

# JAMES NEWBURY MP

Member for Brighton



## PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA

### Parliamentary Speeches

2021





# FOREWORD

In many ways, the second year of the pandemic was harder. Because we had already been through a long lockdown and curfew, and lived through months of restrictions, we knew what we were in for. It was tougher the second time around. Our kids have found online learning tough, our much-loved small businesses have been deeply affected, and we need to be honest and acknowledge the mental health shadow pandemic that has touched so many households. As your representative in Parliament, I was a strong voice on these issues, for you. There are 46,000 voters in our community and 62,500 people who deserve a strong voice in Parliament. And our electorate is growing at the next State Election. Roughly 2,500 voters from Brighton East and Hampton East are being redistributed into our community. With lockdowns behind us, our community has come together, and Bayside led the State in getting vaccinated. Now that we have begun to re-open, we can roll up our sleeves, with hope in our hearts, and help each other rebuild and recover.









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# PARLIAMENT SPEECH DEFINITIONS

As set out in Parliament, Members speak on various debates in the Legislative Assembly. Different rules and time limits apply for each type of debate. Debates allow Members to cover a wide range of issues that are important to them and their constituents.

## Debate on Bills and Motions

Members may speak on proposed legislation or a Motion that is before the Parliament. An example of a Motion being a 'No Confidence Motion' or a speech on a Bill being referred to as a Second Reading. The contribution must be relevant to the issue and is time limited. The Chair decides whether or not a Member's speech is relevant.

## Matter of Public Importance

Two of every three sitting weeks, Members debate a 'Matter of Public Importance'. Each Party and the Independents rotate who proposes the topic for discussion. The debate covers current issues of public interest.

## Grievance Debate

Once every three sitting weeks, Members debate the question: 'that grievances be noted'. The debate is wide ranging. Members use the debate to raise concerns about individual constituents or other significant issues. Each Member may speak for fifteen minutes.



## **Adjournment Debate**

The Adjournment gives Members the chance to request action on topical issues from the relevant Minister. A Minister is then required to respond to the issues raised, either in the Chamber at the end of the debate, or within thirty days, in writing.

## **Members Statements**

Each sitting day, Members may make statements on any topic of concern. Members often use this time to speak about individual constituents or organisations in their electorate.

## **Constituency Questions**

Members have the capacity to ask 'Constituency Questions' of a Minister. The questions must relate to matters in a Member's own electorate. Any Member, except a Minister, can ask a Constituency Question. Members have one minute to ask their question. Ministers do not answer the question immediately. Instead, they must provide a written answer within thirty days. This gives the Minister and the relevant Government Department time to research the issue.



# SPEECHES TABLE

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT	ELECTORATE	PARTY	SPEECH COUNT
Andrews, Daniel	Mulgrave	Labor Party	407
Allan, Jacinta	Bendigo East	Labor Party	333
O'Brien, Michael	Malvern	Liberal Party	296
Pearson, Danny	Essendon	Labor Party	279
Staley, Louise	Ripon	Liberal Party	274
McLeish, Cindy	Eildon	Liberal Party	266
Foley, Martin	Albert Park	Labor Party	249
Wells, Kim	Rowville	Liberal Party	246
McGuire, Frank	Broadmeadows	Labor Party	241
Newbury, James	Brighton	Liberal Party	230
Angus, Neil	Forest Hill	Liberal Party	225
Southwick, David	Caulfield	Liberal Party	221
Pallas, Tim	Werribee	Labor Party	216
Carbines, Anthony	Ivanhoe	Labor Party	212
Wakeling, Nick	Ferntree Gully	Liberal Party	208
Thomas, Mary-Anne	Macedon	Labor Party	206
Green, Danielle	Yan Yean	Labor Party	205
D'Ambrosio, Lily	Mill Park	Labor Party	205
Kealy, Emma	Lowan	National Party	201
Kilkenny, Sonya	Carrum	Labor Party	201
O'Brien, Danny	Gippsland South	National Party	197
Hamer, Paul	Box Hill	Labor Party	196
Walsh, Peter	Murray Plains	National Party	192
Bull, Josh	Sunbury	Labor Party	190
Sheed, Suzanna	Shepparton	Independent	186
Hennessy, Jill	Altona	Labor Party	185
Edbrooke, Paul	Frankston	Labor Party	179
Maas, Gary	Narre Warren South	Labor Party	178
McCurdy, Tim	Ovens Valley	National Party	178
Richardson, Tim	Mordialloc	Labor Party	177
Fowles, Will	Burwood	Labor Party	177
Merlino, James	Monbulk	Labor Party	177
Britnell, Roma	South-West Coast	Liberal Party	176
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Addison, Juliana	Wendouree	Labor Party	158

Theophanous, Kat	Northcote	Labor Party	157
Ward, Vicki	Eltham	Labor Party	157
Cheeseman, Darren	South Barwon	Labor Party	154
Hibbins, Sam	Prahran	Greens	151
Vallence, Bridget	Evelyn	Liberal Party	148
Morris, David	Mornington	Liberal Party	145
Riordan, Richard	Polwarth	Liberal Party	143
Horne, Melissa	Williamstown	Labor Party	141
Northe, Russell	Morwell	Independent	139
Battin, Brad	Gembrook	Liberal Party	136
Hutchins, Natalie	Sydenham	Labor Party	136
McGhie, Steve	Melton	Labor Party	135
Suleyman, Natalie	St Albans	Labor Party	134
Tak, Meng Heang	Clarinda	Labor Party	134
Settle, Michaela	Buninyong	Labor Party	132
Sandell, Ellen	Melbourne	Greens	132
Rowswell, Brad	Sandringham	Liberal Party	130
Wynne, Richard	Richmond	Labor Party	128
Richards, Pauline	Cranbourne	Labor Party	127
Spence, Ros	Yuroke	Labor Party	127
Couzens, Chris	Geelong	Labor Party	125
Halfpenny, Bronwyn	Thomastown	Labor Party	125
Crugnale, Jordan	Bass	Labor Party	124
Cupper, Ali	Mildura	Independent	120
Guy, Matthew	Bulleen	Liberal Party	120
Kennedy, John	Hawthorn	Labor Party	119
Eren, John	Lara	Labor Party	119
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Hall, Katie	Footscray	Labor Party	113
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Tilley, Bill	Benambra	Liberal Party	67
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Scott, Robin	Preston	Labor Party	55
Brooks, Colin	Bundoora	Labor Party	"NA (Speaker)"







# BRIGHTON ELECTORATE



## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **DENDY STREET, BRIGHTON, PEDESTRIAN RAIL CROSSING**

Tuesday, 2 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (19:18):**

My Adjournment matter is for the Minister for Public Transport. The action I seek is for the Minister to immediately invest in the Dendy Street pedestrian rail crossing in Brighton and enhance safety at the site.

Many pedestrian crossings are dangerous. In fact, they can be killers. My community knows how dangerous these crossings are. In April 2019, grandmother, Gloria Holmes was tragically killed at the Grenville Street crossing in Hampton.

The tragic death came after Public Transport Victoria confirmed that the crossing is one of the worst in the state, but the Government refused to invest in upgrading its safety.

It was only after Gloria's passing, the outpouring of grief that followed and strong advocacy from our community that Labor finally agreed to the crossing update.

Many in my community now fear that the Dendy Street pedestrian rail crossing at the New Street roundabout in Brighton is even more dangerous. It lacks any safety features. There are no barriers to stop pedestrians from walking onto the tracks.

Disturbingly, the Brighton crossing is a busy thoroughfare for two nearby primary schools, St Joan of Arc and Brighton Beach. Hundreds of young children cross there each and every day.

Molly, a young student of St Joan of Arc has written to me pleading, and I quote:

It's a massive concern to me because I want people to live. I cross quite a lot with my brother, and I usually talk to him and sometimes I don't hear the bells and my brother yells at me to get out of the way. I get really scared, so please put in some gates.

And young Lily has written to me, and again I quote:

It's highly dangerous when the crossing is so close to a school. Little kids could trip and fall onto the track while a train is coming.

Despite the danger, the safety upgrade in Brighton remains unfunded.

My community knows that Labor treats investment politically. We know it is political, because the McIndoe Parade – Elm Grove rail crossing in Parkdale has already been tentatively flagged for an upgrade before the community has even asked for it!

In fact, residents tell me that Steve Michelson, the former adviser to the Federal Labor Party Opposition Leader and organiser of the Labor front group Kingston Action Team is running a local political campaign on the issue.

Not only is Labor playing politics with safety, but they are also data harvesting at the same time. Minister, my community is calling on Labor to invest in the Brighton crossing before it is too late.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **GRENVILLE STREET, HAMPTON, PEDESTRIAN CROSSING**

Wednesday, 3 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:57):**

The safety-enhanced Grenville Street pedestrian rail crossing in Hampton is now open.

Our collective voices were heard.

Every petition signature, every minute spent at a community meeting and every ounce of support all mattered.

Stuart Worn, who has been a tireless advocate for the community around the crossing, deserves special acknowledgement.

This upgraded crossing is a win for our community, a win for Hampton.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **‘DOG PARK, ELWOOD’**

Thursday, 18 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:00):**

Elwood has been heard.

We have been calling for a dog agility park for years. My community survey of almost 500 people found that almost 80 per cent supported a dog park.

After years of advocacy \$275,000 will now be invested in Moran Reserve. The park will feature a ball area and agility equipment.

The dog park is a wonderful win for Elwood’s collective voices.

## **CONSTITUENCY QUESTION**

# **HAMPTON OVERDEVELOPMENT**

Friday, 19 February 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (12:52):**

My constituency question is to the Minister for Planning, and I ask: can the Minister inform me whether the State Labor Government has developed any specific planning measures to protect Hampton from overdevelopment?

The State Labor Government has targeted Hampton as a hotspot for developers. Labor has put out neon signs and said to developers, 'come to Hampton and trash our leafy village'. Developers have heard Labor's calls and are queueing to overdevelop our quiet streets.

Recently, I met with residents to hear about a proposed development in Orlando Street, Hampton. Almost 100 local residents poured into the street to voice their anger. Orlando Street residents that know if this 35-bedroom apartment block is built, it will act as a welcome mat for developers to dig up the whole street.

The Liberal Party has previously proposed to introduce mandatory height limits. Height limits make it clear what can be built and will stop dead any proposed development that is not in line with the character of the community.

Hampton is unique and deserves protection.

I look forward to the Minister's response.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **ELSTERNWICK PARK NORTH**

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:58):**

There has been a lot of activity at Elsternwick Park North. Excavators are shaping a new chain of ponds which will help mitigate flooding and enhance the environmental space.

I recently met with new Elsternwick Park Association presidents, Natalie Davey and Julie Beatty, and site supervisor, Marcus Gwynne, at the bottom of a future billabong to see the works firsthand, which will convert the site into an environmental wetland of regional significance.

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# AGED CARE EXEMPTIONS

Thursday, 4 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (11:40):**

My constituency question is to the Minister for Planning, and I ask: can the Minister inform me whether the government has reviewed whether residential aged-care facilities are misusing the wider scope they have afforded to them under the Victorian planning laws?

Residential aged-care facilities have broader latitude in terms of how they can build or redevelop under planning law. This additional scope has been afforded where those facilities are 'essential services, not a lifestyle choice'.

Japara Elanora aged-care home has been nestled into Brighton Beach for decades. They offer a wide variety of private and shared homes for around 140 residents.

Local residents are supportive of the home modernising but were alarmed to read a final advertised plan by Elanora to build 245 apartments, including three-bedroom luxury apartments with beach views.

As Amanda has written on behalf of 80 local residents, if the proposal has 'chosen retirement lifestyles', they should not be included in the allowances.

I look forward to the Minister's response.

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# CRIME IN DENDY PARK

Tuesday, 16 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (12:44):**

My constituency question is for the Minister for Police and Emergency Services, and I ask: what has the State Labor Government done to enhance safety in my community after a young girl was sexually assaulted at Dendy Park in Brighton East?

Two weeks ago, a 16-year-old girl was sexually assaulted in Dendy Park. For background, despite the violent nature of the crime and the park being a community hub, Victoria Police did not notify the community of the assault. Many local parents became aware of the crime through word of mouth. It has left many in my community terrified.

As Jodie, a mother of teenagers, has said:

“It’s not fair on our kids that they are unable to go out with their mates ... without fear of being attacked.”

Anne, another concerned parent, has said:

“The fact that such a violent crime happened last weekend in our area and has not been formally reported to the community totally undermines the safety of our children.”

Anne is right. Why was the crime not reported to my community?

Parents now fear that other crimes at Dendy Park might have been hidden too. I look forward to the Minister’s response.



## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# DENDY STREET PEDESTRIAN CROSSING

Wednesday, 5 May 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (11:45):**

My constituency question is to the Minister for Public Transport, and I ask: can the Minister release all advice on the safety of the Dendy Street pedestrian rail crossing in Brighton?

The Dendy Street pedestrian rail crossing at the New Street roundabout in Brighton lacks any safety features, yet it is a major crossing that services two primary schools, St Joan of Arc and Brighton Beach primary schools.

St Joan of Arc principal, Tony McMahon, recently reported that he had received at least 10 reports of children almost being hit at the crossing and said:

“The fact that there hasn’t been a terrible accident is purely through luck.”

The Department recently hired crossing counters, who have advised me personally that hundreds of residents are using the crossing each day and are often groups of young children.

We also know the Department has commissioned a secret assessment of the safety of the crossing, which I am advised has found the crossing is not compliant and is dangerously unsafe.

Labor needs to act now before the luck runs out for crossing users in Brighton.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BAYSIDE VIOLENT CRIMES**

Tuesday, 25 May 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:06):**

How many crimes need to be committed in my community before Labor wakes up?

We have seen a string of crimes in Bayside parks, sexual and violent assaults committed on local teenagers.

On Saturday night a 17-year-old Elwood boy was stabbed by 20 youths in Elwood Park.

The State Government has a duty of care to keep the community safe.

Brighton deserves more than Labor's deliberate silence.

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# MIDDLE BRIGHTON PIER

Thursday, 24 June 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:41):**

My constituency question is to the Acting Premier.

I ask: given the responsible Minister is struggling, can the Acting Premier provide the community with an ironclad date for the completion of the long overdue safety upgrades at the historic Middle Brighton Pier?

Thirteen months ago, without notice, the State Labor Government closed off Middle Brighton Pier. After intense community advocacy, Labor begrudgingly committed funding to implement repairs. Thirteen months later, the repair job still has not been completed.

The tendering for the second stage of works has only just been approved. These works will start on 12 July and will close off the whole pier for at least 12 weeks.

Embarrassingly, Labor's own signage at the pier states that the works will be completed this month. In truth, we know the works might not be completed this year.

My community knows Labor was dragged, kicking and screaming, to fund upgrades to our historic pier and is now overseeing repairs at a rate slower than paint dries.

With many community groups and not-for-profit organisations waiting to plan for the summer, can the Acting Premier provide an ironclad date as to when the pier will open?



## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# ELSTER CREEK CRIMES

Tuesday, 3 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:44):**

The children in my community deserve to be safe — safe to take an afternoon walk and safe to enjoy our parks.

On Saturday afternoon two 13-year-old girls were chased along the Elster Canal Path in Brighton by teens carrying a knife. The incident terrorised them.

Disturbingly, last Saturday a similar incident occurred when two 10-year-old boys were set upon by a group of half a dozen teens on the canal path. The group also had knives.

These crimes come on the back of violent crimes, in Bayside parks, committed by gangs. Tragically, earlier this year a 15-year-old girl was sexually assaulted at Dendy Park in Brighton East, and teenage boys were seriously assaulted in other Bayside parks. Then in May, a local teenager was stabbed at Elsternwick Park in Brighton.

It is the government's job to make sure our community is safe and to ensure that law enforcement have the resources they need.

Can the Premier inform me: what is Labor's plan to stop violent crimes being committed against children in my community?

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **LANDCOX PARK SHELTER**

Wednesday, 4 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:04):**

In September, my community will welcome a new shelter at Landcox Park in Brighton East.

Landcox Park is a wonderful park. Many say it is a much-loved secret that we are lucky to enjoy.

The shelter came about after hundreds of local residents banded together to voice their support to Council for an all-weather shelter.

Congratulations to my community, whose voices have been heard.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BRIGHTON CRIME**

Wednesday, 4 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:03):**

In mid-July, two offenders broke into a home in Albert Street, Brighton. The homeowners, who were at home asleep, immediately called police.

As our community knows, certain streets in Brighton and Brighton East have been repeatedly targeted by criminals.

My community has a right to feel safe, and the State Labor Government should be doing more to prevent crime and protect my local community.



## **CONSTITUENCY QUESTION**

# **NEW STREET PUBLIC HOUSING**

Tuesday, 7 September 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

My constituency question is to the Minister for Housing, and it relates to the New Street public housing site in Brighton, which is one of the public housing sites to be renewed as part of the State Government's Public Housing Renewal Program.

Minister, with the State Labor Government setting up a sham community consultation process, chaired by a Labor Member of Parliament who lives in Caulfield, there are a number of genuine outstanding issues the community has with the project that have not been answered.

Can the Minister allay local concern and provide a detailed update on the project?

For background, the rebuilt site will include five buildings between three and five storeys in height. The five buildings will contain a total of 299 apartments.

Of that total, 148 will be private market rental and 151 will be social housing (an increase from the previous 127).

A community pavilion is planned for the precinct and draft plans show it being built against an adjacent Airlie Street residential home. A retail site is also planned, which will run up against a Rusden Street residential home.

Understandably, the Government owes local residents an explanation as to the impact that these two facilities will have on local residents.

Additionally, there will be 212 parking spaces, for the 299 apartments. Again, the Government owes the local community an answer as to why a decision, made under the false premise of promoting sustainability, has been made to provide no parking to 20 per cent of the private rental apartments. We know this cost-cutting measure will lead to more cars filling up local streets.

And finally, the underground parking egress to the site is planned near to a blind bend where Rusden and New Streets meet. That spot will also host a bus stop.

Local constituents want to know how all of these moving parts will fit safely.

Minister, there are genuine questions about this development. Sadly, the community hasn't been given detailed answers to these genuine questions.

I look forward to the Minister's response.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **ELWOOD BEACH SAFETY**

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Melbourne's beachside communities deserve to be safe when taking advantage of our special coastline. Elwood residents need to know they are safe when taking a swim.

Sadly, personal watercraft and the zoning of boating and swimming near Elwood, in Port Phillip Bay, remains a serious issue that Labor has failed to fix.

Maritime Safety Victoria has previously stated that there has been 'little sign of improvement in behaviour' from jet skiers and listed four sites as being the worst locations for jet ski hooning, two of which are in the City of Port Phillip municipality. That is a real concern.

My community is also aware of the tragic instance of a jet ski hooner killing a father whilst speeding through a swimmer-only zone in Port Melbourne. We cannot let such a tragic event occur again.

We need action from this Government, before there is another tragic incident.









# COMMUNITY GROUPS

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **SAM HIGGINS**

Wednesday, 3 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:57):**

Sam Higgins might have been born profoundly deaf and with cerebral palsy, but he is an incredible young man who was recently awarded Bayside Young Citizen of the Year.

With his mother, volunteers, and the support of Firbank Grammar School, they run Allstars, a sporting program for disabled children.

Congratulations to Sam and the family—Paul, Emily, Maddie, Lucy and Hannah. You are an incredible team.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **ROTARY CLUBS OF BRIGHTON AND BRIGHTON NORTH**

Wednesday, 3 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:58):**

Rotary has an incredibly positive impact on our community and is part of the fabric of Bayside.

To celebrate 100 years of Rotary in Australia, members of the Brighton and Brighton North clubs held a free sausage sizzle at North Point and then a fellowship event at Middle Brighton Baths.

Congratulations to Presidents Robert Ward and Peter Killey on hosting such wonderful events.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BAYSIDE COMMUNITY SPORTS DAY**

Wednesday, 3 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:58):**

And thank you to all of the sports clubs involved in hosting the recent Bayside Community Sports Day. Hundreds of children had a terrific day.

Thank you to Bayside Hockey Club, Black Rock Sports Club, Sandringham Life Saving Club and East Sandringham Cricket Club.

A big congratulations to Rachel Black, Bayside Hockey President, for overseeing the wonderful event.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **STREET2BAY**

Thursday, 18 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:00):**

Scouts Victoria recently completed their innovative Street2Bay Project, a project that sought to combat microplastic pollution and protect our beaches.

Congratulations to project leader Tracey Steeves, who was honoured with an award by Rod Byrnes, Chief Commissioner of Scouts Victoria.

Over 500 Scouts and leaders spent 3,300 volunteer hours in litter audits, collecting and categorising 54,000 items of litter.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **ST LEONARD'S COFFEE CUP CHALLENGE**

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:57):**

St Leonard's Uniting Church in Brighton has ignited the spark of compassion.

To raise money for the homeless, parishioners put aside \$4 each week as part of the coffee cup challenge.

This year the Brighton congregation raised \$10,000.

The spark is well and truly ignited, with 12 other parishes now participating in the challenge.

Congratulations to Minister Kim Cain and Barry Schofield on the initiative.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **LIONS YOUTH OF THE YEAR**

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:57):**

This year, five Bayside Lions clubs have hosted a Youth of the Year Award event.

The award is aimed at helping young people develop worthwhile skills.

Congratulations to Shaelea Hilliard, who was declared Brighton Lions Club Youth of the Year, and Harrison Huber, who was awarded the public speaking prize.

Congratulations also to club members Kim Lowe, Mike Hawke and Ron Smith on the Brighton event.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **TASKFORCE YOUTH HUB**

Wednesday, 3 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:57):**

Each year TaskForce Youth Hub in Station Street, Moorabbin, helps 1000 young people access drug and alcohol addiction support services.

Part of that service includes Reset Life, a free and intensive outpatient program where participants receive wraparound rehabilitation.

The Hub provides a first step to many young people who both need and deserve a hand up.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL**

Wednesday, 17 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:52):**

Soroptimist International are celebrating their 100th year as a volunteer service organisation for women who work to improve the lives of women and girls in local communities.

The Brighton Branch is the biggest in Australia. They have been contributing to my community for over 50 years.

I recently joined them to celebrate International Women's Day.

Thank you to President Lydia Holmes and the Club for their kind invitation.

**MEMBERS STATEMENT**

**BRIGHTON FLORAL  
ART GROUP**

Wednesday, 17 March 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:53):**

Sadly, the Brighton Floral Art Group has wound up.

Formed in 1978 by Merle Barton, the group has been active in fundraising for local charities as well as bringing the pleasure of floral art to the Bayside community for decades.

Thank you to the recent committee Carmen Doyle, Margaret Kitching, Liz Gonnán and Susan Dunstan.

The group will be sadly missed by my community.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **VETERANS SUPPORT**

Wednesday, 5 May 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:01):**

The Rotary Club of Brighton recently welcomed retired special forces major Heston Russell to their annual Anzac dinner. Heston has championed supporting returned servicemen by founding Voice of a Veteran, an organisation whose originating purpose acknowledges that more than 700 veterans have been lost to suicide since 2001.

In recent times Australians have seen a small number of allegations of service impropriety sensationalised through the media. A trial by media will never independently test allegations or allow for the presumption of innocence.

Community leaders must be proactive and stop our broader defence force from being tarnished. The post-Vietnam mistakes must never be repeated.

Elected officials have a responsibility to stand up. Sadly, some who should have led have remained notably mute.

My community has always and will always stand shoulder to shoulder with our defence force personnel.



## ***MEMBERS STATEMENT***

# **HAMPTON RSL GALLIPOLI GARDEN**

Tuesday, 25 May 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:06):**

Hampton RSL recently unveiled a Gallipoli Memorial Garden.

The garden includes the names of the 92 Bayside diggers who fell, etched on steel plaques on top of ten rocks, representing the sites in Gallipoli where they were buried.

Congratulations to Hampton RSL President, Lieutenant Commander Helen Ward, and Chairman of Friends of Gallipoli, John Basarin, on the significant Anzac project.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BAYLEY HOUSE ART APPEAL**

Tuesday, 22 June 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (12:55):**

Bayley House is a special organisation in my community.

They offer support to the intellectually disabled by actively engaging them through a program of exceptional services. Up to 180 clients take part each day.

Part of their service includes a rich program in the creative arts; and let me put on record how much my community looks forward to the Bayley House annual Christmas concert. It is a real highlight of the year, as too are the Bayley House art shows.

What is clear is that Bayley House's art program is both loved and incredibly popular amongst clients. Seventy percent of the clients want to take part in it. In short, the program is so popular that Bayley House has run out of space.

Currently their two art spaces can only accommodate 36 clients, when over 125 clients want to take part in the program. This overwhelming interest is a good problem to have and a wonderful endorsement of Bayley House's services.

To address the need Bayley House has launched an art appeal. As Bayley House has set out, the appeal will fund a fully accessible space with specialist equipment to meet individual needs, staffed by trained art instructors and art therapists and supported by wonderful art volunteers.

The response to the appeal in the community has been heart-warming. Even our local businesses are taking part, businesses like Sports Conscious in Church Street, who have been longstanding supporters of Bayley House.

I encourage my whole community to take part in the appeal and support the wonderful work of Bayley House.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **NORTH BRIGHTON ROTARY SUICIDE AWARENESS**

Wednesday, 4 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:03):**

Twenty-five years ago, the North Brighton Rotary Club established a youth suicide awareness project.

The project started after Michael Carr-Gregg, then Director of the Education and Training Unit Centre for Adolescent Health at the Royal Children's Hospital, presented to the Club.

Twenty-nine Centre graduates have been supported by the Rotary Club since. The Club has made a real difference with this outstanding project.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BRIGHTON ROTARY CHANGEOVER**

Wednesday, 4 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:04):**

Brighton Rotary Club recently welcomed the inauguration of Julie Avery as President of the Club.

Julie is a 26-year Rotarian, having been a charter member of Brighton Beach before moving to Brighton in 2018.

Julie will be Brighton Rotary's first female President since the Club was formed in 1973.

The members look forward to her experience and passion for Rotary in leading the Club.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **SANDY ALL-ABILITIES PROGRAM**

Thursday, 14 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Bayside-based netball association, Sandringham and District Netball Association, delivers an award-winning program and inspires young people of all abilities.

The association founded the Sandy All Abilities Program in 2018. The Program is led by Emily Higgins and Kris Pierce, two community advocates who have shown leadership in so many facets of Bayside life.

As the two said on founding the program:

‘We wanted it to be accessible and inclusive of everyone so that we could set the foundations for a strong program culture from the beginning’.

Week in, week out, young girls donate their time to coach the Program. As Emily described:

‘These girls just “got” the program from the beginning. They coach these kids just like they would coach everyone else. They teach them the fundamentals of skill development, positioning, teamwork and provide a level playing field for all netballers of all abilities.’

There is now a Junior and Senior All Abilities offering. And to add to their inclusive program, the team have also created an eight-part free video resource through the Netfit app — an app founded by Sarah Wall.

My warmest congratulations to Emily, Kris and Sarah on the incredible leadership they have shown with the All Abilities Program.







# SCHOOLS AND KINDERGARTENS

## **CONSTITUENCY QUESTION**

# **INVESTMENT IN HAMPTON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wednesday, 3 February 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (11:47):**

My constituency question is to the Minister for Education, and I ask: can the Minister advise me what investment the Andrews Labor government has ever committed for major capital works at Hampton Primary School in Hampton?

Hampton Primary School is an incredible school that has been teaching our local children since 1913. In many ways the school is not only the centre of Hampton, it is also its heart.

As Hampton has grown quickly over the last decade, so too has the school population. There are almost 625 students there.

This year the school community has been excited to welcome new Principal, Joshua Sheffield, into Hampton.

Despite many schools in adjacent Labor electorates receiving shining upgrades, the historic Hampton Primary's aged infrastructure has been ignored by successive Labor Governments.

The school and the local community need community space, and the school has developed a plan to build a multipurpose netball facility that can serve as a sporting hub, a school meeting place and a community facility.

It is time for Labor to stop ignoring Hampton Primary School.



## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **GARDENVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Wednesday, 17 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

My Adjournment is to the Minister for Education and the action I seek is for the State Labor Government to commit funding to address structural issues at the historic Gardenvale Primary School, in Brighton East.

Gardenvale Primary School is much more than a place to learn, it is a community. It is a community of: first-rate teaching staff who deliver a beacon of schooling excellence; a wide cohort of young children from the Brighton East region; and an active and involved parent network who have an engrained commitment to the school community.

One of the most unique things about Gardenvale Primary is the way the school externalizes their values—through their school mascot, HERRRBY. HERRRBY is based on the values of honesty, empathy, respect, resilience, responsibility, and being yourself.

Over recent years HERRRBY has also taken on a key focus each year, to help children understand modern challenges. Those issues have included a focus on bullying, the environment, and this year HERRRBY is carrying a blue umbrella, to signify the importance of ‘supporting everyone’.

Minister, the school will soon celebrate their 100-year anniversary. An incredible testament of service to our community. The historic nature of the school, which

is set across two campuses, has led to the grounds needing additional care.

Though consecutive State Labor Governments have ignored the school in the past, the active parent body has rolled up their sleeves and delivered transformational upgrades to the grounds. After years of planning and fundraising, the parent body completed two game changing improvements to the school last year.

Firstly, the parent body funded the installation of an outdoor annex roof at the senior school campus. The state-of-the-art roof allows the whole school to meet under cover. The parent funded annex cost \$380,000.

Secondly, and more recently, the parent body funded the \$200,000 installation of Modgrass across the two campuses, replacing the asphalt play surface. Children were overjoyed to arrive at school for the start of term 1 this year to see a modern space and know that scraped knees are a thing of the past.

As the Minister will know, my community has collectively been advocating for further school improvements. And I acknowledge the recent investment in the much-needed bathroom upgrades across the two campuses, which followed overwhelming community advocacy. It was a win for the voices of Gardenvale Primary's community.

I would also like to make the Minister aware that the school has a proud tradition in the creative arts and has a vision to enhance their art facilities, which are currently housed on the third floor of the school. The third-floor space is not fit for purpose and causes difficulty for those children with physical challenges, as they are unable to climb the many flights of stairs.

To enhance their art program, expand and make inclusive their physical space, the school has proposed the redevelopment of a ground-floor classroom into a more accessible learning hub. Such a conversion would be of reasonable

cost but overwhelming benefit, and I ask the Minister to consider the school's worthwhile arts vision.

But there are other issues at the school that are deserving of immediate funding support. During downpours, the school's junior campus corridors quickly flood. The corridors double as extra learning spaces. This is despite the school having installed industrial-level water gutters that line the roof. Only weeks ago, the rain gushed in as departmental staff conducted their annual audit of the school and found teachers drenched by the downpour.

Plumbers have assessed the site and advised the school that there is no band-aid fix to stop the flooding and that the roof infrastructure will need to be structurally addressed.

Minister, Gardenvale Primary School is a centre of excellence and the hub of the Brighton East community. I seek support from the State Labor Government to commit funding to address structural issues at the school.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **ELWOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Thursday, 4 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (19:26):**

My adjournment is for the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is for the State Labor Government to commit funding to assist Elwood Primary School realise their vision of refurbishing their outdoor environment through their landscape master plan.

Elwood Primary School is an exceptional school. It is also a community school in the truest sense. They are one of the largest primary schools in the area, currently educating almost 760 students. One of the school's unique features is that it prioritises development of the whole child, and there is no doubt that the school's teaching staff, led by principal Nicole Richards, are model educators.

Elwood Primary School is a community hub in every sense. Their gates are always open to Elwood and it is a treasured community space, with the school's bimonthly markets being a calendar fixture.

The school have a vision to refurbish their outdoor space and have formalised that vision through a \$1.3 million landscape master plan. It is the final step in completing their full school vision.

Their vision is based on achieving three outcomes that enhance connectedness and best use of available space.

The first goal is to install a nature play space on the grounds nearest to the neighbouring children's centre. The school is situated next to Poets Grove Family and Children's Centre, a not-for-profit community-owned kindergarten. The two sites are interconnected, and the space will serve existing schoolchildren and provide a welcome space for the kindergarten children, who will one day join the school community.

The second goal is to redevelop both the Scott Street and Poets Grove entrances. As a community hub, thousands make their way through the school entrances, and both are not fit for purpose. In fact, when the school hold their fortnightly assembly, hundreds of parents struggle to file through a small gate.

Finally, the school plan to enhance their play equipment, install shedding, reduce hard surfaces, consolidate their hard play spaces and create new outdoor learning spaces. These enhancements will be game changers for the deserving school community.

As the Minister will know, the Government recently completed urgent structural upgrades at the school. These improvements addressed leaking roofs, cracked walls and unsafe ceilings held up by nailed-in wooden planks. But the school deserves more than the completion of urgent works.

Minister, Elwood Primary School is exceptional, and I seek support from the State Labor Government to help the school complete their full school vision through their landscape master plan.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS FORUM**

Tuesday, 25 May 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:06):**

Whether change is big or small, we all have the power and responsibility to use our voices to bring about positive change.

These are some of the issues that I spoke about with Haileybury students as part of their Respectful Relationships Forum.

The students' insights on the issues we face were inspiring.

Congratulations to Campus Head, Katrina Manson, and Deputy Head, Doug Bailey.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **ELWOOD COLLEGE**

Wednesday, 23 June 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (19:14):**

My Adjournment is for the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is for the Minister to step in and invest real funding into the future of Elwood College in Elwood.

Elwood College and its neighbouring primary school are the heart of Elwood. It really is as simple as that.

The schools are not only the heart of learning but places for recreation and a central point for social engagement, and both have been the heart of my Elwood community for decades.

Elwood College is just over 60 years old. Much of the college is in original form.

The college currently has 850 students and almost 50 international students enrolled. The college is big, vibrant and an education hub.

One of the most used parts of the college is their theatre, a theatre that has hosted hundreds of creative productions and thousands of community group events. In fact, roughly 70 per cent of use is community use, so if you live in Elwood, you have almost certainly visited the theatre.

And it is much the same for the adjacent gym. Both are loved to the point of being worn right through.

And you will understand, Deputy Speaker, there are only so many ways you can affix band-aids over well-loved spaces. In fact, close to \$1 million worth of maintenance works are needed at the College.

One of the most pressing maintenance needs is the gymnasium roof. The estimated cost of those works is \$200,000, and that maintenance need has left the school in a real dilemma. Does the school invest in needed maintenance works or will the Government step up and do the right thing and properly invest in the future of Elwood?

The College has an incredible vision for the future, a vision to rebuild their existing theatre and gymnasium as a sports, recreation and arts hub they are calling the Phoenix Theatre.

As I have set out to the Minister before, the centre would include development of a new competition-compliant multiline netball-sized indoor court with spectator seating, change rooms and toilets, a recreation dance rehearsal studio, multipurpose recreation rooms, court and theatre foyers, dressing rooms and a refurbished theatre. The sports hub would include an indoor netball facility and outdoor basketball courts.

The school has completed detailed costings for their vision and estimates a total \$15 million cost.

I call on the Minister to stop investing politically, do the right thing for Elwood, and fund the project.

## ADJOURNMENT

# BRIGHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thursday, 5 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (17:05):**

My adjournment is for the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is for the Minister to step in and invest real funding into the future of Brighton Primary School.

The historic Brighton Primary sits on the corner of Wilson and Male streets.

Opened in April 1875, the school is now home to 620 students and a staff of 60.

The school community has developed a Master Plan that outlines strategies to develop projected long-term enrolment growth, address current planning issues as well as improve the facilities to reflect the school's vision and enhance the 140-year-old buildings.

The master plan is visionary, but it can only be delivered if this Labor Government stops playing politics with school funding and invests based on need. Brighton Primary originated as two brick Victorian buildings, which are still the core of the site. However, there are now a dozen relocatable buildings that make up the learning spaces too. In fact, roughly two-thirds of the school's children are housed in 12 demountables that were originally installed in the 1970s, when local teachers wore flares.

The demountables run adjacent to the nearby train line. Many would not know, but Brighton Primary is also home to 20 children with special hearing needs.

It is not right for those special needs children to be sitting in half-century-old demountables next to a train line.

The parent community have been the real champions of enhancing the school. Despite being forgotten by government, their hard work has delivered real school improvements, including raising funds to construct a covered walkway that connects the gymnasium to the rest of the school and, more recently, installing mini libraries in every single classroom.

The school community is particularly proud of the classroom library rollout, the associated 2,000 books and the \$25,000 investment in decodable books for prep to grade 2 students.

There is a tongue-in-cheek joke amongst the local community that funding has not flowed into Brighton Primary School since the 19th century, and though said in jest, no-one can actually recall when the State Government actually committed a cent to capital improvements.

Government funding should not be political, yet we know that 93 of the last 113 upgrades to metro schools have been directed into Labor seats.

This government is pouring money into schools in Labor seats on five out of six occasions—five out of six occasions.

I call on the Minister to stop investing politically and do the right thing by Brighton Primary School.



## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **BRIGHTON NEGLECTED IN SCHOOL FUNDING**

Thursday, 16 August 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

My Adjournment is directed to the Minister for Education, and the action I seek is for the Minister to stop politicking with Brighton kids and direct funding to needy schools in my community.

The Victorian School Building Authority provides a particularly helpful feature on their website. It's called 'Projects in my Area'.

The feature is one that many in my community have used recently.

When using the feature in the Southern Region, the map shows one thing — the State Labor Government has carved out Brighton and Hampton, and starved the suburbs of education funding.

The suburbs look like lonely orphans on the project maps. Government funding should not be political — especially when it comes to schools.

But, under this State Labor Government, it is.

You don't need to rely only on the departmental map, you can also look at the facts.

The facts show that 93 of the last 113 upgrades to metropolitan schools have been directed into Labor seats.

These facts prove that the Labor Government has directed money into schools in Labor seats on five out of six occasions.

That's no accident. It's pork-barrelling by design.

Yet we have needy primary schools, like Brighton Primary and Hampton Primary—where our children have been neglected.

Neglected solely because the state Labor Government has refused to fund school improvements because of the suburb where the school is based.

Imagine being a Minister that neglects children because of the politics of a suburb.

And I say to my community, I cannot force the Minister to give a green tick to needy projects in our community.

You know, and the facts show, what Labor is doing.

But what I can do, on your behalf, is use Parliament to let the minister know directly that we see what he is doing.

We know he is giving our schools a red cross because they are in Brighton suburbs.

He is saying 'No' to your kids because of a postcode and ignoring their genuine need.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **BRIGHTON SECONDARY COLLEGE**

Wednesday, 13 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

My Adjournment is to the Minister for Education and the action I seek is for the State Labor Government to commit to funding a purpose-built performing arts and culture centre at Brighton Secondary College, in Brighton East.

Brighton Secondary has served the Bayside community for almost 70 years. The school was established in 1955 and currently educates 1,200 students. Not only does the school serve local students, but it also has a renowned international student program. Brighton Secondary is both inclusive and it is comprehensive.

Currently, there are no modern performing arts spaces for community use in the area. As the school has identified, existing facilities and buildings are old, dating back to the early- and mid-20th century. Existing offerings are well out of date with current community needs or expectations.

The school has a vision to solve this problem. Their vision is to build a modern, purpose-built performing arts and culture centre. The centre will be a hub of learning, culture and celebration for both students at the school and for the broader community.

The proposed purpose-built performing arts and cultural centre will include the following: 1,400 tiered theatre seats, a stage, curtains, lighting, with theatre-style acoustics and audio-visual facilities; music tutorial rooms with equipment

and storage facilities to support; and an accompanying infrastructure foyer area and kitchen facilities.

For the broader community, a performing arts and culture centre will enrich Bayside culture. The school believes a centre will open opportunities for group theatre, dance performances, cinema, guest speakers and lectures, primary school graduations, local school productions, seniors' events, awards ceremonies, seasonal events and presentations. We in Bayside can see how much these events would enhance our rich cultural tapestry.

Minister, Brighton Secondary has always had to fight for support from the Labor Party. After years of community advocacy, and a Liberal commitment to upgrade the school a decade ago, Labor matched our commitment to fund the Julie Podbury David Marshall Building — a building that was finally completed and opened in August 2019.

The upgrade is a testament to the former principal Julie Podbury, former school president David Marshall, and two key advocates, the former Member for Brighton Louise Asher and now passed Brighton community champion Willis Parton.

Minister, it's time for Labor to set aside the politics and do the right thing for the Bayside community. Brighton Secondary College's proposed performing arts and cultural centre will not only benefit the students who attend the school but be an important cultural community space.

I call on the Minister to step up and invest in the vision of Brighton Secondary College, a vision which will greatly benefit the broader Bayside community.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **GARDENVALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Thursday, 14 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Gardenvale Primary School, in Brighton East, is an outstanding school that has been teaching our local children since 1922. Gardenvale Primary is a split-school learning environment with a junior campus and senior campus and a growing enrolment of almost 630 students. We are all looking forward to celebrating the school's century of service to our community.

The Department of Education recently visited the school and deemed a senior school external fire escape staircase non-compliant. Yet, concerningly, the government has placed the burden of the \$200,000 repairs onto the school.

As the school has advised the minister, this burden is unfair because, in the school's words:

- a) facility maintenance is the department's responsibility, not the community's;
- b) the issue of OH&S is not a discretionary matter—the works need to be done as the only other viable staircase is even older and is extremely slippery when wet;
- c) almost the entirety of our school's funds (outside of the department mandated reserve) have already been committed — and there is not sufficient financial capacity;
- d) it is the department's specific direction that funds raised from families are to be directed to student consumables and not facilities such as this expenditure.



Over recent years the school community has invested \$1.27 million into school works. Though an incredible testament to the community's hard work, it is unfair that the parent body has contributed two-thirds of recent capital investment.

Sadly, Labor's only investment came after significant community advocacy called for upgrades to basic needs, like bathroom updates. The school community has described government funding as 'yet to commence and has been severely slowed by lockdown and general bureaucracy'.


Labor needs to do the right thing by Gardenvale Primary School and the Brighton East community. We are talking about support to fix a fire escape staircase.

Government funding should be based on need, not on politics, and it must fund basic school safety needs. I call on the Minister to stop Labor's partisan approach to school funding and help Gardenvale Primary.









# ISSUES OF IMPORTANCE

## **BILL DEBATE**

# **APPROPRIATION (2020-2021) BILL 2020**

Thursday, 4 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (15:38):**

That this House takes note of the 2020–21 Budget Papers.

This Budget is a road to nowhere. It has cut community confidence off at the knees. The Government is claiming this Budget is putting people first. What a con. Labor has left Victorians behind.

A Budget should set out a Government's economic policies and priorities, but this Budget band-aids over the cracks and ignores many of the real challenges. It is a Budget whose bare-boned economic strategy at best undermines confidence and at worst is fundamentally dangerous. And to my community of Brighton, Brighton East, Elwood and Hampton: Labor has forgotten you.

This is a typically cynical Labor Budget, a Budget that is economically irresponsible and undermines the confidence in this State.

Victorians and indeed Australians know that Labor cannot manage money. Labor Governments always lean towards economic vandalism. This Budget is no exception. We know this because Labor has refused to release details on the total cost of projects or the time frame for their completion. On top of that, this Budget racks up debt like never before. Labor is loading \$23,100 of debt onto the shoulders of every Victorian man, woman and child and has forecast debt peaking at \$155 billion, which will eventually cost \$4 billion in interest repayments.

In terms of deficit the projections tower against the combined deficits of all other Australian States, and on growth the Government has sided with the public sector and the male-dominated construction industry instead of fostering private enterprise. Confidence has been sapped. People are voting with their feet.

Thousands have migrated from Victoria in a way we have not seen for 25 years.

The international experts have also cast their judgement. As soon as the Budget was handed down the international credit rating agencies circled on the carcass of economic responsibility in Victoria, swooped in and downgraded our rating sharply. It was downgraded from AAA to AA. Labor's Budget legacy will be the trashing of economic responsibility.

Credit ratings are not simply something to boast about. The rating gauges a state's ability to repay its debt. Instead of acknowledging that Victorians will pay more for Labor's debt through a higher cost of borrowing, the Treasurer responded in his typically contemptuous way. He casually sneered that the downgrade was 'not unexpected'. But what was worse was that the Treasurer acknowledged that he had no plan, no economic plan, for Budget repair. His lack of plan was not lost on the rating agencies either. Moody's described the budget as 'silent on debt stabilisation and reduction strategies' and said that the budget position had 'weakened its capacity to pursue timely fiscal repair'. Standard & Poor's went further, ringing dire alarm bells by saying our budget 'could take generations to recover'. These verdicts have sent a very strong signal. They have undermined the business community's already shaken confidence.

Labor despises the private sector. Business knows this Government rewards tax spenders, not taxpayers. Labor has delivered a Budget that backs in the public sector at the expense of the private sector. Just look at the Government's public sector wage bill, set to jump by 10 per cent over the next two years,



from \$30 billion to \$33 billion. Incredibly, the wage bill for top public servants has tripled.

Mum-and-dad businesses of Main Street should know that Labor has turned its back on them. These businesses are the backbone of our economy, and I say to the private sector: you must never forget that when the pandemic hit, every State Government jumped to support business and protect workers—every State Government except the Victorian Labor Government. Businesses should also not forget the Treasurer’s rationale for not providing support—because he was ‘monitoring’.

When this Government’s wholly misguided support came, it totally missed the mark. Labor has left small businesses behind, and businesses know it. The Sensis Business Index reports that business believes the Victorian Government is the equal worst Government in the country in its support of small business and one in four believes the Victorian Government’s policies are actively working against them. What a sad record for this state to hold, having small business decide that their Government is actively working against them. But can you blame them?

Late last year Bill Lang, the Executive Director of Small Business Australia, estimated that more than a third of Victoria’s small businesses had either closed permanently or were ‘on the verge’ of closing.

Despite that dire state, newly released figures expose how deeply small business has been ignored by Government. Of the 640,000 small businesses in Victoria, only one in five received any support from Labor during the pandemic. The Premier forcibly shut business down and left 80 per cent to drown, and sole traders, many of whom are women, were hit even harder. Labor did not just let them drown; this Government held their heads underwater. You drowned them.

We know that only 33,000 of Victoria’s 412,000 sole traders were eligible

for Government support. Over 90 per cent of the State's sole traders were ineligible.

We also know that for the 10 per cent of sole traders that were eligible only \$15 million of the \$100 million sole trader package was actually spent. The private sector should know that Labor has sat on the support fund instead of paying it out.

This Budget has offered our private sector a road to nowhere. What Labor has never respected is that mum-and-dad businesses are the backbone of our communities. Small businesses are the local employers, where our children get their first job. We can see the impact now on unemployment.

Since the start of the pandemic over one in 10 jobs has been lost in Victorian businesses employing fewer than 20 people. When our small businesses suffer, our children suffer disproportionately, as do women.

In many ways young Victorians are doing it tougher than most, in terms of both the impact of the pandemic on their way of life and on their outlook for the future.

Their education has changed, and their social engagement has been cut off. As Youth Affairs Council Victoria puts it, there is:

"... an economic and employment crisis for young people in Victoria."

For young Victorians the prospect of generational inequality is real. This explains why young people have suffered mentally in a disproportionate way. Saving minds is just as important as saving lives.

Last year's report from Beyond Blue that one in five children between 11 and 17 years old were experiencing high or very high levels of psychological stress was deeply alarming. One proposal to address this, as set out by the Victorian Student Representative Council in their Congress 2020 report, is to incorporate a consistent mental health curriculum to identify specific mental

health conditions throughout the lower secondary years.

Despite the relaxation of restrictions in the community, the pandemic will have a profound and ongoing effect on young Victorians. We can see that in the employment market. There are 57,300 less Victorians in work compared to at the start of the pandemic, and three out of five of those dislocated are women. And alarmingly, one in six young people are unemployed—15 per cent roughly—almost three times the state average of 6.5 per cent. With state underemployment averaging 9 per cent and a higher youth underemployment rate, there is little doubt a further one in six young people are underemployed.

It should be a sobering fact for this Parliament that roughly one in every three young people in this state is either unemployed or underemployed. These figures are grim. As Youth Affairs Council Victoria recently put in their report A COVID-19 Recovery Plan for Young People:

“The pandemic will result in economic scarring that will affect this generation of young people for their entire lives... Economic scarring will negatively impact young people’s health and wellbeing until their retirement.”

The challenges our young people face not only deserve to be voiced but also deserve a detailed policy response. Instead, young people have a shallow Budget wrapped in branding aimed at giving the appearance of helping them, when in reality the Budget has left them behind. Like most Labor policy, the Jobs for Victoria initiative has been scant on detail and results. We are told that the money will go towards wage-subsidised jobs. Considering the Government’s track record, young Victorians should not be holding their breath.

The Youth Affairs Council has called on the State Government to develop and release a recovery plan for young people. The Council is right. Young people deserve a concrete plan, a plan of hope. They deserve more than a hollow Budget offering young Victorians a road to nowhere.

Leaving people behind and shutting the door has been a hallmark of this

Government. We saw that with the immoral and illegal public housing lockdown, and our community felt the Premier's heavy hand again in January when Victorians were locked out of their own State, when our neighbours were refused the right to return home. Victorians were made stateless, and now the Premier is asking to extend the State of Emergency powers for a full year. What madness. This Parliament cannot allow the State to be run by dangerous, unaccountable decree.

The City of Melbourne is the heart of our State, a heart that is now on life support, where over one in four businesses are either closed or vacant. The decimation of our great City centre is not just economically dire; it is having a profound effect on the psyche of Victorians, and it undermines business confidence. During the week before Christmas, the City of Melbourne pedestrian traffic report showed a 36 per cent reduction in shoppers in the Bourke Street Mall from the year before.

Similarly, the city's nightlife has been crushed.

The nightlife which supported 31,000 jobs pre-pandemic was down by two-thirds on the year prior. At its most vibrant the city delivered a quarter of the State's economic turnover — \$104 billion last year — and almost 1 million people worked in, lived in or visited it each weekday. The City will not return to its vibrancy on its own. We need to fix our State's centre. We will not fix it if the disjointed, conflicted announcements continue on when workers can return to office work.

We know that if one in five City office workers keeps working from home it will come at a \$540 million cost. The Premier might have the power to march around the public service, but he has no power to direct the private sector, which he treats like second-class citizens. The disjointed City decrees have had one effect— undermining confidence. Business will weigh up their business models and reconsider future investment, and you can feel it. Labor had a

moral obligation to do something for our City. The Budget should have been an opportunity for a broader emergency response, but again the Budget failed and left our city centre behind.

It is not only the City centre but other economic cornerstones that have been ignored in this Budget. International education is a cornerstone of Victoria's future economic prosperity. For over 10 years it has been our largest services export industry, delivering \$13.7 billion in revenue and supporting almost 79,000 jobs. In fact, Victoria represents one-third of Australia's onshore enrolments. The sector has been decimated, and although there are overarching Federal issues, each State must be on the front foot. We need to be planning.

Instead of offering hope the Premier has simply said that developing a plan is frankly not possible. Well, it was possible in the Northern Territory. In November, under strict quarantine conditions, 63 international students from five countries arrived in Australia to study at Charles Darwin University.

All proactive plans deserve consideration, because you cannot kick the leg out from a chair and not dive in to rescue it from falling over. With that in mind the International Education Association of Australia has proposed a purpose-built quarantine arrangement for students, paid for by international students and the education providers. Not only do we need a plan to recommence onsite international learning, but the Government should be using the Budget to encourage the export of Victorian education online into international markets.

This Budget is a con. It is a Budget that offers a road to nowhere, a Budget that is economically irresponsible and undermines confidence in the State, and in turn it has cut community confidence off at the knees. Labor has left Victorians behind, and I say again to my community: Labor has forgotten you.



# **SPENT CONVICTIONS BILL 2020**

Wednesday, 17 February 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (15:37):**

I rise to make a brief contribution on the Spent Convictions Bill 2020.

Our justice system is designed to deliver the law righteously. It is a system that has been codified in black letter law but is underpinned in morality and values. That underpinning is comprised of weight of evidence, impartiality and swift force.

Our system also acknowledges that we as a broader community value redemption. We expect justice to be served proportionately, but we also recognise that redemption through rehabilitation is possible and should be encouraged. We want all people to make a valuable contribution to the community.

A spent convictions scheme codifies that principle of redemption. It is a legal acknowledgement that rehabilitation is possible — not that it is an embedded right but rather that rehabilitation can be proven, that it can be earned and, after being earned, lead to the State redeeming an offender's legal record, which undoubtedly would have a positive effect on an individual's character and confidence. Those are the principles that the Government should have embedded in this Bill, because there are people for whom redemption is warranted and deserved, and I would like to speak about one of them today.

Before my election to Parliament, an elderly Brighton resident handwrote to me. To respect her privacy, I will refer to her as Joan and her son as John. Joan wrote to me about her now adult son John. As a young boy, John was sexually

abused and raped by a layman of the Catholic Church. For decades the crime remained undetected. In his early 20s John approached his abuser. John sought to blackmail him for \$5,000 to keep the abuse quiet. The paedophile went to the police, did not reveal the motivation for the blackmail, and John was charged and convicted of blackmail.

As part of the court process, John revealed the nature of the initial crime and the identity of the paedophile. John was the first person to make an allegation against the paedophile. John's brave statement exposed a web of other children who had all been abused by the same man, but unfortunately the paedophile claimed illness and delayed his trial. As such, the childhood crimes did not form part of John's trial process nor his later appeal. The paedophile was later convicted and spent three years in jail.

Since John's conviction for blackmailing the paedophile, he has had an unblemished record. He has run a small business and now has an adult child of his own. However, the conviction has caused him difficulty throughout his life, in seeking employment, in attempting to travel overseas and as a permanent and recurring reminder of the vile trauma he suffered as a boy. Perhaps Joan best described the impact of the conviction and the depth of his family's need for state-acknowledged redemption, and I quote:

"... the conviction stands as a constant reminder of the psychological, emotional and mental trauma he endured as a little boy and I, as his mother, could be given peace of mind, freed from some guilt of not being able to protect my son ... from this paedophile."

John was twice a victim: a victim of a paedophile and a victim of the rules which stopped his mitigating circumstances being recognised. John deserves redemption, both legally and for his own peace.

Tragically we know that crimes of this nature too often break victims' spirits. Often the trauma is too great to bear. I will always remember a notable New South Welshman, with a loving family of his own, who took his own life in 2017

because of the toll of similar abuse, and the heartbreaking comments of his wife who said, and I quote:

“... he wore out and it was time for him to be free. He was so handsome on the outside and broken inside, now his body is so broken and his spirit is free.”

That is why I strongly support enshrining the value of redemption in law. We as a Parliament should support a formalised, principle-based system. Both as a candidate and Member of Parliament, publicly and privately, I have advocated for the introduction of state atonement laws, through a spent convictions scheme, but this Bill does not enshrine those values.

This bill does not adequately recognise the need for rehabilitation. A principle-based spent convictions scheme should get the balance right: a balance between the right to proportionate punishment, justice for victims of crime and general community safety, and on the other hand the rights of historic offenders who have demonstrated their reform and future contribution to the community.

By contrast this Bill provides certain automatic rights to a spent conviction. No balance scheme should provide an automatic right to a murder conviction being spent. For offending children under the age of 15, that is what this Bill does.

It is not the first time a flawed Bill has been put to this chamber, where the drafting undermines the principal purpose. We all saw the Let Us Speak campaign, which drew attention to the poorly drafted laws which would have prevented survivors from speaking to media using their real names.

Those laws, like these, were flawed. These drafted laws do not align with the altruistic principles this Parliament wants to support. I say to the Government: reconsider the drafted Bill and ensure that the final Bill enshrines a balance scheme for spent convictions, a Bill that gets the balance right, because our community values redemption and wants to see it enshrined in law, but not where it is an automatic right.

## ***SPEECH***

# **GOVERNMENT BUSINESS PROGRAM MOTION**

Wednesday, 17 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (13:13):**

This debate is so very important. This Government Business Program is something that every Victorian should know about. Every Victorian should be listening today to know that this Government Business Program is the scheduling of the extension of the state-of-emergency powers—the extension of the state-of emergency powers in this state to give the Premier, Daniel Andrews, a year’s extension of state-of-emergency powers. We know that Daniel Andrews is dangerous. He has hurt Victorians.

**Ms Allan:** On a point of order, Speaker, you were perhaps also going to interrupt the Member for Brighton mid-flight on a speech he has been practising now for the best part of I reckon four or five days. As much as we are fond on this side of the House of talking about and supporting our terrific Premier, the Premier is not the subject of the Government Business Program. The Government’s legislative agenda is the subject of the Government Business Program. If the Member wishes to remake this speech, he will have the opportunity to do so on the Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (State of Emergency Extension) Bill 2021, given we have granted agreement for all Members of the Opposition to make this cookie-cutter speech on the public health and wellbeing bill. We look forward to that happening on Thursday and Friday of this week. I ask you to bring the new Member for Brighton back to the Government Business Program.

**The SPEAKER:** On this point of order, I ask Members not to debate the Bills that are on the Government Business Program, but Members are entitled to

touch on those Bills and at this point I would suggest the Member for Brighton is just touching on this Bill. I do, though, remind the Member for Brighton about using people's correct titles—that includes the Premier—and also to be careful not to make imputations about Members in the Chamber as well.

**Mr NEWBURY:** I understand why the Leader of the House would be running a protection racket for the Premier. The scheduling of the state of emergency powers Bill this week is outrageous. It is absolutely outrageous. Victorians know that this Bill is dangerous. They know that giving the Premier these powers is dangerous.

I very rarely talk about personal matters in this chamber on purpose. On Monday my six-year-old daughter woke up in the morning, came in, sat on my lap and started crying because of the online learning that she would be going through this week—my six-year-old daughter.

The effect that this has on little kids is unacceptable; it is outrageous. It is outrageous what this Premier is doing to children, to small businesses—and then to know that only one in five receive support is totally and utterly unacceptable. To know that he has shut down this state for five days and provided no support on a whim, on a lie, is outrageous. The scheduling of the Bill this week is a matter that every single Victorian knows is unacceptable.

Every Victorian is passionate about the scheduling of this Bill this week. For the Government to say it is allowing Members on the other side of the Chamber to have a view, to speak, is arrogant beyond belief. I can assure every Victorian the Liberal Party will oppose this every step of the way. We will oppose this Premier's clear, outrageous power grab every step of the way—every one of us.

The Government will sit there allowing the Premier to have these powers, allowing the Premier to shut down the State at any point—



**Ms Allan:** On a point of order, Speaker, I appreciate the Member for Brighton is enjoying taking the Member for Malvern's thunder from the speech that he should be making tomorrow, but this is actually about the Government Business Program not the substance of the Bill itself.

**The SPEAKER:** I do ask the Member to come back to the Program rather than the Bill itself.

**Mr NEWBURY:** We will oppose it every step of the way.

**House divided on motion.**

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **COVID & SMALL BUSINESS**

Thursday, 18 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (13:13):**

Hampton favourite cafe Larsen and Co. is permanently closing.

Labor has crushed small business, and the Premier's decisions have sent many broke.

We know that only one in five small businesses received any support from Labor during the pandemic. We also know that Labor stomped on sole traders.

Labor's legacy has been an active assault on our state's private sector.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **COVID & CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH**

Thursday, 18 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:01):**

Mental health issues have swept across our community like a tidal wave.

On Saturday, Lifeline received 3,306 calls in one day, the third-highest number in Lifeline's 60-year history.

I spoke about the effect of online learning on my daughter.

Thank you to the many parents who have contacted me about the effect it has had on their children. I have heard you. I will always fight for you.

## ***BILL DEBATE***

# **PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELLBEING AMENDMENT (STATE OF EMERGENCY EXTENSION) BILL 2021**

Friday, 19 February 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:19):**

The Public Health and Wellbeing Amendment (State of Emergency Extension) Bill 2021 makes the Premier an autocrat.

The Liberal Party will fight to oppose this Bill. Every Member of Parliament should be fighting to oppose this Bill. The Upper House Independents should oppose it, and it is time for the Reason Party to stop acting like the Premier's footstool and oppose it too.

The Premier has forgotten our economy, he has forgotten our small businesses and he has forgotten Victorians, especially our children. We in this place must fight for our community and fight for our democracy. If you vote for this Bill, you are changing our system of government. You are setting aside a democratically elected leader and installing an autocrat. This Bill removes any means of accountability.

What do these proposed laws do? Put simply, our State is governed by rules and laws that Parliament makes and oversees. Checks and balances stop one person from irrationally misusing power, ensuring practical and proportionate behaviour.

The state-of-emergency powers allow the Premier to become a law unto

himself, and we know that is what he has been doing. The Premier has simply dictated what he wants in the public health orders.

The reason the Government will not release the health advice is that it is a sham. Victorians know. The truth swept across the community over the last week. For the first time the majority have seen the Premier for who he is. His tightly controlled public image has been exposed, as have his character flaws.

Victorians know that the five-day lockdown was the Premier's overreaction, an overreaction because he is fixated, because he lacks perspective and because he needs to be the centre of attention. His overreaction and the lockdown led to Victorian pain; the Premier hurt Victorians willingly, knowingly and enthusiastically.

Victorians now see the Premier's character flaws, and that is why this Bill is dangerous and why the Premier is dangerous. It is dangerous to give a man with those character flaws unaccountable power.

For the record of history, this is how the Premier has abused his power: with three lockdowns, where Victorians were locked up for 156 days; by sledgehammering the economy at an \$18 billion cost, which includes an estimated \$1 billion cost for the last five-day lockdown; and by stomping on education, where 108 days of school were missed.

This abuse of power came despite the warnings of expert advice. The World Health Organization made their views clear. David Nabarro, the organisation's coronavirus special envoy, has said, and I quote:

"We really do appeal to all world leaders: stop using lockdown as your primary control method."

The local medical fraternity also spoke out, with 500 doctors petitioning the Premier, saying, and I quote:

The response to the virus will cause more deaths and result in far more negative



health effects than the virus itself.

One of those doctors, Dr Eamonn Mathieson, went on to say, and I quote:

“The way you do public health is not to focus or have a fixation — a fixation — on one condition to the exclusion of all others.”

Again, I quote him:

“There has been massive collateral damage in the mental health space due to the lockdowns ...”

Yet the Premier marched on, boasting that Victoria was better than South Australia days before the second wave, boasting about his approach to the pandemic being gold standard days before the third wave.

For the record, Victorians should know the truth behind the Government’s pandemic policy. A core job for the State Government of managing the pandemic is to keep the State safe from the international virus. The door into our State is hotel quarantine. It is where Victorians arrive and depart.

In the last year New South Wales has managed to process 125,000 international arrivals and deal with issues as they arise, yet Victoria has left the hotel quarantine door open repeatedly after processing only 35,000 arrivals. Why has it taken so long for the Government to move quarantine from hotels in the CBD? Why are our infection controls so Third World?

We know what the experts think. Professor Peter Collignon, an infectious disease physician and microbiologist at the Australian National University, confirmed — and I quote — the:

“... real issue [in Victoria] is infection control. If you look at the three hotel outbreaks in Melbourne over the past week, all of them had infection control breaches.”

Again, I quote:

"I can't see how we can lockdown cities for five days every time we get a security guard or somebody with a leak from quarantine hotel, that would be ruinous ..."

He is not a lone expert voice. Professor Maximilian de Courten, Director of Victoria University's Mitchell Institute, also confirmed, and again I quote:

"... equipment error and human error are a far more likely cause of the current escape of the virus ..."

The cost of these errors is beyond imagination. 801 Victorians tragically lost their lives in the second wave and instead of taking responsibility the Premier simply turned up to the open-door quarantine inquiry and recalled nothing. In fact, he recalled nothing almost 30 times. Victorians watched the Premier celebritise over 100 press conferences and not leave any word unsaid yet become purposefully blank at the inquiry.

He has remained just as quiet on the recommendation from the Victorian Ombudsman that he publicly apologise to tenants of the public housing towers after locking them in and breaching the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities. That policy, to jail vulnerable people, was sickening. What was more sickening was the silence.

There was similar silence when the Government locked Victorians out of their state on New Year's Eve. Victorians were left stateless.

Should it be a surprise to anybody that thousands of Victorians have migrated out of the state in a way we have not seen for 25 years? \$23,100 of debt has been heaped onto the shoulders of every Victorian man, woman and child; our international credit rating has been savaged and young people have become a lost generation, with roughly one in every three young people in the state either unemployed or underemployed. Young people have been left lost and left behind.

Small business has been forgotten too. There are 640,000 small businesses in Victoria, yet Labor only provided support to one in five during the pandemic — 80 per cent were left to drown. Sole traders were treated even worse. Under the Government's support scheme only 33,000 of the 412,000 sole traders were deemed eligible for government support — only 10 per cent. But for the 10 per cent of sole traders that were eligible, only \$15 million of the \$100 million package was actually spent.

When the Premier announced this five-day lockdown last week and was asked about the impact on small businesses who are already on their knees, he simply said, dismissively, 'Well, they can just do takeaway'.

The Premier is so fixated. He has no perspective on the human impact of his decision-making. The human impact has been decimating. Not only have mental health issues swept across the community like a tidal wave but many people, including children, are showing the characteristics of post-traumatic stress disorder.

The reports on mental health last year were strong enough to make a grown man weep. Beyond Blue reported that one in five children between 11 and 17 years of age were experiencing high or very high levels of psychological stress. Department of Health data showed a 33 per cent increase in children presenting to hospital with self-harm injuries.

These mental health issues have not passed. We know that Lifeline received 3,306 calls on Saturday, the third highest daily figure in the organisation's history — a 60-year history — and a further 3,200 the following day. John Brogden, chair of Lifeline, sent out a strong warning, and I quote:

"There will be no vaccine for the mental health pandemic that is happening in Australia ..."

Let me repeat that:

“There will be no vaccine for the mental health pandemic that is happening in Australia ... a tidal wave across our community.”

This Parliament must take a stand and fight — fight for our economy, fight for our small businesses, fight for our people and most of all fight for our children.

The Premier is fixated, and he has forgotten them. The Premier has allowed them to be lost, and that is why the Premier is dangerous and why this Bill is dangerous.

It is dangerous. I will fight for Victorians, and the Liberal Party will oppose it.

## **BILL DEBATE**

# **PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2021**

Tuesday, 2 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (18:12):**

I rise to speak on the Planning and Environment Amendment Bill 2021.

Your home is your castle, and your suburb is your village. Like a village, every suburb is unique—unique because of the way it has developed its own natural environment and, most importantly, unique because of the people living in it. Each element is part of the melting pot of a community's individual character.

We should support the preservation of community character. In fact, we should support what is best about our liveability wholeheartedly. Our laws should act to preserve what is best about our suburbs.

That is not to say that change should not happen or that we should be frozen in time. Change is inevitable, whether it be through modernisation of existing homes or ensuring that our city has the capacity to meet a growing population through new homes. Change from a planning perspective is always with us.

Our planning laws should be balanced—balancing modernisation and growth at one end of the spectrum with the protection of heritage and community character at the other. Our existing planning laws are far from achieving that.

Victorians know that this State Government is a champion of densification. This Government has no respect for heritage or community character, and this Bill is more of the same—imbalanced and failing to fix the real problem. It is not much more than an insipid ministerial knee jerk aimed at addressing the



humiliating public slap the Minister received by a rogue developer—and what a public slap it was. The hairy-chested Minister let out a roar, but we found he has little more than a mouse’s squeak.

On our side of the Chamber we welcome genuine heritage protections. This Bill adds little more than a fig leaf to the Minister, a Minister who has been shown to be wearing no clothes.

This Government has avoided putting in place a proper heritage framework. As National Trust of Australia (Victoria) Chief Executive Simon Ambrose has said:

“This problem is bigger than just one house ... In many areas across Melbourne, heritage protections have not kept pace with development and community expectations.”

And further, acknowledging that a legislative black hole exists, the Chief Executive said:

“The State Government needs to step in and provide real support.”

We know there is no real support from this Government for heritage. We are seeing that play out across Melbourne’s suburbs. Many of us in this place have seen valuable cultural buildings meet the wrecking ball.

It is not only planning watchers who know this Government has little regard for heritage, the community knows it too. What is most sad is that our local communities are forced to be the real guards of heritage. In the absence of real protections our neighbours are now the guardians. As Graham Robson of Hampton put it:

“... our homes really are our castles and our backyards are our neighbourhoods. This is about neighbourhood character as much as it is about heritage and we need to protect both.”

Our neighbours are now the guardians in a system that forces the community

to understand a complex, flawed planning law system. It necessitates that residents act as community campaigners against inappropriate proposals and burdens the community guardians to spend years of their time on each application—years of their time—going through the planning process for each inappropriate proposed site. But most of all, our laws have been purposefully designed to be impotent, and as a result our system pits neighbour against neighbour.

In 2019 we saw that in Grosvenor Street, Brighton, where over 1,000 residents called for the heritage protection of a historic Tudor-style home designed by Home Beautiful journalist Esme Johnson in 1930.

Local heritage activists called for protection on the basis of more recognition being needed for women on the Victorian Heritage Register, but for the owning family, who had saved for years to purchase the property, the fight was heartbreaking. As the owner said:

“Most citizens want a fair system so they can purchase property with certainty—that’s what we thought we did.

We understand the value of heritage (but) to lobby to protect a property after an owner has invested in it is fundamentally unfair.”

And further: “...heritage is impacting families financially and emotionally.”

In Grosvenor Street, like many streets, heritage has not been applied evenly, partly because councils have differing approaches to heritage applications, which are in part based on an opt-in approach. Councils are understandably hesitant to retrospectively overlay heritage. That is where our laws fail—failure in properly protecting heritage that is again highlighted by this Bill.

A fulsome framework is what we need, a fulsome framework that is simple. As Felicity Watson, the Executive Manager of Advocacy at the National Trust of

Australia, says:

“When looking at the protection of properties you need to consider the broader community benefit and not just the impacts on the individual homeowner.”

The Hampton community has seen that firsthand in Service Street, a proposed development where quite genuinely thousands of residents have spoken out. Developers are targeting a quiet, leafy street filled with heritage homes, proposing to demolish four significant homes and construct 36 apartments. Again, the current planning overlay was inadequate.

Disappointingly for Hampton, the Labor Minister has turned his back on the street. Service Street knows that if this development goes ahead it will set a precedent, and the waiting game will begin, where residents watch their neighbours sell out to developers.

The Member for Sandringham and I recently met with the community in Hampton to hear their concerns firsthand, and one of the common threads that the community put to us was they should not be expected to be planning experts.

They should not be expected to be the guardians of heritage or of the amenity of their street. But we know that the law fails them, and we know that the Government has no interest and is not interested in properly and adequately protecting the heritage of our communities.

Why should residents be forced to be the guardians? Why should neighbourhood associations like the Hampton Neighbourhood Association be forced into existence to represent hundreds—or 1000 in that case—of local residents in Hampton and be their voice each time a proposal is put forward that is out of character with the community?

In Hampton's case we know the Government set out the neon lights and targeted

Hampton for overdevelopment. That organisation, which does wonderful work, incredible work, has been forced into existence by a Government that has no interest in protecting the heritage or planning amenity of our community.

Our suburbs are our villages. We should have laws that preserve heritage and community character. We do not.

This Bill is another Labor failure in a long line of planning failures by this Government.

Only the Liberal Party will protect your amenity and only the Liberal Party will protect your suburb.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **CONSENT PETITION**

Wednesday, 17 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:52):**

The petition for consent to be included in school education is not just an issue for New South Wales.

Chanel Contos started a petition to give voices to girls who have experienced sexual abuse.

The voices in the petition from across Australia deserve to be heard, and it is incumbent upon all community leaders to give those voices a platform.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **KYLIE MOORE-GILBERT**

Wednesday, 17 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:52):**

Kylie Moore-Gilbert has shown profound bravery, both as a prisoner for 804 days and more recently in her personal life.

Kylie's strength of character and her daily mantra in prison, 'I am free; no matter what you do to me, I am still free', is inspirational.

My best wishes to Kylie for a long, happy and free life.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

# **VACCINATION ROLLOUT**

Thursday, 18 March 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (17:15):**

My Adjournment is for the Premier, and the action I seek is for the State Labor Government to prove it has a plan to roll out COVID-19 vaccinations across our state and advise our community how, when and where that vaccination program will be delivered.

The vaccination of 25 million Australians will be one of the biggest operations the nation has ever undertaken, and the States are responsible for the practical rollout.

Victorians know that vaccinations are an effective way to protect against infectious diseases. They help strengthen your immunity and act to protect the broader community.

Two of the most important factors in the vaccination rollout will be, firstly, that the program will need to be competently implemented, with logistics being carried out well and delivery being prompt; secondly, details on the program must be communicated thoroughly. Good communication will assist with take-up of the voluntary vaccine. It will also allay the concerns that many in the community have.

For the benefit of my constituents, the vaccination program is being staged in a fivefold way. Phase 1a will ensure that almost 680,000 Australians in the areas of quarantine, border, frontline healthcare workers, and aged-care and disability-care staff and residents will receive the vaccine. Under phase 1b, 6.1

million Australians, including those 70 years of age and over, other healthcare workers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults over 55, adults with a specific medical condition or a disability and critical and high-risk workers will receive a vaccination. 6.5 million Australians under phase 2a will be vaccinated. The phase will cover adults over 50 years of age, adult Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and other critical and high-risk workers. Under phase 2b, the remaining 6.6 million people in Australia will be vaccinated. Finally, under phase 3, 5.6 million young people under the age of 18 years of age will be vaccinated, if it is recommended.

Recent figures show 164,437 vaccinations have been delivered across Australia. New South Wales has delivered 37,553 vaccinations, with Victoria some way behind on 31,808.

A former Victorian and National Australian Medical Association President recently observed that we have to get more and more people vaccinated and have to pivot from one-on-one vaccinations to mass vaccine type set-ups.

Victorians are now rightly asking: what is the state Labor Government actually doing about the rollout of the vaccination program in our State?

Does the Government have a plan, and will the Premier advise our community how, when and where the vaccinations will be delivered?

I look forward to the Premier's response.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **SEXUAL ASSAULT VICTIM SUPPORT SERVICES**

Wednesday, 5 May 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:01):**

Young women are calling for modernisation of the sexual assault reporting system. We should not be proud that Victoria is the only jurisdiction in Australia without a structured informal reporting system.

Brave women from my community, like sexual assault survivor Yasmin Ilhan, have described being horrified throughout the reporting process and how no-one, let alone victims of sexual assault, should be treated this way.

At the same time, horrific crimes have recently occurred in my community — violent crimes against children — yet the authorities have chosen not to publicly report them.

And the Labor government's silence has been deafening — silent on making the system better, silent on efforts to protect my community and silent on any comforting words to victims.

# **ADJOURNMENT**

## **BUDGET & TAXES**

Thursday, 20 May 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (19:04):**

My Adjournment is for the Treasurer, and the action I seek is for the Labor government to scrap the envy-based tax attack at the core of its punitive State Budget.

This Budget is a tax attack, a Budget that hates entrepreneurs and job creators, a budget of envy. It is a budget whose economic plan is to borrow, tax and overspend.

On borrowing, our debt will peak at \$156.3 billion.

On tax, the Budget includes an additional \$10 billion in new tax revenue—new tax that includes a callous new payroll tax on business, the biggest ever new state tax.

As Jennifer Westacott, the Chief Executive of the Business Council of Australia, said on the new payroll tax:

“This sets a very dangerous precedent of fiscal repair which ultimately harms growth.”

The hospitality sector will be hit acutely. Chris Lucas, owner of the Chin Chin restaurant group, has said the new payroll tax is, quote, ‘a real kick in the guts’.

And on spending, Labor has already overspent \$22.3 billion in cost blowouts, a cost blowout bill that Labor is forcing the private sector to pay.



As Paul Guerra, the Chief Executive of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said:

“We’re really concerned that businesses continue to foot the bill for ... ongoing cost blowouts on government projects.”

This is a dangerous, tall-poppy Budget. The government’s property tax approach is class based. It is highway robbery.

Over recent years Labor sat on its hands and reaped the reward of a structurally unfair land tax system. Desperate for cash, Labor’s Budget introduces viciously increased property taxes.

Under the changes, the land tax rate will increase by 0.25 per cent for taxable landholdings exceeding \$1.8 million and 0.3 per cent for taxable landholdings exceeding \$3 million.

Stamp duty will also increase. For transactions on properties over \$2 million, the payable rate will increase to \$110 000, 6.5 per cent of the dutiable value in excess of \$2 million.

Despite Labor’s hollow rhetoric, this tax slug is ever broadening. There are now 26 suburbs where the median housing price is \$2 million. As Saul Eslake, the former chief economist of ANZ bank, said, the Treasurer is, quote:

“... taking a tax that is universally recognised as being the worst tax in the armoury of taxes levied by Australian governments and making it worse.”

This Budget is a tax attack. It is a class-based, punitive attack.

More than anything else this Budget is economically dangerous, and I call on the Treasurer to scrap Labor’s envy-based taxes.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BUDGET TAX ATTACK**

Tuesday, 25 May 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:07):**

The budget is a tax attack.

It is a budget of envy that attacks tall poppies.

The State Labor Government has run out of money, so they are digging their grubby hands further into Victorians' pockets.

My community knows that Labor hates wealth creators, so it is attacking home owners and job creators.

Labor plans to borrow more, tax more and keep overspending — and it is economic vandalism.

**BILL DEBATE**

**STATE TAXATION AND MENTAL  
HEALTH ACTS AMENDMENT  
BILL 2021**

Wednesday, 26 May 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (15:55):**

I rise to speak on the State Taxation and Mental Health Acts Amendment Bill 2021.

The Labor Party should be ashamed of itself. As we have a debate in this Chamber about Labor's new tax attack, Victorians across the State are anticipating a further state-wide lockdown.

Reports this afternoon are suggesting that the authorities are considering a five-day lockdown. Think about that.

Businesses are scared out of their wits that another lockdown is coming, and this Labor Government is proposing a harmful tax, a series of harmful taxes, in this place. You should be ashamed.

Not only does Labor want you to welcome these new taxes, they want Victorians to know how lucky they are. You are lucky because of the attack of new taxes — \$5.8 billion — they are going to hit you with!

What Labor do not understand is it is not their money. We have heard Speaker after Speaker with the presumption somehow that Victorians do not have a right to their own money.

They made it. They created it.

Labor has introduced or expanded 38 taxes since they were elected.

So say, 'Thank you', Victoria, because this Bill will introduce the most damaging taxes yet — a tax package containing increased stamp duty, increased land tax, new windfall gains taxes and, dangerously, a new payroll tax on business.

The Bill will hurt home owners and it will damage job creators. Labor's Budget is a tax attack on wealth creators, Victorians who have had a go.

We know, because the Acting Premier admits the new payroll tax, which will hit over 9000 businesses, was 'targeted'. It was targeted. If you are a tall poppy, Labor will assault you with a new tax.

Not only does Labor want to hurt you, they want you to welcome this tax attack.

The Treasurer has said he wants taxed home owners to have 'a warm inner glow' and further that new taxes on job creators should be welcomed as an obligation.

The Treasurer's language is code. What he means is that Labor has racked up \$156 billion in debt and already overspent \$22 billion in cost blowouts. This is ideological.

As Paul Guerra, the chief executive of the Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry said:

"We're really concerned that businesses continue to foot the bill for these ... ongoing cost blowouts on government projects."

Labor will never dip into their own pockets to pay for their economic vandalism.

No, they will always dip their grubby hands into Victorians' pockets, or more specifically, the Acting Premier has admitted that Labor has targeted the burden.

This Budget and these taxes have been targeted at wealth creators, the tall poppies that Labor innately hates, the people who the Treasurer has previously

described as those who can 'afford to pay'—afford to pay the backbreaking \$5.8 billion in new and additional taxes. This is a tax attack on Victorians.

There are two issues with Labor's attack. Firstly, the attack is ideological, and class based. It is an overt attack on tall poppies, on wealth creators.

But secondly, and this should concern all Victorians, the budget is economically dangerous — a dangerous Budget that actively and deliberately hurts our state economy.

Jennifer Westacott, the chief executive of the Business Council of Australia, said the new payroll tax:

"... sets a very dangerous precedent of fiscal repair which ultimately harms growth."

Industry groups agree, with the Housing Industry Association, the Master Builders, the Property Council, the Real Estate Institute of Victoria and the Urban Development Institute writing to the Acting Premier and Treasurer, quote:

"We are gravely concerned about the impact these increased and new taxes will have on our industry, on Victorian home owners, home buyers and businesses, and the very real threat that these tax hikes will cripple Victoria's economic recovery."

Similarly, CPA Australia said:

"... by seeking to raise tax revenues at this stage of the economic cycle, the Victorian Government risks damaging the state's recovery.

It doesn't make sense to impose new costs on businesses and investors now. People and money are mobile. New taxes will undermine confidence and may drive them away."

And the assessment from the property industry has been equally alarming.

The President of the Real Estate Institute of Victoria said:

“We don’t want to see Victoria become the state no one wants to invest in and with additional taxes for the property sector, that’s where we’re heading ...”

and that the taxes are an ‘assault on property owners’.

The Victorian Executive Director of the Property Council of Australia said:

“This is a greedy tax hike on the industry that is building Victoria’s recovery.”

And further:

“The Victorian Government has given itself a massive 13 per cent pay rise this year thanks to increased property taxes and new taxes on families, jobs and investment...

Victorians pay more than 50 per cent of the government’s tax revenue through property, and with massive hikes on land tax, stamp duty, and investment in new projects, these taxes are anything but fair.”

The broad assessment of the private sector and industry is disturbing, with assessments like ‘danger’, ‘harm’, ‘very real threat’, ‘crippling’, ‘greedy’ and ‘damaging’. These words have not been used lightly.

Peak industry groups in Victoria and indeed Australia have assessed that Labor’s tax attack will cause serious harm to our State and our nation. Victorians need to know that this Labor Government is a sovereign risk. Labor is a sovereign risk.

Victorians can feel confident in one thing: by contrast to this Labor government, taxes will always be lower under a Liberal government. Our side of the Chamber has already committed to do that. Our side of the —

Mr Dimopoulos: On a point of order, Speaker, the member has been in this place long enough to know that he should not be reading his speeches word for word, line for line, page for page.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Carbines): Well, I would ask the member for Brighton:



is he referring to notes?

Mr NEWBURY: Referring to notes.

A Member: What a childish interjection.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr Carbines): Well, I will rule on the interjection. What I would say is that the Member for Brighton has advised the House that he is referring to notes, and I will allow the Member for Brighton to continue on that basis.

Mr NEWBURY: Our side of the Chamber has committed to scrap Labor's stamp duty tax hike on the family home. Again, a Liberal Government will scrap Labor's stamp duty hike, because we know that Labor's new stamp duty tax will make home ownership and rents less affordable. Unlike Labor, if you are a Victorian homeowner, we will back you.

And if you are a job creator in Victoria, know that we will back you too. Under a Liberal Government, businesses will not pay a cent of payroll tax until their wages bill is greater than \$1.6 million. That will mean 15,000 Victorian small businesses will be removed from the payroll tax system. The policy will mean a saving of up to \$43,650 on payroll tax for small business. Again, a Liberal government will cut Labor's payroll tax impost because we know that payroll tax is a tax on jobs.

There is a stark difference between the visions offered by each side of the Chamber. The Liberal Party believe that if you have a go, we will back you.

By contrast, Labor wants to attack homeowners and job creators with new taxes — a tax attack — and at the same time this Parliament is debating Labor's Bill to thrash people with new taxes, to attack people with new taxes with a dangerous Budget.

The Government outside this Chamber is debating shutting down the State. You could not have a more perverse, disgraceful display of a Government that has no concept of the private sector. You attack them, we will back them.

# **MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE**

## **SUPERVISED INJECTING ROOMS**

Wednesday, 26 May 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (17:58):**

I am pleased to rise on the Matter of Public Importance.

Public policy is about balance. On this issue, on the supervised medical injecting room, the Government has got the balance wrong — wrong in Richmond and wrong in their proposed CBD site.

There is no question that those who are drug affected need support and rehabilitation — no question. But there is a need when you provide that support, when you propose rehabilitation, that you do so in an appropriate and balanced way.

The Government has stood here on this Matter of Public Importance and said how immensely proud they are of the Richmond site, how the site is a weight off the community, how it is a magnificent facility and how they are standing up for those affected by drugs.

What about the thousands of people that live in the surrounding community?

In the CBD site, what about the thousands of businesses and people who use the area, the tourists who use the area — the tens of thousands who use those sites.

The Government has got the balance completely wrong.

I would note the Minister referred to crime data earlier this evening, crime data I am not aware that is publicly available, so I would call on him to come back into the Chamber and table for the House the magical crime data that he

was referring to.

I went to the North Richmond injecting facility and took a tour of the facility. I did arrive about an hour before the tour, and what I arrived to could only be described as a war zone, an absolute war zone. I saw drug-fuelled rage, screaming at local residents as they were up early to go to work, people lying on the ground, local families trying to pass — bedlam, violence!

Half an hour before my tour started the Government had organised a clean-up crew to come and literally push people away before Members of Parliament arrived. It was outrageous. It was a total and utter cover-up.

What I learned from the facility itself is worth noting and putting on the record.

Three hundred people, roughly, use the Richmond facility each day. Three thousand people in total, roughly, have used it, with six new people per day. A third of the users are not from the local area—they are people who travel to the site — so the idea that this is a facility for local users is factually wrong. And the site does get used by children, by people under the age of 18.

Roughly 25 per cent of those who attend want help with drug treatment, a quarter.

Let me get to that. The follow-up program for the 3000 people—this is the facility that provided me with this information. As I said, 750 had indicated they wanted drug dependence treatment. Guess how many have received treatment out of the 750? One hundred. One hundred of the 750 have been provided with treatment, because of a lack of capacity. This site, the injecting room, is not about rehabilitation. This has nothing to do with rehabilitation. This is a site for people to take drugs, and the people who are asking for support are not being provided with it. It is outrageous.

What is more outrageous is that this Government gave an absolute commitment that they would not open a supervised injecting room. The Premier made it clear that he had, quote, 'no intention', and that the Government had no plans to do so.

They have said the same thing in St Kilda. We heard the Minister laugh about St Kilda today. What he did not say is that the Government has secretly approached Port Phillip Labor Councillors and asked them to formally write to the Government. The Government has approached Labor Port Phillip Councillors and asked them to request a facility in St Kilda.

Let me say that again: Labor has approached Labor Councillors in Port Phillip and asked them to request a facility in St Kilda. The Minister can laugh though, I presume, knowing exactly what his Government has asked.

When the facility in Richmond opened the community was told, 'It's going to be low impact'. That is a quote, 'It's going to be low impact'. Can you believe it?

The site would be low impact. And what have we seen since?

We have seen workers from the facility being caught using in nearby streets and laneways — workers from the facility. We have seen workers arrested for drug dealing; these are the people who actually run the facility using drugs in the surrounding streets.

What possible faith can the CBD and businesses in the CBD have in this facility being run with any sense of governance when you have had workers in Richmond using drugs and selling drugs? And we know there has been increased drug use around Richmond. Of course — I cannot believe there is even any question.

The other things we have seen, as mentioned by previous speakers: a dead body, which the Minister has mentioned is under investigation, under review, by police, and we have seen trespassing in schools. I mean, for the Minister to come in here and say, 'Nothing to see here, but someone was on school grounds carrying a knife', because it was not as big as Crocodile Dundee's — I mean, what an absolute fool. It is a primary school. How can anybody on that side of the Chamber — how can any parent on that side of the chamber — sit and listen to the Minister excusing that type of behaviour. Imagine if that happened in your children's school and this Minister stood up and said, 'It's

okay because it wasn't Crocodile Dundee's knife'.

**Ms Hall:** On a point of order, Deputy Speaker, I would like you to draw the Member back to this matter. I think he is—

Mr Newbury interjected.

**Ms Hall:** The Member for Brighton should be sitting down. The Member for Brighton has been using unparliamentary language about the Member for Richmond, referring to him as a fool, and is misrepresenting the Member for Richmond's contribution.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member for Footscray, that is not a point of order.

**Mr NEWBURY:** Such a spurious interjection. But we know already what businesses are saying about the proposed site in the CBD, in Degraes Street. It is extraordinary. We know what the businesses are saying.

Al Tempo business owner Jack Horton said a site in the city would kill the city:

"Melbourne's CBD has already been killed and now they want to put the knife in."

They want to put a knife in.

George, who runs Team Kolovos Fight Club martial arts, has said:

"There is no doubt it will affect the city in a big way."

And theatre owner David Marriner said he could not think of a poorer location.

The views of the local community in Richmond are in. The views of the community in the CBD are in. This proposal is outrageous. This is another step in Labor's approach to decriminalising drugs. It is absolutely destroying the amenity of the areas around Richmond and around the CBD, and we know they are coming after St Kilda next—we know it.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH**

Wednesday, 9 June 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (10:03):**

Mental health issues have swept across Victoria like a tidal wave.

Labor has sacrificed our children's mental health. Children have been locked out of our schools for 114 days.

A secret report from the Victorian Agency for Health Information has revealed that in the six weeks to the end of March average weekly presentations to emergency departments by children were up 51 per cent for those self-harming and suffering suicidal thoughts and 44.9 per cent where teenagers have needed resuscitation in emergency care.

The report also found that girls aged 12 and above have been hardest hit, with a 26 per cent increase in those battling serious eating disorders and an alarming 34 per cent increase in new disorder cases.

Kids Helpline is also reporting disturbing figures in Victoria. Tracy Adams, the Chief Executive Officer of the helpline's parent Yourtown, has said:

"It is very clear that the pandemic is taking a toll on the lives of children and young people ..."

and that the Victorian results are 'very disturbing'.

The helpline reports that over the last six months there has been a 184 per cent increase in emergency interventions where the helpline counsellor has



been forced to call police, ambulance or other emergency intervention services, and further, for children and young people aged 5 to 25, 44 per cent emergency interventions occurred because of an immediate intention to commit suicide.

This Government has lost its moral compass.

Labor's lockdown is causing lifelong mental health damage to our children.

What is happening is criminal.

Labor is dangerous.

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# SMALL BUSINESS IS DEVASTATED

Wednesday, 9 June 2021

**Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (14:42):**

Small businesses across my community are crying out 'Enough is enough'.

They are the human face of our economy.

They are the mums and dads of our communities.

They are our neighbours who have taken a risk to realise a dream.

They deserve to flourish. Instead, many are dying.

Over the last year Labor has released four small business packages.

The truth has been revealed: hardly any businesses were eligible.

Twelve per cent of Victorian small businesses accessed round 1, 16 per cent round 2, 11 per cent round 3, and we know only 13 per cent are eligible for this current round.

I say to Victorian small businesses: don't you forget who shut you down.

Don't you forget it was the Premier, whose only life experience is working for the Labor Party, and a gang of Cabinet Ministers, who are all union officials or Labor staffers.

Labor is not a Party of diversity. Its gene pool is either Labor or union.

I ask the Acting Premier: how many of the businesses in my community does this Government anticipate will be shut down?

## MEMBERS STATEMENT

# CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH

Wednesday, 8 September 2021

### Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):

Parents know that the shattered mental health of our kids is the biggest threat facing our State.

They know there is a mental health shadow pandemic in Victoria, despite the State Labor Government trying to deny it and seeking to cover it up.

The truth is known because the community has felt it.

We also know because secret reports, which set out up-to-date health data, have been publicly released. Data the State Government has tried to hide.

The most recent Victorian Agency for Health Information child and adolescent edition report shows that each week an average of 342 children and teenagers present to emergency departments, in a mental health crisis.

And more specifically:

156 teenagers were rushed to hospital after self-harming and suffering suicidal ideation—which represents an 88 per cent increase on last year; and

more than 37 teenagers required resuscitation and emergency treatment — an 83 per cent increase on last year.

Disturbingly, new information from Victoria's Coroners Court reinforces how the shadow pandemic is most harming children and teenagers.

Court data shows that in the first seven months of the year, eight teenage girls

have taken their life—in the first seven months of last year, one young girl took her life.

The Court itself has publicly confirmed the troubling increase, saying: 'The Court has noted a potentially higher than expected number of suspected suicides among women under 18 this year'.

We should mourn any young child taking their life.

Any child lost represents decades of life not lived.

It is heartbreaking. We should fight frantically to stop it.

And any increase in loss of life amongst young people should be met with a sense of distress from Government, followed by hasty action seeking to do whatever it can to do more.

Victorians can see the truth.

They know this mental health crisis is not being met by a government desperate to do something.

In fact, we have witnessed this Government's immediate response was to cover up.

Did the Government quickly and repeatedly incorporate mental health messaging into the daily press conference? No.

Has the Government ensured that expert mental health advice helps shape lockdown restrictions? No.

Or finally, and most egregiously, 20 months into the pandemic, has the Government already provided a mental health specialist at every primary school?

Again, no.

This Government shouldn't just hang their heads in shame.

The Government's behaviour hasn't just been unconscionable.

Their lack of action isn't only immoral.

It's malicious.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **COVID POLICY HURTING KIDS**

Wednesday, 15 September 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

The State Labor Government has justified every decision it has made during the pandemic by saying that the imposition of punitive policy has been based on expert health advice.

Within days, these decisions will have led to Melbourne becoming the most locked up city on the planet.

Victorians know that our children have been amongst those most affected by these punitive policies.

As parents look at their children, they know the damage that is being done to their kids — government policies that have kept our children locked out of schools; banned kids from playing in playgrounds or using skate parks; and policies that have permanently isolated young people.

Even the Premier himself has whipped up the threat of danger to our children by saying that as a dad, the threat terrifies him.

All of this damage has been done in the name of so-called expert health advice— advice that Victorians have never seen.

But what do the available health facts actually show?

It's true, evidence shows, that delta infection rates are higher in young people under 18 years of age.

But hospitalisation rates are: 1.7 per cent for children aged between 0 and



four; 1.4 per cent for children aged between five and 11; and 2.2 per cent for children aged between 12 and 17.

We also know that the virus has not caused the death of any Australian child.

These health outcomes are matched by a growing body of expert opinion from health experts—experts willing to put their name to their advice.

The Murdoch Children's Research Institute, in its recently released report 'COVID-19 and Child and Adolescent Health' has found that:

"Children and adolescents who have COVID-19 commonly have no symptoms, or only mild symptoms' and that 'The Delta variant does not appear to cause more severe disease..."

And Associate Professor Margie Danchin, an immunisation expert at the Royal Children's Hospital, has said:

"There is this real groundswell of panic among parents ... Overall, parents need to know that kids still mostly get mild disease with a sore throat, runny nose and fatigue mostly, like a nasty cold, but they are very unlikely to get sick'."

Similarly, Robert Booy, a professor at New South Wales' Children's Hospital at Westmead has said:

"They can catch infection easily but most cases have no or mild symptoms. You might not even know you've had COVID-19."

These are the facts put forward by experts willing to put their name to their health advice.

What should disturb every Victorian is what the health experts are now saying about the real cause of damage to our children.

As the Murdoch Children's Research Institute has found:

“The main risks to children and adolescents’ health in this pandemic continues to be due to indirect effects on mental health, wellbeing and education, which are worsened by continued lockdowns and school closures.”

The experts are saying that the main risk to our kids is mental health — exacerbated by government policy.

Parents know that the mental health crisis is the real shadow pandemic.

There are 173 Victorians in hospital with COVID today — of the 4038 active cases in the State.

Yet, the recent Victorian Agency for Health Information, child and adolescent edition, report shows that each day almost 50 children and teenagers present to emergency departments in a mental health crisis—at an average of 342 each week.

Of course, we need to implement policy to protect our kids.

But we also need to stop policy which the experts say is damaging our kids.

Because right now, Victorian children are silently screaming. And this State Labor Government isn’t listening to them.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT**

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

At a time when Victorian businesses are doing it incredibly tough, the Labor Government is cutting financial support for hard-done small businesses. It is outrageous.

Numerous businesses have contacted me, concerned about Round 5 of the Business Costs Assistance Program. They advise that non-employing business payments were cut from \$2,800 to \$1,000 on 1 October.

We know the shocking track record of the Government on business support. In Round 1 of the program only 12 per cent of all small businesses were eligible; in Round 2, 16 per cent; and Round 3, 13 per cent.

Five out of six small businesses were left behind with no support.

As one business owner has said to me, 'No restrictions are easing and we are still unable to work, so our question is: how are we supposed to survive?'

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **LGBTIQ+ BUSINESS SUPPORT**

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Despite hollow words, this Labor Government has let the LGBTIQ+ community down.

There has been a 24.9 per cent cut to LGBTIQ+ and equality programs in the budget. The cuts mean a change from \$7.6 million last financial year to just \$5.7 million this financial year.

In a recent Parliamentary hearing, the Minister confirmed that Labor will only be giving 'small support' for

LGBTIQ+ programs this financial year, despite the community suffering ongoing and crippling lockdowns.

The rainbow community deserves more than hollow words.

The community, made up of thousands of hardworking small business owners, deserve real support right now.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **BASTION INSIGHTS SURVEY**

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Is there any wonder that Victorians think the economic cost of lockdowns outweighs the risks of the coronavirus?

A recent Bastion Insights survey has shown that 49 per cent of Victorians believe the cost outweighs risk, 21 per cent were undecided and only one-third disagreed.

Additionally, only 41 per cent of Victorians support the State Government's virus response.

The Premier gets up on a platform every day and hectors people and blames people.

When you yell at people every day, it's hardly surprising that they stop listening.

When you impose restrictions that are stupid, people will stop listening.

That's what this survey is showing, and it's time for the Premier to open his tin ear and start listening to Victorians.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **HEALTH SYSTEM IN CRISIS**

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

With over 18 months to prepare for the pandemic it is more than just outrageous that Labor has not prepared our health system.

The system is now in crisis.

We know that the Premier promised to deliver 4,000 ICU beds in April last year at a cost of \$1.3 billion.

Although the money has been spent, we don't even know how many beds have been delivered. Reports suggest roughly 400.

Ambulances are all lined up outside of hospitals each night with sick patients unable to get the urgent care they desperately need.

And alarmingly, a record number of people who have been calling 000 have been left waiting.

The health system is in crisis and Labor has done nothing to alleviate the pain for those in need of urgent health care.



## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **DELAYED HEALTH CARE**

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Current restrictions are deterring people from accessing the health services they need. That delay is causing ongoing health issues, and for many, leading to ongoing agonising pain.

A mother recently contacted me, desperate, because her daughter hasn't been able to receive myotherapy. Her daughter has a chronic pain condition resulting from spinal surgery three years ago.

As she said:

'My daughter is in Year 12 and is supposed to be preparing for exams, but she is spending much more time in bed due to severe pain'.

Hampton dentist Dr Ian Maratos, a dental surgeon and dentist, recently shared a disturbing story of a patient, saying:

'I saw a new 'emergency' patient, a mother of two young kids... She was fully vaccinated, had a TMD issue and some mouth discomfort, she was a little perturbed about a mouth ulcer that had persisted for some months during lockdown... It wasn't an ulcer—it was oral cancer... It made me worry for my other patients. What was being missed during these extended Lockdowns.'

Victorians need access to proper health services.

And we know that ongoing lockdowns are causing access to be denied or dissuaded. It's just not good enough.

## CONSTITUENCY QUESTION

# AGED CARE RESTRICTIONS

Thursday, 7 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

My constituency question is directed to the Premier, and I ask it on behalf of aged-care residents and providers in my community. On what date will the State Government allow them the quality of life they deserve?

For many in aged-care homes, it is the last step in their life. As a community, we want to make sure that residents are safe but also provide them with the best quality of life they can have. Our loved ones deserve no less.

That's why the Liberal Party has called on the State Labor Government to allow practical relaxation of restrictions for residents at aged-care homes. Where a resident and direct family member—children or grandchildren—are all fully vaccinated and are in agreeance, they should be allowed to sit outside together, fully masked, and socially distanced. This is common sense and compassionate.

As Linda Potter, the General Manager of Princeton View in Brighton East, recently said to me:

'I am all too aware of the need for caution and all care to be taken, however I cannot sit back and see people dying and not being able to enjoy their families as they would like to'.

Linda's plea is heartfelt, and her words speak for residents and families across the State.

The Government needs to hear Linda's sincere plea and give aged-care residents the enhanced but safe quality of life they deserve.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **SMALL BUSINESS SUPPORT DELAYS**

Thursday, 14 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton):**

Labor's attitude towards small business throughout the pandemic has been shameful.

This week the Government admitted their disinterest in supporting the 660,000 Victorian small businesses.

At anti-corruption hearings this week a government witness admitted:

'The small business portfolio was so small, there wasn't a lot of work to do'.

The reality is that Labor's effort towards small business has been insulting. On average five out of six small businesses have been ineligible for the Government's own designed support.

We also know that in the latest round of the Business Costs Assistance Program support has been cut from \$2,800 to \$1,000.

Numerous businesses have also reported significant delays in October's automatic payments. One business said to me today:

'Business support entails two fortnightly payments of \$5,600 from 1 October to 26 October and the first payment has not even been processed'

and that

'This ALP Victorian government swiftly locks us down and they should equally as swiftly process payments... this dictatorship government is pathetic and completely reactive!'.  
'

Labor is showing utter contempt towards hundreds of thousands of Victorian small businesses, their families, and their staff.

## **MEMBERS STATEMENT**

# **PANDEMIC LAWS SURVEY**

Thursday, 28 October 2021

### **Mr NEWBURY (Brighton) (9:50):**

Victorians are speaking out strongly in Opposition to the Premier's pandemic management.

They know that Labor has mismanaged the State. They also know that the Premier's decisions have been punitive, and his restrictions have hurt people.

Labor cannot be trusted with increased power.

Throughout the pandemic I have asked my community directly about their views on important issues, including state-of-emergency powers and lockdowns.

This week I asked my community about pandemic management. Their response has been overwhelming, with thousands letting me know how desperately opposed they are to the Government.

Within hours, over 95 per cent of thousands of respondents from my constituency told me they oppose new powers, oppose laws being transferred from health professionals and oppose extending the length of a declaration.

By the end of the first day, it was not just my community who had responded so ferociously.

Without intention for the text message survey to leave my community, it had gone viral.

In less than two days over 130,000 people have accessed it, with many of the respondents living within the sand belt. The results have proven identical to the assessments of my community. Over 95 per cent are in Opposition across St Kilda, Bentleigh, Mordialloc and suburbs right down the sand belt.

I say directly to those who have responded: your Labor representatives are not listening to you, but the Liberal Party has heard you.

We will be a strong voice on your behalf.

Put Labor last when you vote at the next State election.



# JAMES NEWBURY MP

Member for Brighton



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