Tasmanians, is there a prospect of that? And just be honest about the fact that you'll pay whatever it costs. That's what you're going to do, despite your promise.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Well, it might be less, how do you know? We will get this stadium built and the opportunity for it. I saw some data the other day where the AFL wanted 28,000 young people participating in AFL/AFLW by 2028 -



**Dr Woodruff** - You're cutting thousands of public servant jobs. Every dollar matters. Just be honest about the fact that you are spending more than you promised.

**The SPEAKER** - Order, Honourable Leader of the Greens. I remind the House to allow the Premier to finish his response. You can ask further questions.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - When we signed the agreement for the 19th licence, I think the participation was around 16,500, I stand to be corrected on that figure, and we've almost reached the 28,000 right now, such is the enthusiasm that has been generated right across the state. So, I'm not going to be part of game playing by you, to destroy jobs and destroy the dreams of young Tasmanians.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

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### Recognition of Visitors

**The SPEAKER** - I'd like us all to please welcome year 6 students from Mount Carmel College. This is the first group; there will be a second group coming through soon. Welcome to parliament.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

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### Bell Bay Aluminium - New Power Agreement

**Ms FINLAY question to MINISTER for ENERGY, Mr DUIGAN**

[10.20 a.m.]

My question 's about Bell Bay Aluminium: the 550 Tasmanian workers and their families that rely on that site; the 550 households whose jobs, their finances, their future rely on the future of Bell Bay Aluminium, and the Tasmanian businesses in the supply chain right across the state. It's about the \$600,000 a day Bell Bay Aluminium pay you as a government for fees and charges - \$4.2 million a week, over \$200 million a year. It's the \$262 million paid to Tasmanian businesses and the billion dollars of economic output generated by Bell Bay Aluminium. Last year it took you to the 11th hour to finally admit you couldn't bring a deal together, and we're in the same situation now. Those 550 families waiting on you to do your job. I know you'll blame the federal government, but the power deal is on you. Will you guarantee that Bell Bay Aluminium's 550 families will have a power agreement before the end of the month?

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable member's time has expired. Order. I don't need any assistance. The honourable member will take a seat, please.

### ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. I would reiterate my earlier comments. The government is the strongest supporter of our major industrial businesses. There are a number of policy settings the government has which support our major industrials. That's

long been the case and that will continue to be the case. I spend plenty of time in George Town; I'm aware - acutely aware - of the uncertainty that this is causing. I think I explained where we're at and the need to bring the Commonwealth into these negotiations, given where we were when we had the commitment from the Prime Minister and minister Tim Ayres around the green aluminium and production credits. That ground has shifted somewhat under our feet through the announcements by the member for Bass, interestingly enough, who's come out and said that Bell Bay would no longer be in line for green aluminium productions credits. Noting that it is the greenest aluminium smelter in the country, if not the world, and our Labor government can't find it in its heart to support that worthy, worthy business. I would take members back to - As I say, it's important, when the Prime Minister of the country says something, that's typically a policy you can take to the bank.

**Mr Willie** - A bit like the Premier when he writes letters?

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr DUIGAN** - From Gladstone to Portland and Bell Bay to Tomago, Australia is already the sixth-largest producer of aluminium in the world, and we want to see that continue to grow. Securing the future of the Australian-made aluminium industry is a direct investment in jobs and skills across the country, all the way from Central Queensland to Northern Tasmania, and minister Mr Ayres, indeed. This package guarantees good blue-collar jobs here in the Hunter, Central Queensland, Northern Tasmania, Western Australia, and Victoria, so we are at the table -

**Ms Finlay** - You've only got jobs if you've got a power deal, minister.

**The SPEAKER** - Deputy Leader of the Opposition, this is your first warning.

**Mr DUIGAN** - With Hydro Tasmania we will get the job done, but there will be a gap and that will be an ask of the Tasmanian taxpayer and the Commonwealth taxpayer.

**Ms Finlay** - What is the ask?

**The SPEAKER** - This is your second warning, Deputy Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Our job, my job, is to get that gap down as narrow as it can be to reduce those impacts. It's not just about one side of this argument. There are more sides to consider, and that is the role of responsible government.

### Supplementary Question

**Ms FINLAY** - It is really clear, even in the minister's comments, that a power deal is between the Tasmanian Government, Hydro and Bell Bay Aluminium. This is at your feet, minister. Even Susie Bower, former Liberal candidate, says that. Get over trying to chase that deal, because it's not there, and get on with delivering a power deal. What are you going to do to deliver a power deal before the end of the month?

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. I ask all members of the House to settle down, please. The member has asked a question. The only one who has the call right now is the Minister for Energy and Renewables. From now on, interjections, if they continue, I'll give the suspension very fast. To remind the House, the honourable Leader of the Opposition has two warnings. The honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition has two warnings. But all members will get warnings from now on, because it has been far too disruptive this morning.

**Mr DUIGAN** - That is a remarkable -

**Ms Finlay** - Susie Bower says stop wasting your time.

**Mr DUIGAN** - - remarkable admission for the -

**The SPEAKER** - Sorry, minister. Honourable Deputy -

**Mr DUIGAN** - The Deputy Leader of the -

**The SPEAKER** - Minister, sorry. Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, this is your third and final warning. The next one will be suspension from the House.

**Mr DUIGAN** - As I say, an extraordinary admission from the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party. To have positioned the Commonwealth Government, the federal government, to walk away from northern Tasmania, to walk away from Bell Bay Aluminium, one of the biggest strategic businesses in our state, this is absolutely extraordinary. So, I will continue to -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable minister's time has expired.

## **Macquarie Point Stadium - Updated Cost Estimate**

**Dr WOODRUFF question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.27 a.m.]

The conflict in the Middle East has driven up construction prices worldwide, and no-one believes your cost estimate of \$1.13 billion from November last year still stands. Your government is defying the parliament's call to provide an updated cost estimate for the stadium. It's a disgraceful way to treat the parliament and Tasmanians. Your promise to spend no more than \$875 million in taxpayers' money, with funding for essential services being slashed across the board, means every dollar matters, and Tasmanians are paying big-time.

This morning you committed to giving an update when the work is complete and before a contract is signed, noting that you've made and broken multiple promises on the stadium already. What does that mean exactly? Will you commit now to telling Tasmanians, the people footing the bill, the final stadium cost before the contract is signed?

## **ANSWER**

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for your question and noting you reflected on the budget and community services. Our budget delivers economic growth and invests in essential services. Two-thirds of this budget will be spent on health, education and

public safety: \$15 billion into health expenditure, growth in funding when it comes to health - over \$10 million a day. Every single day we are investing in our health system. To put this into context, when we came to government, we were investing \$5.8 billion into health. It's now \$15 billion into health, and that's a 59 per cent increase, so we are delivering.

It's been a great opportunity in the last few weeks to visit many health settings with the honourable Health minister: Campbell Town, North West Regional Hospital, Deloraine Hospital, the North East -

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Honourable Speaker, 45, relevance. This morning the Premier made a commitment, and I'm asking him to provide details to Tasmanians about that. He's been general and waffling before - can he please be precise about what that commitment will be?

**The SPEAKER** - Thank you, honourable member. Just to remind the House, as noted in the *House of Representatives Practice (7th edition)*: as long as the minister or the Premier is addressing the relevant policy area, the answer is relevant. The Premier is addressing the relevant policy area and in response to your question, but there are other forms of the House, if members do not agree with the Premier's or the minister's response. Premier, I ask you to resume, please.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Thank you. I know the Greens value process. We are in the middle of a live tender procurement process at the moment. You know exactly what you're doing in terms of trying to spike this project by spiking the procurement process -

**Dr Woodruff** - No. It's just rubbish what you're saying.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Don't do that. Because your deputy leader said so.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. Again, I ask all members in the House to settle and to show respect to the honourable Premier, who is on his feet right now.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - We acknowledge the motion that was passed in the House, thank you very much. As outlined during the debate, there are significant commercial, procurement and probity considerations associated with releasing or developing detailed cost information during a live procurement process. What you are doing is damaging Tasmanians and Tasmanian taxpayers. These risks are unchanged by parliament's motion, and the government has worked through the most appropriate way to respond. The Macquarie Point Development Corporation -

**The SPEAKER** - The Premier's time has expired.

### **Supplementary Question**

**Dr WOODRUFF** - Honourable Speaker, the Premier didn't answer the question. This morning he made a public commitment to providing an update to Tasmanians and I asked you to provide exactly what that means. Will it be, as your words seemed to suggest, the stadium cost before a contract is signed? Will you provide that, the contract cost, before it is signed?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I refer you to the chair of Macquarie Point Development Corporation, Kim Evans, answering the Public Accounts Committee. As I understand, he said there will be an update in a few months.

**Dr Woodruff** - What does that mean?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - It means that.

**Dr Woodruff** - The cost? That's what people should know.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I can't be any more technical than that.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. Dr Woodruff, this is your first warning. I do ask that when somebody is on their feet, interjections are to cease. You can ask further questions, there's other forms of the House.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Thank you, honourable Speaker. The Macquarie Point Development Corporation has continued to work with its legal and probity advisers, consulted the Department of Treasury and Finance, and assessed the procurement implications of preparing and releasing a revised cost estimate during the current tender process. The advice I've -

**The SPEAKER** - The Premier's time has expired.

### **Gambling Machines - Government Advice**

**Ms JOHNSTON question to TREASURER, Mr ABETZ**

[10.33 a.m.]

You continue to disrespect the Independent Gaming Commission. You trashed the precommitment card they were ready to roll out. You didn't ask their advice on your replacement harm minimisation package. They said your package would cause more harm and you ignored them.

Two weeks ago, after the commission tried to make the best out of a bad situation by closing all gaming rooms from 2 a.m. to 9 a.m., you overrode them again. At the eleventh hour, by ministerial direction, you reversed their call, allowing venues to stagger closing times to maximise profits for gambling addicts. You ignored the independent commission. You've ignored other harm minimisation experts. You ignored your own Deloitte pokies report. So, who did you listen to on the opening hours? When will you put the interests of vulnerable Tasmanians first, rather than protecting gambling profits?

### **ANSWER**

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. Can I completely debunk the assertions in the honourable member's question? First of all, if you're talking harm minimisation, can you explain in any way, shape or form, in a logical manner, how compelling venues to close not four hours, as is currently the situation, but seven hours, does not help harm minimisation? Can you explain how reducing the load limit on the machine, which is currently \$500, down to \$100, is not harm minimisation?

Can you explain how allowing somebody to self-exclude immediately, at the time of the most remorse, being able to exclude themselves there and then as they're leaving a venue, rather than having to ring an 1800 number the next day to seek a counselling appointment, after which the remorse may well have dissipated?

When you go through all those steps to assert that there is, in fact, a worse situation, can I ask rhetorically to the member for Clark, would she really want us to go back to where we were, rather than all those factors that I've just pointed out? Of course you wouldn't, so at least acknowledge that there is harm minimisation in the things we have done.

In relation to the flexibility of venues to choose their closing hours, you do realise, don't you, member for Clark, that for 18 years - one-eight years - there was that flexibility, when there was only four hours of closure. Now, we have seven hours of closure, and the assertion that people might then be able to venue-hop with a compulsory seven-hour closure but that that exist when it was a four-hour closure, with respect, does not make much sense.

In relation the ongoing flexibility that existed for 18 years - I stress, 18 years - to then say to some venues, with about 11 days' notice, that it's now a compulsory closing time from 2 a.m. till 9 a.m. took no account, with respect to the commission, of the rosters and workplace arrangements that these venues had. These are, might I add, for small specific businesses. Can I tell you, the big ones like Federal Hotels could have easily lived with a 2 a.m. till 9 a.m. compulsory closure. It was the small independent operators around the state -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Treasurer's time has expired.

### Supplementary Question

**Ms JOHNSTON** - In the Treasurer's response, he said he was debunking some assertions and referred to whether there was any evidence provided that any of the harm minimisation matters wouldn't be successful. I ask the Treasurer then, has he read the letter from the Independent Gaming Commission of 31 March where they do debunk the myths asserted with your harm minimisation and provide the evidence that it will cause greater harm than what he's proposing.

**Mr ABETZ** - Honourable Speaker, of course I read the letter and, as I've outlined, with great respect to anybody who makes that assertion, how can you say it will cause more harm when you say that you can only load a machine up to \$100 rather than the current \$500? Do you honestly believe in your heart of hearts that that is not harm minimisation? For a rare occasion, the honourable member for Clark does not interject. Do you really say that extending the compulsory closure from four to seven hours is not harm minimisation? Do you honestly say that enabling somebody to self-exclude immediately is not harm minimisation? There has to be some common sense in this debate. Right, wrong or indifferent, poker machines and electronic gaming machines are legal -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Treasurer's time has expired.

## Bell Bay Aluminium - Negotiations with Hydro Tasmania

**Ms FINLAY question to MINISTER for ENERGY and RENEWABLES, Mr DUIGAN**

[10.03 a.m.]

You keep saying that Hydro must operate commercially, but you're responsible for making sure it operates to its charter and in Tasmania's long-term interests. Have you made it clear to Hydro that they must operate as per the charter and consider not just the jobs but the supply chains, the grid services and the strategic economic value of Bell Bay Aluminium in all the negotiations? Or have you left it to Hydro to simply chase the highest price? What's your position?

### ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. As I have said I think probably repeatedly this morning, the government absolutely values the role of Bell Bay Aluminium as a strategic business for Tasmania. It's one of our biggest exporters, it's one of our biggest employers and it has a wide-ranging, very important supply chain. We understand all of those things. It also plays a critical role in our energy system. It provides a range of services that help support stability in our system, load tripping and so on.

All of those factors are considered, particularly those energy ones as they apply to Hydro Tasmania, and those technical details are being factored in the negotiations that are taking place as I speak. Putting a fair value on those things is really important but, as I say, we will likely be left with a gap between what Rio says it needs to operate profitably and commercially and what Hydro Tasmania - And as I have also said earlier, I am insistent and repetitive in my demands of Hydro to view its role in the context of its charter to provide Tasmanians with the lowest power prices and also support jobs and economic development. It's an important tool, it always has been and it will continue to be so. But, we will have a gap between what Rio says is commercial and what Hydro can responsibly put on the table that doesn't then translate into a cost to the Tasmanian taxpayer.

I'm advised that at the moment there is a gap of around \$60 million a year. It's a big gap and if you extrapolate that over 10 years it becomes a very large number. This is not peculiar to Tasmania. This is a circumstance that we are seeing with every other aluminium smelter in the country. The difference is the Commonwealth, the federal government, in all of those other cases - at Boyne, \$1 billion of Commonwealth funding; at Tomago, it hasn't landed yet, but it's likely to be the same, if not more. What we need is the Commonwealth, despite being let off the hook by the Deputy Leader of the Labor Party -

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr DUIGAN** - 'Don't worry about it, it won't happen, we've got this, we'll write a blank cheque, will we?' A blank cheque - that's your position.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Well, unfortunately, I have a greater responsibility.

## UNCORRECTED PROOF

**Ms FINLAY** - Point of order point, Speaker. I am offended personally by the suggestion of the minister that I would ever write a blank cheque to anybody and ask I ask him to withdraw.

**The SPEAKER** - I ask the member to withdraw.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Minister, you need to withdraw your comment.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - She was personally offended by the comment.

**Mr Duigan** - You've imputed something's -

**Ms Finlay** - The Speaker has asked you to withdraw.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. I ask members to my right to stop interjecting.

**Mr Duigan** - Sorry, I didn't get what the withdrawal is about.

**The SPEAKER** - That she has -

**Mr Duigan** - What words?

**Ms Finlay** - I would never allow anyone to have a blank cheque. I'm personally offended and I ask that you withdraw.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Duigan** - Do you know what the number is?

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. This is not a time for debate. The member has asked you to withdraw the comment. You just need to say, 'I withdraw'.

**Mr Duigan** - No, I don't think I do.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Okay. I withdraw.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - There was a supplementary, wasn't there?



**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. I remind the House that we only need 14 for a quorum, so the number of members in this House for Question Time can dramatically reduce very fast, or I can suspend Question Time. There are quite a lot of questions remaining. I ask that all members be respectful of each other. As I reminded the House at the start of this sitting, the public is watching, so I ask that members be cognisant of the fact that we are being broadcast and we have our guests in the Gallery. I welcome again year 6 students from Mount Carmel College. This is the second group this morning, so I ask that all members settle, please.

## Supplementary Question

**Ms FINLAY** - Thank you, Speaker. Delivering a power deal is the responsibility for the Energy minister of Tasmania. Susie Bower, who I was quoting earlier, said, 'Get on with the power deal for BBA because the state will benefit hugely'. She was talking about getting over the repeated questions. What I want to know is, if you say that there's all these commitments elsewhere, what have you asked the federal government for?

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms Finlay** - The minister in his answer said -

**The SPEAKER** - Deputy Leader of the Opposition, I do not need any more assistance. Thank you. The minister has the call.

**The SPEAKER** - Order, members to my right, I ask that all interjections cease as well because you, too, can have warnings and be suspended from the House. The honourable minister has the call.

**Mr DUIGAN** - Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for the question. We have continued to and will continue to ask Canberra to play its role -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr DUIGAN** - as it has done. Now, and I think it's very important, up until the federal member for Bass delivered the great news for Bass that the federal government would be reneging its commitment to Bell Bay Aluminium -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order.

**Mr DUIGAN** - reneging its commitment. The Deputy Leader -

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms Brown** - What exactly have you done, minister?

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable member for Franklin, this is your first warning.

**Mr DUIGAN** - The Deputy Leader of the Tasmanian Labor Party -

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr Mitchell** - What have you done?

**The SPEAKER** - Second warning.

**Members** interjecting.

**Ms HADDAD** - Speaker, point of order 45, relevance. The question was: what has the minister specifically asked for?

**Mr DUIGAN** - Well, again, I have asked Canberra to fulfil its commitment; the commitment that was made by the Prime Minister and the minister.

**Members** interjecting.

### **Fuel Prices**

**Mr O'BYRNE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.47 a.m.]

Tasmanian households are being smashed by the cost of living and fuel prices are on the rise again. The federal fuel excise discount ended on Sunday, 2 August but, on the Friday before, prices had already jumped to \$2 per litre at some Tasmanian service stations. As of today, prices of regular unleaded are between \$2.08 and \$2.12 around Hobart and as high as \$2.32 at Dover in the far south. High fuel prices are expected to persist for some time, given the war in the Persian Gulf. In March, this parliament passed urgent legislation giving the government greater powers around fuel pricing and supply levels. Do you think it was fair for petrol prices to spike so high even before the excise cut had flown through, and what is your government doing to keep suppliers honest as this cost-of-living crunch continues?

### **ANSWER**

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. As I've been around Tasmania in the last five or six weeks, I concur with the member. Cost of living is a very big issue for Tasmanians who are hurting when it comes to interest rates, when it comes to inflation and when it comes to higher fuel prices, which flow on to grocery prices as well. That's why, as a government, we're very mindful of the fact that we need to reach in and support vulnerable Tasmanians, particularly those on fixed incomes and low incomes, when it comes to concessions and the Budget that has passed both Houses invests significantly when it comes to supporting Tasmanians, as it does the organisations that support vulnerable Tasmanians.

If I can ensure the member that Tasmania's fuel supply remains secure and stable with no change to the overall position and no statewide shortages. We have strong fuel reserves with

around 112 days of petrol and 67 days of diesel and that data is to 4 August. Now, throughout this period, we've remained focused on sensible, proactive and precautionary measures. We have improved the legislative framework, which you acknowledged, thank you, sought better visibility of our fuel stocks and stepped up our communication to Tasmanians.

We are exploring ways to increase fuel resilience in Tasmania, including working with the Australian Government to leverage support through their \$14.8 billion fuel security and resilience package. We have the legislative framework. I concur with the member around the unfairness of higher fuel prices and the impact that that has on everyday Tasmanians. We very quickly enacted legislation brought in by the Attorney-General earlier this year, and I thank both Houses of the parliament for working through that in a very short amount of time.

But, what is exacerbating the fuel price increase is, of course, interest rates for mortgage holders, also fuel interest rates as well, which is really - and inflation is hurting Australians and Tasmanians. I look forward to working with the honourable member. If I've missed something in the question, I will detail that to the House at a later time, in terms of the transparency aspect of the question.

### Supplementary Question

**Mr O'BYRNE** - The federal Treasurer has called on the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC) to keep an eye on price gouging. Premier, my question to you is: do you think it's fair that the price of petrol jumped even before the decision came into effect to reduce the fuel excise subsidy? If so, will you then call on the ACCC to investigate what happened over that period of time?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Of course, Consumer, Building and Occupational Services (CBOS) is conducting proactive online and in-person audits of fuel retailers to ensure fuel board pricing aligns with prices advertised on the FuelCheck app. They have completed 287 on-site audits with 10 non-compliances detected, I'm advised.

CBOS has also written to all fuel retailers, reminding them of their obligations under the Australian Consumer Law (Tasmania) and its associated updated codes of practice relating to fuel price boards, pump price displays, and fuel price reporting.

While our audits demonstrate that compliance by retailers is high, I encourage any examples of incorrect information on FuelCheck to be brought to the attention of CBOS so they can be investigated. The government has taken action to ensure that penalties now apply for non-compliance.

### Audit Tasmania - Funding

**Ms BURNET question to TREASURER, Mr ABETZ**

[10.52 a.m.]

In December 2025, you and the Premier wrote to Dean Harriss MLC promising that Audit Tasmania would receive sufficient funding to deliver at least six performance audits a year. You made that promise to secure his vote for the Macquarie Point stadium. On 10 April 2026, your office received correspondence from the Auditor-General setting out, in black and

white, that an additional \$800,000 of annual funding was needed to deliver on that promise. Your response: to cut the Auditor-General's funding by \$300,000. The Auditor-General has said this will leave his office with no option but to cut back on the work it does, precisely at a time when transparency, accountability and trust in your government is at an all-time low. Treasurer, did you ever intend to keep that promise to Mr Harriss, or was it simply another case of your government doing and saying whatever it takes to get its stadium?

### ANSWER

I thank the honourable member for her question. The role of the Auditor-General is a very important one in our system of democracy, but the independence of the Auditor-General does not allow that office to seek to determine their own budget. That is a very important principle. I don't blame agencies for trying to get as much funding as they possibly can, but it has always been, in our system of government, that government will determine funding. To claim that somehow independence is removed, unless the full request is provided, is something that does not sit easily with the way we do business in the Westminster system. Can I also point out -

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr ABETZ** - Can I also point out to those seeking to interject, have a look at the full-time equivalent jobs in the Auditor-General's office over the past year: a 30 per cent increase. Oh, I wonder where that funding came from. So, please be very careful, when making assertions, that you look at the full total picture in relation to that which is being put out into the public arena.

In relation to the former member for Huon, Dean Harriss, can I assure you that that undertaking was given to him in the circumstances of that which had occurred in the previous year. Asking, 'How much does six audits cost?' is a bit like asking, 'How much does six houses cost?' It depends on the extent of the house, the size of the house, the quality of the house, et cetera. Therefore, it is our view that there is funding for six audits for the Auditor-General to be able to undertake.

The question is: do you want an audit 'this big' or 'that big'? Of course, that is where you can have some discussion. Our view is that the Auditor-General does a good job with all his staff, with all the powers that are available to that office. We are currently looking at amendments to the *Audit Act* to refine and enhance some of those matters that the Auditor-General has sought, and ongoing discussions are taking place. Speaker, in brief, we support the Auditor-General.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Treasurer's time has expired.

### Supplementary Question

**Ms BURNET** - Honourable Speaker, the question to his answer: Treasurer, you've said that perhaps the Auditor-General doesn't need that extra \$300,000 to do their job and to scrutinise. Have you actually read the Auditor-General's report. It says that the performance audits in 2024-25 were only two, and in 2025-26 there were four, but the number of audits has been reducing?

**Mr ABETZ** - I can provide some exact figures to the honourable member. The 2026-27 Budget provides appropriation revenue to the Tasmanian Audit Office of \$2.43 million, increasing to \$2.56 million in 2029-30. In addition, the office receives, reserved by law, appropriation revenue of \$626,000 in 2026-27, and that will increase to \$666,000 in 2029-30 for the salary and allowances of the Auditor-General.

Total forecast expenditure of the Tasmanian Audit Office in 2026-27 is \$11.5 million, comprising the appropriation revenue plus the forecast retained revenue from audit services, and the forecast expenditure of the office is estimated to increase to \$12.5 million in 2029-30.

**The SPEAKER** - Time has expired.

Before I give the call to the honourable Leader of the Opposition, I remind members of the members' guide to procedure that on page 33, it does state that members should be referred to as 'the honourable member for Bass' or 'honourable Treasurer', 'honourable Premier', 'honourable Deputy Speaker', et cetera. Also, when we refer to members in the upper House, we should call them 'honourable' as well. That includes previous members of the parliament. Please just try and remember. If you haven't read this in a while, I encourage you to read it - please use 'the honourable member', 'honourable minister', 'honourable Leader of the Opposition', et cetera, in your questions and in your responses.

### **Bell Bay Aluminium - Impact of Closure on Tasmanians**

**Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[10.59 a.m.]

Energy analysts estimate that the closure of Bell Bay Aluminium could add around 2 per cent to household power bills by shifting its network costs onto other customers. Do you accept that figure? If not, has the government done any modelling on how another major industrial collapse will impact Tasmanians?

**ANSWER**

I thank the honourable member for his question. Can I commend the honourable Energy minister on his answers today and the diligence that he is displaying when it comes to working with major industrials, alongside minister Mr Ellis and our team. Of course, we're very well aware of the impact on Liberty Bell Bay, and we threw everything at it: \$155 million over 10 years, versus \$15 million that the feds had on the table. There's a stark difference there. What we also needed, in backing up our team and local members, is advocacy from the federal Labor government and they were silent all the way through.

We are well aware of the impact because we were in George Town the other day with local members for Bass meeting with the community, both Liberty Bell Bay workers and those within the supply chain as well. We recognise how devastated the community. This is why we need to secure a deal with Bell Bay Aluminium and we need the feds to come good on their commitment.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I know the honourable member has sent a memo around caucus saying the Labor Party will be 30 per cent in the polls by Christmas. I have some good advice for the

honourable member: start standing up for Tasmania and don't cave in to the Labor Party in Canberra.

**Ms FINLAY** - Point of order, relevance, 45. The question is about household and small business power bills going up because major industrials will exit the system. What's your response to the question about the modelling about household power bills going up if Bell Bay Aluminium don't get a power deal and because Liberty Bell Bay couldn't secure their power deal?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Which is why we need a Team Tasmania effort to stand up to Canberra and make sure that the federal Labor Party come good on their commitment when it comes to green energy, aluminium credits. Why aren't you standing up to Canberra?

Stand up to Canberra on Rushy Lagoon and while you're at it, stand up to Canberra on behalf of all our people in hospitals that deserve an aged care placement. There's three things for you to get to 30 per cent by Christmas.

**The SPEAKER** - The Premier's time has expired.

### Supplementary question

**Mr WILLIE** - The question was about modelling and whether the government has done any modelling on the impacts on Tasmanians for another major industrial collapse on your watch.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - The real question is, will you join team Tasmania - take off the political colours and put on the Tasmanian jumper and actually stand up to Canberra?

**Mr Mitchell** - You are so weak.

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable member for Lyons, this is your first warning.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Stand up for Tasmanians and don't cave in to Canberra because there was a clear commitment made on green energy credits and it's there in black and white. Whatever form of support that takes, we are open to those discussions with Rio Tinto and the federal Labor government.

There's three things for you, honourable member, to realise your memo target to your caucus of getting the Labor Party to 30 per cent by Christmas. Stand up for the workers of Bell Bay Aluminium, stand up for our aged care system and stand up against the sale of Rushy Lagoon.

### *Forest Practices Act 1985 - Community Expectations*

**Mr Di FALCO question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[11.04 a.m.]

Three thousand Tasmanians have just signed the petition saying the *Forest Practices Act* (FPA) if is not meeting the community's expectations. I'm sure you received direct feedback

from your meeting with the impacted landowners last week. The videos Lindsay White of the Farmers Landowners Action Group has been filming across the state have been heartbreaking to see and hard to watch. A good first step with opening consultation, but what commitments do you give to the farmers and landowners that you will follow through on fixing this?

### ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for the question. You've asked similar questions both to myself and Mr Ellis on a few occasions in the parliament. You're correct. I did speak with affected landholders and farmers, and spoke with Lindsay White just the other day. It was a very productive meeting.

In that meeting, incidentally, I commended you for your advocacy on behalf of rural and regional communities because we all recognise the strength of feeling in the farming community, that the regulations pertaining to trees and rivers on private land can be confusing, and that farmers are under significant pressure. Parts of the vegetation clearing and enforcement framework are seen as complex, inconsistent and very difficult to navigate. Those concerns were expressed in the meeting.

Our Resources minister, Mr Ellis, and our minister for Primary Industries were at the meeting as well. We are listening to relevant stakeholders. I commend Mr White on his advocacy - and I've taken great interest in his social media, but most importantly the people with lived experience in this area who have been put under very stressful and heartbreaking circumstances.

Stakeholder engagement with the farmers has commenced with the release of the FPA feedback portal as part of our regulatory review to identify areas of improvement for private landowners. I commend Mr Ellis on getting that underway and announced just a few days ago. As a part of this process, people will have a chance to share their views. It will include both written submissions and in-person sessions, which will take place over the coming months.

We must ensure that we get the balance right when it comes to this matter, protecting Tasmania's high-value environmental assets while also supporting practical productive farming and maintaining confidence in regional communities. Most importantly, we support Tasmanian farmers. The task ahead is to deliver a system that is fair, transparent and balanced, recognising both environmental responsibilities and farmers' ability to manage their land.

I've met with more high-profile people involved in these matters, also at that meeting. I have taken great interest in public commentary, including your advocacy, Mr Di Falco. I appreciate that and I look forward to some very positive change in this area. No doubt they will continue -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

### Signage Threatening Firearms Violence

**Ms BADGER question to MINISTER for POLICE, FIRE and EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT, Mr ELLIS**

[11.08 a.m.]

We are increasingly hearing stories from the Tasmanian community about the growing presence of signage threatening firearms violence displayed at properties across the state, like those at Collinsvale highlighted in today's news. These signs are understandably intimidating and frightening to reasonable law-abiding Tasmanians, especially in the context of threats and attacks on police by armed so-called sovereign citizens in other states and here.

As Police minister, you are responsible not only for Tasmania's firearm laws, but for public safety and the safety of officers on the front line. Given that, will you condemn the display of signage threatening firearms violence and seek an urgent meeting with the police commissioner about public safety in this context and responsibly reframing public messaging on the firearms reform debate in Tasmania?

### ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for Lyons for the question. Certainly, there's no place for firearms violence in our community. I think we'd all agree on that. There's also no place for trespass. In terms of private signage, that is a matter for landowners, but we encourage people to be civil in their tones -

**Dr Woodruff** - You've got to be kidding. That's disgraceful.

**Mr ELLIS** - I'm not sure what exactly the concern was there, Dr Woodruff, but specifically there's no place for firearms violence. I think we made that really clear.

**Dr Woodruff** - But what about promoting firearms violence? What about if a police officer goes onto the property?

**Mr ELLIS** - In terms of concerns about - well, saying that I'm responsible for the signs that - some of them look rusty enough to be older than you and I, Ms Badger, I'd reject that. Ultimately, these are matters for the landowners themselves. But the police commissioner and I speak regularly about these matters, which is part of the reason we included in this Budget, that's been passed by this House, an officer safety package that extensively provides greater tools for our officers, so they have more use of force options and they have greater protection. We're also the government that delivered a full-time special operations group. These highly trained operators are often the people that our frontline general duties police look to to provide that additional capability in some of these concerning moments.

More broadly, in terms of sovereign citizens and other potential terrorists, this is exactly why the legislation we have is very much focused on ensuring better intelligence sharing. It is important that firearms don't fall into the wrong hands, that's why we need stronger penalties, and that, when intelligence comes into police or other intelligence agencies that our firearms licencing bodies are empowered to act. The problem at Bondi was very clear. Border Force and the ASIO knew that the terrorists had been to terrorist training camps overseas, yet didn't tell New South Wales police.

**Dr Woodruff** - We're talking about Tasmania.



**Mr ELLIS** - Didn't tell New South Wales Police and, if it had happened in Tasmania, the same concerns would have existed. That's why we need a change to this system for the country.

**Dr Woodruff** - It has happened in Tasmania.

**The SPEAKER** - Dr Woodruff, this is your second warning.

**Mr ELLIS** - That's why we to change this system for the country, Dr Woodruff, because better information sharing from those agencies will assist police here.

**Mr ELLIS** - One of the terrorists was on an ASIO watchlist for more than six years, yet firearms licencing in New South Wales was not aware of that. That's why New South Wales's Premier, Chris Minns, has described what happened as a giant intelligence failure. Now, the Prime Minister was very quick to blame law-abiding firearms owners, but very slow to call the royal commission. The reason that this is so important is that we need to ensure that firearms don't fall into the wrong hands, so that we can protect our community.

### Supplementary Question

**Ms BADGER** - These are very clear threats that are being displayed in public and it is reckless rhetoric like this that is only emboldening people to continue to display it. It is simply inappropriate. To be unequivocally clear, minister, are you today on your answer standing by threats of firearm violence in the Tasmanian community or will you condemn it?

**Mr ELLIS** - Sorry, Ms Badger, I'm not sure where the miscommunication is happening between the two of us, but as I said, very clearly, there is no place for firearms violence in our community and we condemn it because we believe that there is no place for firearms violence in our community.

**Ms Badger** - But you stand by the threats, minister?

**The SPEAKER** - Member for Lyons, this is your first warning.

### Bell Bay Aluminium - New Agreement

**Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[11.13 a.m.]

Last week you told the Tasmanian Minerals, Manufacturing & Energy Council (TMEC) conference you wanted Tasmania's major industrial businesses to remain here for generations to come, but wanting them to stay here isn't enough. Your government has a responsibility to make sure they can. Your Energy minister failed to deliver a workable power agreement at Liberty Bell Bay, that's what the administrator said, and more than 200 Tasmanian jobs were lost. Now, Bell Bay Aluminium needs a new agreement by the end of the month with more than 550 jobs and the future of a regional community at stake. Premier, will you take responsibility, bring together Hydro, your Energy minister and Bell Bay Aluminium, and deliver a whole-of-government proposal that protects those 550 jobs, or will you just watch it collapse and blame everybody else?

**ANSWER**

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. Of course, Liberty Bell Bay signed a 10-year power agreement in 2024, so I'll just give you a bit of a history lesson on that one. Second, negotiations are underway, clearly. Yes, I said how important the major industrials and, indeed, mining companies and those associated with TMEC, are to our state. We're very fortunate in Tasmania, we have enormous diversification when it comes to our small, medium and large businesses and industry, of which Tasmanians should be rightly proud, whether that be in hospitality, tourism, agriculture, of course -

**Mr WILLIE** - Point of order, Speaker. The Premier might want to run the clock down, but this is a very important issue facing the northern economy and the people there, and I would like him to answer the question. Will he take responsibility and bring people together to protect the jobs?

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Thank you. As I remind members, if the honourable minister or Premier is addressing the relevant policy area, the answer is relevant. That is according to the *House of Representatives Practice (7th edition)*, at page 567. I encourage members to have a look at it. The honourable Premier has the call.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - The real question, knowing full well our Energy minister is engaged in these matters and negotiations with Hydro and Rio Tinto Bell Bay Aluminium, is what the honourable member is doing for Bell Bay Aluminium and the workers?

**Mr Mitchell** - We're not the government.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - But you're a member of the Labor Party, Brian -

**Mr Mitchell** - We're not the government. Do your job. Do your job.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - and there is a Labor Party in government in Canberra, okay?

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable member for Lyons, this is your second warning.

**Mr Mitchell** - I'm just trying to be helpful, Speaker.

**Members** interjecting.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Why don't you do your job and support the workers who no doubt are members of unions that you support. I commend their advocacy as well and I would hope that they also join with the Labor Party in standing up to Canberra and at the very least -

**Ms Haddad** - What have you asked for as Premier of the state?

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable member for Clark, Ms Haddad, this is your first warning.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - ensure they realise their commitment to support the smelter industry. Now, Ms Finlay has clearly indicated today that through her own words she seems to be informed -

**Mr Mitchell** - She's reporting the comments of Susie Bower.

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable member for Lyons, your third and final warning. I remind all members that the warnings do stay for the whole day. There are a few on three. Thank you, honourable Premier.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Can I inform the honourable member, to his question, we have in fact directly intervened to drive negotiations with BBA forward. We have established a structured process between the Tasmanian government, Hydro Tasmania, Rio Tinto, and Bell Bay Aluminium with clear parameters around energy pricing.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

### Supplementary Question

**Mr WILLIE** - The question for the Premier is: will he secure Bell Bay Aluminium's future, or will he just watch it collapse, blame everybody else, and then sell the power elsewhere?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - We have directly intervened to drive negotiations with BBA moving forward. I detailed that to you at the end of my question. But, you are really on very shaky ground because I can guarantee you the 550 workers also want you to stand up to Canberra. Is Ms Finlay correct? Does she know? Has she advocated on behalf of the workers of BBA? Ms Finlay appears to have got an answer from the federal government to say it's all over, it's all over. Is that true? Is that true? That's what you intimated in the answer to the honourable member for Windermere.

**Mr Willie** - You've broken the budget, that's the problem. You're just trying to maximise profits.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - No, the problem is you're too weak.

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable Leader of the Opposition, your third warning.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - You won't stand up to your federal colleagues. That's the problem with you, sir. That is the problem with you.

**Mr Willie** - You want Hydro to maximise profits to pay for your broken budget.

**The SPEAKER** - Honourable Leader of the Opposition, you're on three warnings.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - If you want to get to your 30 per cent, then I'd start standing up for BBA and the 550 workers and keep -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

## AI Data Centres - Approvals

**Prof RAZAY question to MINISTER for INNOVATION, SCIENCE and the DIGITAL ECONOMY, Mr ELLIS**

[11.19 a.m.]

We have one Firmus AI factory under construction at St Leonards in Launceston and another proposed for George Town, which if approved by local council, will be 200 m wide and 500 m long. There are at least another five AI centres from different parties being discussed. Many questions about AI factories remain unanswered. As AI is such an important public issue, what is the government's position on whether the approval of AI factories should also be the responsibility of the state government, at least until the federal government has its bill for consideration?

### ANSWER

Thank you, Speaker, and I thank the member for Bass for this very important question. AI is disrupting our communities and economies in ways that are good and bad, and it's important that we work through this. Now, in terms of some of the large-scale data centre developments that you talk about, obviously there are a number of data centres already existing in Tasmania. What's new is that with AI we are seeing a significant uplift in terms of size and scale. That's why it's important that we set down really clearly what the expectations are for AI developers and the community in this process.

We are, in the course of the next 100 days, going to be releasing our expectations for AI data centres and that'll make it really clear about what the process is.

**Ms Finlay** - Nothing like being ahead of the game.

**Mr ELLIS** - Ms Finlay, I know you don't know what your position is on AI data centres, but we will be really clear on ours.

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### Member Suspended

### Member for Bass - Ms Finlay

**Ms Finlay** - Statement of expectations after you've delivered the energy.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. Honourable Deputy Leader of the Opposition, under Standing Order 149, you are suspended from the House until the end of MPI.

**Ms Finlay withdrew.**

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**Mr ELLIS** - Thank you, Honourable Speaker. As I was saying, it's important that we work through that process. Tasmanian planning laws are strong, as are Tasmania's environment laws, and generally speaking, we believe that AI data centre matters can be managed through those processes. What is unique about AI data centres, particularly at this hyper scale, is the consumption of energy and potentially the consumption of water, although in the case of some

proponents with direct-to-chip cooling, like Firmus, the use of water is much lower. So, it's very clear that we need to set out some clear parameters.

We will be releasing this statement of expectations in the coming days, but we'll make it very clear that AI data centres need to pay their way. In large-scale proponents in the past, there has been some expectation that the Tasmanian Government would provide deeply concessional opportunities when it comes to electricity generation and transmission. We believe that it's important that for AI data centres, they need to pay their way. That will support load sharing across our broader power network as well, because these will be large users that will pay a large amount for transmission, but they can be located close to where existing transmission already is.

We'd also strongly expect that they draw through new renewable energy opportunities as well. I understand that Firmus in particular, as a developer, has spoken about bringing on 2 megawatts of capacity for every 1 megawatt that they use. There will be some great opportunities to draw through more renewable energy for our broader grid, and when it comes to water, Firmus uses significantly less on the basis of the kind of technology, the innovative technology, that they're using.

Broadly speaking, it's important, too, that AI data centres pay their way on water costs for generation, effectively, and for transmission too. We'll have more to say about our expectations on AI data centres in this course of our 100 days.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable minister's time has expired.

**The SPEAKER** - While the member makes his way to the lectern, I just want to remind the House that the honourable member for Franklin, Ms Brown, is on three warnings, the honourable member for Lyons, Mr Mitchell, is on three warnings, and the honourable Leader of the Opposition is on three warnings. If we can get through the remaining three questions of Question Time without any more people suspended, that would be fantastic.

### **Salmon Industry - Consultation by Minister**

**Mr GEORGE question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr PEARCE**

[11.23 p.m.]

In June you held three meetings, or had three meetings, with salmon industry spin merchant John Whittington, as well as with Huon Aquaculture and Tassal executives. I'm sure they fed you well with salmon and spin. Since you've held your ministerial office, how many times have you met with scientists and communities who have genuine, well-informed concerns about the impact on our state's inland waterways, marine life and the lives of coastal residents - for instance, the Tasmanian Independent Science Council, or any number of environmental and community organisations?

### **ANSWER**

Honourable Speaker, I thank the member for his question - or his accusation, more likely. However, I'm in constant contact with my scientific experts that feed my department, and that's

what I take notice of. I reject the implication of any impropriety in relation to me speaking with anyone from any industry. I reject it. I refute it.

In terms of exactly who I speak with and who I don't, I'll provide that to you on notice.

**Supplementary Question**

**Mr GEORGE** - I made no suggestion of impropriety, but all I'm asking you -

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order, order. The only one who has the call right now is the honourable member for Franklin, Mr George. I ask that the House settle, please.

**Mr GEORGE** - If my constituents were to offer your party as much support as the salmon industry does, would you undertake to meet them, and independent scientists, to hear their concerns about the salmon industry?

**Mr PEARCE** - Speaker, I refer to my previous answer. I'm not going to get into the gutter, the absolute gutter that this line of questioning has gotten to.

**State Energy System**

**Mr WILLIE question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF**

[11.26 a.m.]

Tasmanians should not be forced to choose between the major industrial businesses that sustain our communities today and the new industries that can create jobs tomorrow. After 13 years in government, why haven't you built an energy system capable of supporting both?

**ANSWER**

Thank you, honourable member. I am very proud of the diversity of the economy here in Tasmania. That's why our unemployment rate has a four in front of it, not an eight as when of you were last in government. It's why we've created some 50,000 jobs over the course of the last 12 years. It is why I see investment in key areas, all areas of Tasmania, in actual fact. It is important that that diversification remains, and we can have it all when it comes to our major industrials, when it comes to energy security, and when it comes to our small, medium and large businesses as well. We are very clear when it comes to securing Tasmania's energy future, while keeping power prices among the lowest in the nation.

I will give an example of the work that we've done. There's no greater example of a government standing up for and securing Tasmania's energy future and working with the federal government of all shades of colour, being the Coalition and the Labor Party federally at the moment, and that is the Marinus Link. While we were working on those negotiations with the federal government, you were still working out whether or not you supported it, and you were flip-flopping all over the place. I used to come to Question Time wondering whether you'd be pro-Marinus one day or anti-Marinus the next day. Such is it so difficult for the Labor Party in Tasmania to make a decision on where they stand on anything.

I can advise the honourable member that we are delivering on Project Marinus and the North West Transmission Developments, who've moved beyond planning and are now in firm delivery. We are supporting proponents of new renewable energy generation through the Renewable Energy Approvals Pathway, dedicated case managers and coordinated approvals.

We do have a very clear plan for energy, and I welcome your belated bipartisan support for Marinus Link. I commend the minister for Energy, who is engaged in his matters in the upper House at the moment, for his work and diligence on that, and indeed his predecessors as well, including minister Barnett.

What I can say very clearly and advise you again, Mr Willie, on getting to that 30 per cent by Christmas, honourable Leader of the Opposition, is you really need to start standing up for major industrials, advocate for a policy commitment to be realised by the federal Labor Party in Canberra.

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

### **Supplementary Question**

**Mr WILLIE** - There's a lot of uncertainty in the northern economy right now, and I think the Premier's words today would be cold comfort to the people up there. Will he secure Bell Bay Aluminium or is his plan just to sell the power elsewhere and blame everybody else?

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - Thank you. I reject all those assertions, absolutely and categorically. I've spoken in my previous answer about the negotiation work going on through a number of entities when it comes to securing a power deal for Bell Bay Aluminium.

**Mrs Greene** - You know the northern economy is in trouble. That's why you had a summit.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - I thank Mrs Greene very much for attending the Northern Tasmania Economic Summit, which was very well attended, including by your good self, representing the entirety of the Labor Party. We had 100 leaders and business, industry, local government, tourism, agriculture, community organisations and all levels of government for the Northern Tasmania Economic Summit in Launceston -

**Mr Willie** - All these high-value jobs going and your answer is a beer weekend.

**Mr ROCKLIFF** - We were very up-front about some of the challenges we are facing, which is why we brought the community together and why we also wanted the input of the Labor Party and the unions in that summit. I thank the honourable member for Bass -

**The SPEAKER** - The honourable Premier's time has expired.

## Government Honesty and Transparency

### Mr GARLAND question to PREMIER, Mr ROCKLIFF

[11.31 a.m.]

We are all living on something of a hamster wheel, working, paying bills and making decisions in the hope of creating a better future while much of the world around us is increasingly uncertain. In that environment, people depend upon those who govern them to be honest about the choices being made on their behalf, particularly when those choices involve significant public money, long-term consequences, and competing claims about what is in the public interest. When you speak of honesty and transparency in government, what does honesty actually mean to you? Where do you draw the line between telling Tasmanians what they need to know and telling them only what your government wants them to hear?

### ANSWER

Honourable Speaker, I thank the honourable member for his question. We are increasing openness and transparency, and informing the community on all matters pertaining to executive government, through what we've put in place over the course of the last 12 years. I can talk about allowances and ministerial diaries, for example. The question from the honourable member for Franklin, Mr George, today was a reflection on the fact that he has been doing his due diligence and keeping an eye on us and the ministerial diaries we are releasing in openness and transparency.

We are also making sure that all the important data that needs to be presented to the community around a whole range of areas - I'll take the health system dashboard, for example, honourable member for Bass and Health minister Mrs Archer. The dashboard is updated very regularly across a range of indicators, highlighting where things aren't working and where we need to improve when it comes to our health system.

From our independent review into the Right to Information (RTI), 11 recommendations have been completed, with most of the remaining recommendations to be completed within the next 12 months. The RTI Uplift Project has delivered whole-of-government information disclosure policies and procedures, training for all staff, training on applying and the provisions of the *RTI Act* for RTI delegates, and online training modules across the public sector and public authorities.

We have monthly disclosure of full-time equivalent numbers in the State Service. Under previous governments, we were waiting for annual State Service reports. I have mentioned monthly release of ministerial diary information. There are also regular disclosures of ministerial salaries and numbers, and ministers' travel and entertainment expenses, and enhanced quarterly procurement statistics under the Buy Local policy. So, there's a range of areas, honourable member.

I take the first part of your question seriously, in terms of where Australians and, indeed, many people across the globe, find themselves trying to make ends meet, pertaining to the honourable member for Franklin, Mr O'Byrne's question around the difficulties around cost of living and the difficult choices families have to make in a higher inflation, higher interest rate, higher fuel price environment. It's been tough, and people are telling me it's been tough as I've



travelled around the state. But they are pleased with progress in key areas. I was in Bicheno, saw the new ambulance station about to be -

**Time expired.**

### CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS

**Dr BROAD question to Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Management, Mr ELLIS**

Alex from Burnie has seen messages on fire stations and fire trucks calling out how poorly firefighters are being treated in wage negotiations, which you say are going well. If negotiations are going so well, why are firefighters taking unprecedented industrial action?

### **Tasman Peninsula - Closure of Public Infrastructure**

**Ms BADGER question MINISTER for PARKS AND HERITAGE, Mr DUIGAN**

My question is from the community on the Tasman Peninsula. The community and local businesses are deeply concerned about Parks removing vital public infrastructure from the region. This matter was also raised with you today in a letter from the Tasman Council. Public toilets have been removed at Stewarts Bay and those at Roaring Beach are proposed to be closed. We also understand Parks are terminating a longstanding lease of over 25 years for a local business at the Blowhole. These decisions will have negative impacts on the Tasman community and visitor experience. Will you reverse the decisions over closing the public toilets, reinstate the commercial lease at the Blowhole and urgently go and meet with the Tasman Council to establish a collaborative, transparent approach to managing public infrastructure and business on the peninsula?

### **Landale Street Community Hall - TasWater Charges**

**Prof RAZAY question to TREASURER, Mr ABETZ**

The Landale Street Community Hall has received advice from TasWater that its new sewage charging structure will see the cost rise from \$930 to more than \$2000, an increase of 120 per cent. The hall's treasurer says that the bulk of this increase is due to the size of the connection required for a firehouse reel that is tied in with the fixed sewage charge. The whole committee understands that the fire hose can be removed, but only at considerable cost to the hall. The hall is run by a non-profit organisation and is used by a variety of groups for singing, dancing, craft, et cetera. Will the Treasurer commit to investigate this case and to a wider review of TasWater pricing policy to ensure they are fairer and equitable for community-based organisations?

### **Reallocation of Funds for Huon Valley's Failed Transformer Project**

**Mr GEORGE question to MINISTER for TOURISM, HOSPITALITY and EVENTS, Mr JAENSCH**

My question comes from Toby Clark in Franklin, who asks what's happened to the \$2 million committed by the state and federal governments to the failed Transformer project. This was funding specifically to rejuvenate the tourism industry in the Huon Valley in the wake of the devastating 2019 bushfires? A community led initiative in the Huon could provide lasting economic, cultural and social benefits. Will the government explain how it will reallocate its \$500,000 commitment to honour the original purpose of the funding? And will it commit to ensuring a community-led process going forward?

### **Workers' Compensation - Review of Legislation**

**Ms HADDAD question to TREASURER, Mr ABETZ**

My question is from Sam of Mount Stuart. Sam has made a worker's compensation claim for psychological harm that he suffered from an accident at work. Sam heard the Treasurer's Budget speech where he said that psychological injury claims were contributing disproportionately to workers compensation liabilities. The Treasurer said that 'legislative review is clearly needed'. Sam is concerned that the government intends to reduce the benefits, protections or other entitlements available to injured workers in order to cut costs. Can the Treasurer explain to Sam precisely what changes the government is considering through its proposed legislative review of workers compensation, whether this review has already started and how Sam can contribute? And can he guarantee that Sam's workers compensation entitlements and those of other Tasmanians injured at work will not be reduced?

### **Royal Botanical Gardens - Plans for Young Visitors**

**Mr VERMEY question to MINISTER for PARKS and HERITAGE, Mr DUIGAN**

My question is from Sarah in Hobart, who enjoys visiting the Royal Botanical Gardens with her child. They are wondering what else is being planned for the gardens to encourage young people to visit, spend time and enjoy their surroundings?

### **Primary Produce Safety (Horticulture Produce) Regulations - Consultation**

**Mr GARLAND question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES and WATER, Mr PEARCE**

Mr Dennis Turner of Wynyard asks: During phase 2 of the consultation on the proposed Primary Produce Safety (Horticulture Produce) Regulations 2026, members of the public were invited to lodge submissions before the government announced that the consultation process would be discontinued. How many phase 2 submissions had been received by the department at the time the consultation was halted? Will the government publish those submissions, subject to any necessary privacy redactions, so that the Tasmanian community can understand the overall feedback received? And if not, why not?

# UNCORRECTED PROOF

## Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme - Update

**Mr SHELTON question to MINISTER for PRIMARY INDUSTRIES AND WATER, Mr PEARCE**

Many people across the Lyons electorate, particularly those around the Macquarie River, such as Barton, Conara, Campbell Town, Ross and the lower Isis Valley, have been closely monitoring the progress of the Northern Midlands Irrigation Scheme and are looking forward to the opportunities which it will create for farmers and the communities.

Can the minister please provide an update on progress with the laying of the 152 km of pipeline for this project and outline how the Tasmanian government's investment in irrigation development is supporting agriculture, productivity, regional jobs, and economic growth across Tasmania.

**The SPEAKER** - Sorry, honourable member for Lyons. We've asked the number of constituent questions, so we now move on to petitions.

## TABLED PAPERS

### Standing Orders Committee - Report

[11.41 a.m.]

**Mr ABETZ** (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Speaker, I have the honour to bring up the following report of the Standing Orders Committee:

- Operation of Sessional Order Constituency Questions.

**Report received and printed.**

## RESPONSES TO PETITIONS]

### No. 4 of 2026 - Bell Bay Wind Farm

### No. 28 of 2026 - Expenditure on Track and Huts Analysis

**Mr ABETZ** (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Speaker, I thank the House. I also table two responses to petitions.

**Papers tabled.**

## QUESTIONS ON NOTICE \_ - ANSWERS

### No. 16 of 2026 - King Island Freight Assistance

**Mr GARLAND question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT,  
Mr VINCENT**

See Appendix 1 on page x.

**No. 25 of 2026 - Illawarra Road Risk Analysis**

**Ms BUTLER question to MINISTER for INFRASTRUCTURE and TRANSPORT,  
Mr VINCENT**

See Appendix 2 on page x.

**No. 32 -**

**X question to X [tbc tabled papers website]**

See Appendix 3 on page x.

**No. 33 -**

**X question to X[tbc tabled papers website]**

See Appendix 4 on page x.

**No. 36 -**

**X question to X [tbc tabled papers website]**

See Appendix 5 on page x.

**Standing Committee on Government Administration B - Report**

**Ms HADDAD (Clark)** - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to bring up the following report of the Standing Committee on Government Administration B:

- Inquiry into the Assessment and Treatment of ADHD and Support Services.

On indulgence. Speaker, I want to mention that this was a very rewarding piece of work. I want to thank all of the Tasmanians who gave evidence and all of the MPs who contributed to the report before us today. I also want to recognise Simon Behrakis, a former member for Clark, who's joined us in the Chamber today.

**Members** - Hear, hear.

**Ms HADDAD** - This inquiry was established following a motion that Mr Behrakis has moved in this House. I'm very proud to table the report today.

Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the report be received.

**Report received.**

**The SPEAKER** - I too would like to acknowledge the former member for Clark, the honourable Simon Behrakis. I acknowledge your passion and commitment towards this very important committee. I commend the committee for all their hard effort and work in regard to this matter.

### **Public Works Committee - Reports**

[11.44 a.m.]

**Ms BUTLER** (Lyons) - Honourable Speaker, I have the honour to table reports of the Public Works Committee on the following references:

- (1) North West Regional Hospital Mental Health Precinct (Paper No. 34).
- (2) Launceston General Hospital Mental Health Precinct (Paper No. 35).
- (3) Northern Suburbs Community Recreation Hub Stage 3 Expansion (Paper No. 36).
- (4) North West Regional Hospital Upgrade - Emergency Department and Ambulance Drop Off Redevelopment (Paper No. 37).
- (5) South George Town Primary School Redevelopment (Paper No. 38).
- (6) Macquarie Point Northern Access Road (Paper No. 41).
- (7) New Tasmanian Youth Justice Facility (Paper No. 42).

Together with the evidence received and the transcripts of evidence. Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the said reports be received and printed.

**Reports received and printed.**

### **MESAGES FROM THE GOVERNOR**

#### **Royal Assent to Bills**

**The SPEAKER** - I am in receipt of messages from Her Excellency the Governor.

C. WELLS, Governor.

'A Bill for an Act for the appropriation of \$9 104 688 000 out of the Public Account for the services of the Government for the financial year ending on 30 June 2027'. (Bill No. 18 (Act No. 7 of 2026))

'A Bill for an Act for the appropriation of \$62 913 000 out of the Public Account for the services of the Government in respect of Parliament and Statutory Offices for the financial year ending on 30 June 2027'. (Bill No. 19 (Act No. 8 of 2026))

having been presented to the Governor for the Royal Assent, she has, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty the King, assented to the said Bills.

Government House, Hobart, 10 July 2026.

**The SPEAKER** - Another message from the Governor.

C. WELLS, *Governor*.

'A Bill for an Act to amend the First Home Owner Grant Act 2000'. (Bill No. 20 (*Act No. 9 of 2026*))

'A Bill for an Act to amend the Public Health Act 1997'. (Bill No. 8 (*Act No. 10 of 2026*))

having been presented to the Governor for the Royal Assent, she has, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty the King, assented to the said Bills.

Government House, Hobart, 10 July 2026.

## **MESSAGES FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL**

**The SPEAKER** - I also have receipt of a message from the Legislative Council, which I shall ask the Clerk of the House to read.

### **PUBLIC HEALTH AMENDMENT (PROHIBITED TOBACCO AND OTHER PRODUCTS) BILL 2026 (No. 8)**

### **FIRST HOME OWNER GRANT AMENDMENT BILL 2026 (No. 20)**

### **Bills returned from the Legislative Council Without Amendment**

#### **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 1) 2026 (No. 18)**

#### **APPROPRIATION BILL (No. 2) 2026 (No. 19)**

### **Bills returned from the Legislative Council Without Request or Amendment**

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT AMENDMENT (TARGETED REFORM)  
BILL 2026 (No. 10)**

**Bill Returned from the Legislative Council With Amendment**

**Mr ABETZ** (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

That the last mentioned message be taken into consideration at a later hour.

**Motion agreed to.**

**COMMISSION OF INQUIRY (MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS)  
BILL 2026 (No. 25)**

**First Reading**

**Bill presented by Mr Barnett and read the first time.**

**MOTION**

**Committee Membership - Appointments**

[11.50 a.m.]

**Mr ABETZ** (Franklin - Leader of the House) - Honourable Speaker, I move -

- (1) The Honourable Member for Bass, Mr Fairs, be appointed to serve on the Parliamentary Standing Committee of Public Accounts in pursuance of Section 2, subsection (2) of the *Public Accounts Committee Act 1970* (No. 54).
- (2) The Honourable Member for Lyons, Ms Howlett, be appointed to serve on the Joint Sessional Committee on Gender and Equality in the place of the Honourable Member for Braddon, Mr Jaensch.
- (3) The Honourable Member for Clark, Ms Ogilvie be appointed to serve on the Joint Select Committee on Energy Matters in the place of the Honourable Member for Clark, Mr Vermey.
- (4) The Honourable Member for Lyons, Ms Howlett be appointed to serve on the Joint Sessional Committee on the Recommendations of the Final Report of the Commission of Inquiry in the place of the Honourable Member for Clark, Mr Vermey.
- (5) The Honourable Member for Clark, Ms Ogilvie be appointed to serve on the Joint Sessional Committee on the Parliamentary Library in the place of the Honourable Member for Lyons, Mr Shelton.

- (6) The Honourable Member for Lyons, Ms Howlett be appointed to serve on the House of Assembly Standing Committee on Government Administration B in the place of the Honourable Member for Braddon, Mr Jaensch.

[11.51 a.m.]

**Ms HADDAD** (Clark) - Speaker, I don't have a lot to add to this other than to say that the opposition agrees with the motion and recognises these changes need to be made to accommodate the fact that Mr Jaensch is now back in the Cabinet room, and congratulations again.

I also just notice there has been a little bit of change in membership amongst the Liberal membership, including Mr Vermey coming off of two committees - energy and the commission of inquiry committee - and Mr Shelton coming off of the library committee. I note that, to my knowledge, I don't know that the library committee has met in the seven-and-a-half years I've been here. Three times.

**Ms Ogilvie** - It will be meeting.

**Ms HADDAD** - It will be meeting. That's great. As Ms Ogilvie says, it will be meeting. I look forward to that.

[11.52 a.m.]

**Mr BAYLEY** (Clark) - Honourable Speaker, we too acknowledge this motion in the context of a reshuffle on government committees and Mr Jaensch's promotion to the Cabinet. Many of them are entirely uncontroversial and we support them.

I want to flag an amendment, and I'll move an amendment in a moment, because the Greens have made no secret about our aspiration to get on to the Public Accounts Committee, and this is clearly an opportunity to broaden the representation of the Public Accounts Committee to reflect a number of things - our party status, amongst other things. The Public Accounts Committee as it stands at the moment is too independent, too Labor, and too Liberal. With the Greens Party status, I think it's entirely appropriate that we are given a position on that committee. I'll talk about it a little bit more in detail. Honourable Speaker, I move -

In paragraph (1).

*Leave out 'Bass, Mr Fairs'*

*Insert instead 'Clark, Mr Bayley'.*

**The SPEAKER** - Just a reminder that you need to give a copy of the amendment to the clerks.

**Mr Ferguson** - Why did you choose Mr Fairs and not someone else to be removed?

**Mr BAYLEY** - We have chosen Mr Fairs because it's an opportunity for us to go on there. We feel we can only deal with people in this House, so that's who we have chosen, because he's the one that's moving on. That's the motion that's being made.



**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. Honourable member for Bass, Mr Ferguson, I ask that interjections cease, please.

**Mr BAYLEY** - Mr Ferguson, you can get up and talk about this issue when you want.

**Members** interjecting.

**The SPEAKER** - Order. I ask the House to settle. The only one speaking right now is the honourable Deputy Leader of the Greens.

**Mr BAYLEY** - Honourable Speaker, we've made no secret about the aspiration to have representation on the Public Accounts Committee. It's a really important forum for scrutiny, and we believe we have an important role to play in that space, and we represent a significant section of the community that wants us to do that. Whether it be in relation to the stadium, Wilkinsons Point, TT-Line, TasWater, PAC has had some really important roles to play, and we Greens have a demonstrated capacity to work within the committee system in an honourable and trustworthy way and also a demonstrated capacity to scrutinise really effectively.

We have an interest in all of those inquiries, of course, and anything else that PAC may choose to bring on. Of course, the stadium is something that is of particular interest because of the size and the scale of the investment in Tasmania. Not only the size and the scale of the investment, but I think it's really important to say that scrutiny is utterly imperative here because the decision of the parliament was made against the expert advice that we, indeed, commissioned to give us advice. That included economic advice. That included