

WEDNESDAY, 4 JULY 2007

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. MF Reynolds, Townsville) read prayers and took the chair at 9.06 am.

PROCLAMATION CONVENING THE TWELFTH QUEENSLAND YOUTH PARLIAMENT

"WHEREAS the State Council of YMCAs of Queensland wish to develop a Youth Parliament program that—

- Educates young people by being as true to the parliamentary system as possible: adheres to its rules, presents ideas in its format and places young people in the role of leaders; and
- Equips young people with the skills and strategies necessary to impact their community; and
- Unites young people by having as few as possible social, economic or geographic barriers to participation and developing a recreation and training program to support young people to grow in body, mind and spirit; and
- Links and supports young people across Queensland to use their skills practically to bring about change on a local and State level;

AND WHEREAS the Honourable Speaker of the Queensland Parliament has graciously consented to the use of the Chambers of Parliament for this purpose;

AND WHEREAS the Speaker has agreed to attend in the Legislative Council Chamber to receive the Youth Bills passed by this Youth Parliament;

NOW THEREFORE I, Nicola Strohal, Youth Governor, command the selected Members of the twelfth YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament to attend at the Legislative Assembly Chamber in Parliament House, situated on Alice Street, Brisbane for the carrying out of business that the YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament shall deem appropriate.

Given under my hand, on this 4th day of July 2007—

Her Excellency, Ms Nicola Strohal

Youth Governor of Queensland."

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. MF Reynolds, Townsville) acknowledged the traditional owners of the land upon which this Youth Parliament is assembled and the custodians of the sacred lands of our state.

Mr SPEAKER: I recognise Her Excellency the Youth Governor; Mr Stirling Hinchliffe MP, member for Stafford and Parliamentary Secretary to the Hon. Warren Pitt, Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth; and the Hon. Kev Lingard, shadow minister for communities, seniors and youth. I also recognise the ministers, shadow ministers and parliamentarians who are here today. Thank you very much for recognising the importance of this process for young Queenslanders, and I am very pleased that you are all able to make it this morning. I also recognise Dr Joe Goodall, President of the State Council of YMCAs of Queensland; members of the YMCA Youth Parliament executive who have worked hard to make this a success over the next three days; the honourable youth members of parliament; parents and families; ladies and gentlemen.

As Speaker of the 52nd Parliament of Queensland, I have great pleasure in welcoming all participants to today's opening ceremony of the 12th YMCA Youth Parliament of Queensland. Honourable youth members have a busy two-day sitting program ahead of them, and on behalf of the whole of the parliament I wish you all of the best in your important deliberations. I think you will find that those deliberations will be challenging, rewarding, productive, humorous and I think you are going to find, as we parliamentarians find, that it is going to be a good three days for you. There are a number of significant pieces of legislation going before the Youth Parliament today and Friday, including the Zero Tolerance on BAC Youth Bill, the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court Youth Bill, the Health Education Youth Bill, the Indigenous Studies Youth Bill, the Carbon Regulation Youth Bill, the Innovative Classrooms Youth Bill and the Performance Based Incentives for Teachers Youth Bill. As well as the important debates that will surround the passage of these bills through the Youth Parliament, I know that the essential parliamentary accountability mechanism of question time will be held at the commencement of each sitting day.

As honourable youth members will understand from the training and education you have received, the role of the Westminster parliament is essentially twofold. It provides the forum required for representatives of the community to make laws and supplies the purse of both the government of the day and Her Majesty's loyal opposition. It also importantly establishes an accountability regime to which the executive and ministers must report. These two particular features of governance are very much the central tenets of the Westminster system. We have two ministers here today: Margaret Keech, the Minister for Tourism, Fair Trading, Wine Industry Development and Women, and the Minister for Local Government, Planning and Sport, the Hon. Andrew Fraser. I do not think that I have missed any other ministers, but they are both here representing the ministry, and it is great to have them here. Ministers being drawn from the ranks of the members of the parliament must be accountable to the body that establishes their legitimacy.

The effectiveness of the Westminster parliamentary system therefore depends largely on the robustness of parliamentary scrutiny in holding ministers to account. To achieve robust scrutiny, an appreciation of the importance of executive government accountability must exist across the political divide. All members of parliament—whether part of the governing party, opposition party or an Independent—should consider the accountability of the ministry to be fundamental to the democracy that we live in today. This unity of purpose exists in a very strong way in the United Kingdom parliament, which is of course the mother parliament of the Westminster system.

The Westminster system that operates in Australia, whilst inherited from London, has been adapted to suit our own circumstances, in particular the small size of our parliaments. Queensland has 89 parliamentarians and of course the House of Commons in London has about 650 or so. So we have over time developed an extraordinarily adversarial approach to political debate in Australia. With the adversarial approach we take in this country has come strict party discipline—discipline that is really unseen in many parts of the Westminster world. Can I encourage youth members to embrace your role as parliamentarians first and foremost and government or opposition members second. I will be presiding over your first question time shortly and I will be watching with great interest at the approach that all of you take to this important parliamentary function.

Honourable youth members, as the Speaker of the parliament I wish you well as you undertake your legislative duties over the coming days and encourage you to make the most of this tremendous opportunity to contribute to public debate. Thank you very much. Your Excellency, youth members and ladies and gentlemen, it is now my great pleasure to introduce Mr Stirling Hinchliffe MP, the member for Stafford and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth. We welcome Mr Stirling Hinchliffe.

Mr HINCHLIFFE: If I could commence by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we gather today. I would also like to acknowledge of course the Hon. Mike Reynolds, the Speaker of the parliament, and the members of parliament who are gathered here—very many of them, which is a great testament to the importance of this event in the calendar of the parliament's life each year, particularly Ministers Keech and Fraser and my parliamentary secretary colleagues, including Ronan Lee, who is also the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth. I also acknowledge the Hon. Kev Lingard, the opposition spokesperson for communities, seniors and youth; the Queensland Youth Governor, Nicola Strohal; Dr Joe Goodall, President of the State Council of YMCAs of Queensland; the YMCA board members who are here; and youth parliamentarians, particularly Sheree O'Dwyer, the Youth Premier and youth member for Indooroopilly, and Kurt Hopkins, the youth opposition leader and youth member for Stafford. There I think my colleague Ronan Lee and I have found that we have partners who are inspiring us at an early stage.

I welcome the families of the participants who are here today. I know that the participants will appreciate your support and involvement in what they are doing. I also welcome you all to this magnificent chamber in Queensland's premier heritage building. It is a great venue which enhances your opportunity to learn and be actively involved in a great institution, the parliament. Clearly, the ability to hold this meeting in these chambers adds to the opportunity that you have as members of the YMCA Youth Parliament. I respect and pay credit to the Speaker for permitting that to occur. Today it is my pleasure to represent the Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth, Warren Pitt. Warren would have enjoyed being here today, but unfortunately he is not able to be here. He is enjoying a short break to make sure that his health is at the absolute best.

This year marks the 12th annual YMCA Youth Parliament. Since its inception, more than 800 young Queenslanders have stepped up to the challenge and taken an active interest in the world around them. I would like to congratulate each of the young parliamentarians here today for having the necessary determination, commitment and enthusiasm to participate in such an important youth program. I trust that you have enjoyed a busy term in your role as youth parliamentarians and have gained an insight into Queensland's system of government. I have been impressed with the thought-provoking and topical youth bills that you have undertaken to debate at Parliament House. I have heard about them firsthand from the youth member for Stafford, Kurt Hopkins. I am keen to see the debate unfold over the next few days. Ranging over issues from a Youth Drug and Alcohol Court to Indigenous studies in primary schools, the topics that you are debating are very interesting. I look forward to hearing the results of all seven bills.

The Queensland government has long been committed to providing young people with the opportunity to have their voices heard and their concerns and viewpoints understood by government. Another opportunity that encourages young people to assist in policy and program development is the Queensland Youth Council. I believe that currently six members of the Youth Council are past participants in the YMCA Youth Parliament. I would encourage every one of you here today to consider applying for the next council term. Another upcoming opportunity that will allow young people to highlight issues of importance to them and share their knowledge is the Queensland Youth Conference.

This conference is being staged by the Department of Communities in Brisbane in September. I certainly hope to see several of the young parliamentarians who are participating in the YMCA Youth Parliament take a role in that conference as well. For information about these events, I encourage you to look at www.generate.qld.gov.au, which is the key web site for getting information about activities that the Queensland government has for young people. This web site is aimed at people aged 15 to 25 years and features online discussion opportunities, a calendar for youth events and other relevant information for young Queenslanders. It is one of the many things that the government is doing to try to engage with young Queenslanders and take into account their concerns and issues.

The results of the seven bills that you will be debating, which will be accessed through the excellent *Hansard* record of the sessions of this week's YMCA Youth Parliament, will be of interest to all parliamentarians. I know that Warren Pitt, the minister for youth, will take a particular interest in reading closely those *Hansard* debates to see the concerns and issues that young people are raising here in Queensland. This great venue provides the opportunity to raise those issues on behalf of your fellow young Queenslanders. In that context, I close by thanking YMCA Queensland for its dedication and commitment to supporting young people and providing this opportunity for them. I particularly congratulate our young parliamentarians. Too often as a community we are willing to criticise all sorts of things, but we are not necessarily able to commit to being involved in effecting change ourselves. I am sure that the recent experiences that you have had and will have over the next couple of days will stay with you long after you have returned home from these hallowed halls. It will allow you to participate in your communities and effect the sort of change that you would like to see in those communities for young people and Queenslanders in general. I congratulate you very much on this activity. I encourage you to enjoy it, have fun and take the lessons that you learn back to your communities to make a real difference. Thank you.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Mr Hinchliffe. It is now my very great pleasure to introduce the shadow minister for communities, seniors and youth, the Hon. Kev Lingard, who is also a former Speaker of the Queensland Legislative Assembly. Mr Lingard.

Mr LINGARD: Your Excellency, I can honestly say that 24 hours ago—yesterday morning—I was in Germany. The day before I was in Budapest, where a most magnificent parliament is situated on the river Danube. There are three magnificent parliaments of the world: first, our own parliaments in England; second, those in Rio de Janeiro; and, thirdly, Budapest. In the plane on the way over—it was a private trip—I saw a film called *Freedom Fighters*. It is a magnificent film starring Hilary Swank as a young American teacher whose class is a group of hoodlums. That class of hoodlums obviously did not want to be there and believed that they were worse off than anyone else in the world. The young teacher, played by Hilary Swank, had to take them through a process to try to encourage them and show them that they were not the worst off in the world. She talked about the diaries of Anne Frank. In the end, she convinced them that they should change and become good citizens. It was an excellent film.

About two days later I was in Amsterdam at the building where Anne Frank and her family, who were Jews, hid during the Nazi period. Unfortunately, just before the end of the war they were betrayed by a friend and taken to Auschwitz. A day later I was at Nuremberg and visited the Hitler museums. Those who have heard of them would know how horrible it is to go through those places and to see the remains of Auschwitz. Having seen the film *Freedom Fighters* and visiting Nuremberg, I can only imagine the problems faced by youth in those days. I also visited the war cemeteries at Normandy. We have to wonder how previous generations could have ever allowed such atrocities to occur. We have to make sure that we do not allow those or similar atrocities to occur in our generation. I certainly wonder how future generations will come out, especially when talking about youth in Third World countries and, maybe, the plight of Aborigines in our own country.

To the youth here today, I say that when tackling such issues we need your participation and cooperation. We certainly need your work through forums such as this Youth Parliament and in the community. To all of you I say that as young people you have a magnificent opportunity. I hope that you accept that opportunity with open arms. Thank you.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you, Mr Lingard. It is now my pleasure to invite Dr Joseph Goodall to make an address on behalf of the State Council of the YMCAs of Queensland. We welcome Dr Goodall.

Dr GOODALL: Thank you, Mr Speaker, Your Excellency, members of parliament, my YMCA colleagues, youth parliamentarians, all of our very proud parents and I am not going to forget—as others have not forgotten—the traditional owners of the land. This year there is a particularly important reason for that. With this 12th Youth Parliament we are getting closer to the goal I have which is that, one of these days, I will get up here and welcome 89 youth parliamentarians, one per electorate. It is the flu that gets us. We actually had 89 participants but a couple have not managed to show, but one of these days that will happen and I will die happy.

Mr Speaker, I want to thank you for your commitment, the involvement of yourself and your staff and that of the Department of Communities, as well as the members of parliament who get behind this project. I thank you for what you do and for the financial support provided. With things such as the Youth Parliament, if you do not support them you do not get any results. However, as you increase the support

the results multiply. You actually get far more bucks than you would anticipate. I think that is one of the great characteristics of a Youth Parliament. The other great characteristic is that it is by young people for young people. It is not by older people who reckon that they know what young people should be getting. The youth and government task force is, in fact, made up of young people as well.

To the young people, my message this morning is this: you need to get involved. People who make a difference—and the Youth Parliament is about making a difference—are passionate. People who make a difference stay with it. They are committed. They even become fanatical. Sometimes they really get up people's noses, but they have a vision, they have drive and they keep going and going and going. They get down and dirty. Youth parliamentarians have to get down and dirty, because that is the way to make a difference. Observers do not make a difference and commentators do not make a difference. You sound very good observing and criticising the actions of others, but you do not actually do anything. Passionate people—the ones who are going to get their hands dirty—are the ones who make the difference.

Sir George Williams founded the YMCA. He was not Sir George when he founded the YMCA; he was your age. He had 11 mates in his bedroom back in 1844 when Queensland was not Queensland and Brisbane was a few convict huts that the government in Sydney could not figure out what to do with. Last year, 12 million Australians used the YMCA in one way or another—12 million—and it got that way because George Williams had that passion, even as he got older. He had piercing eyes. You can see them in the portraits of him. Sir George would grab hold of you and say, 'What have you done for the Lord today?' which is pretty off-putting. He met an old friend and said, 'I haven't seen you around?' He said, 'No, no, I haven't been well and the doctor said I should take it easy.' Sir George said, 'I can fix that for you.' He asked, 'How? How?' He said, 'Change your doctor.' Sir George's drive, his whole vision, his whole commitment, his whole life, got the YMCA where it is today. That is George Williams.

I want to talk about Winnie Mandela. I could talk about Nelson Mandela, but I want to talk about his wife. She was not the figurehead, but she was the one who kept the freedom movement going in South Africa while Nelson Mandela was in jail. Winnie is the one who did the hard slog for years. Who could ever have thought at that time that apartheid would collapse the way it did? That is an important thing, too. When you are in the middle of it, you do not know where it is going to go. When you are driving your objective, you do not know whether you will succeed or not. It is good looking back on things—'Of course it was going to happen that way'—but in the middle of it you do not know. Winnie Mandela did not know, but through her efforts and the efforts of others she changed the political system through the entire country.

The other one is my favourite Australian member of parliament—apart from the ones here today—King O'Malley; one of the first federal politicians. Never heard of him? He is the one who founded Canberra. He is the one who found the Commonwealth Bank, the story is, on a forged vote. He set up the transcontinental railway. It was the promise of the transcontinental railway that brought Western Australia to Australia. King O'Malley finally left parliament during the First World War when he had a conflict with Billy Hughes over conscription. He was against conscription and Hughes forced him out.

You do not hear much of King O'Malley anymore, but he was a big, larger than life character. Occasionally people would challenge him about him being in parliament—'You're an American citizen.' 'My mother, on the night I was born, in her labour pains crawled through the snow across the northern border of the United States into Canada, thus depriving me for all time the opportunity to be President of the United States.' By the time people had figured out what he was talking about he was gone. The fact of the matter was that he sat in parliament illegally. But King O'Malley had vision, he had drive, he had determination. Even if in the long run he went down on that conscription issue, he did some wonderful things that we might not even acknowledge him doing these days.

So you have to get passionate. The thing is that now you have more opportunity than ever before to get involved. We are celebrating this year the anniversary of the referendum that gave Indigenous people in Australia citizenship. They got the vote in 1967. Today is also American Independence Day, and that was also about voting. That was about Englishmen in America complaining that because they owned property in America, not England, they could not vote. How far we have gone from then—you had to be over 30, you had to own property and you had to live in England to cast your vote—to women getting the vote, to 21-year-olds getting the vote, to Indigenous people getting the vote. I remember when 18-year-olds got the vote.

Not only that, we have forums like this—and you heard before about a whole lot of other youth forums—where people, not necessarily voting, got a chance to have their say in Queensland. That is important and being able to do something with it is important. Once again, never before have we had the opportunity to know what we are talking about. We have TV. As a matter of fact, we have this being taped right now on video. We have radio. We have communications where we can find out what is going on all over the world, even all over Australia and all over Queensland. We have wonderful internet and email and things like that. We have the opportunity to learn what is going on. It is all very well to cast a vote, but you have to know how to use it. The opportunities exist now more than ever before.

The Youth Parliament serves two purposes. That is the great thing about it. Firstly, it gives you the opportunity to have your say. Secondly, it gives you the learning so that your say can be valuable. One, it is a forum where our parliamentarians can hear what one group in the community thinks about things. Two, it is training for the group.

So, youth parliamentarians, what are you going to do when you finish on Friday when you go home? You could go home and say you have had a ripping good time, made some good friends, had good debates, seen this wonderful building here and that is the end of it. Or you could take the skills that you ever learned and the training that you have had and you can use it to make a difference. You can use the things that you have learned to go and do—well, it does not matter what so long as it is something that you are passionate about, so long as it is something that you can clutch to, something that you can have a vision about. Choose your own crusade, but when you leave here make a difference. Good luck and all the best.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Dr Goodall. Honourable youth members, I call Her Excellency the Youth Governor.

YOUTH GOVERNOR: I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we stand; the Hon. Mr Mike Reynolds, Speaker of the Queensland Parliament and patron of the YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament; Mr Stirling Hinchliffe, parliamentary secretary representing the Hon. Mr Warren Pitt, Minister for Communities, Minister for Disability Services, Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Minister for Seniors and Youth; Dr Joe Goodall, President of the State Council of YMCAs of Queensland; Mr Kev Lingard, shadow minister for communities, seniors and youth; supportive and gracious MPs; staff and board members of the YMCA; youth members; ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the 12th YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament. The atmosphere is electric.

Today is the first day of two parliamentary sitting days where our youth members have their say on issues that are important to them. This year, the bill topics are interesting, controversial and injected with passion, enthusiasm and a noticeable want for change. In the past two days the executive has seen a unique group of youth parliamentarians working together very admirably within committees, recreational groups, cabinet and caucus. The past two days have been intense, full of recreation and parliamentary training. But the youth members here have a never-say-die attitude. They are willing to learn, to improve and, most of all, to work together to make positive changes within their own community.

For some youth members the past two days have been very challenging. For some, it is leaving work for a week, taking a week off from holidays or university, even the first time away from home. The executive are young, hard working and, most of all, passionate about youth and youth issues. As a past participant, I know only too well what it is like being a youth member and the work that is involved behind it. This is your chance. This is a unique opportunity to have your say and make a difference.

I urge everyone who is here today to at least come to one of the sessions to see what the Youth Parliament is all about. This week is the collaboration of the ideas of the youth members of Queensland. We are proud to showcase their efforts in the chamber.

We are only on day three and we still have very intense days ahead. They include a community get involved day tomorrow and back to parliament on Friday for our last sitting day followed by a Youth Governor's reception, which I am very excited to host.

Ladies and gentlemen, nothing makes me more proud to be a part of this program. Youth members, when the stress levels begin to rise it is important to keep perspective and remember why you are here. On behalf of the youth of Queensland, it is my absolute pleasure to declare the 12th YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament now open.

Mr SPEAKER: Thank you very much, Your Excellency, for a speech that I am sure is going to thrust everyone into the Legislative Assembly chamber this morning with great feeling and a great deal of drive in regard to the work that they will be doing over the next three days. On everyone's behalf I thank the speakers this morning. I thank all of the honourable youth members for participating in this important session that they will be enjoying over the next three days.

Honourable youth members, I will now proceed to the Legislative Assembly chamber where the first session of the 12th YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament will commence. I request the attendance of honourable youth members in that chamber at 10 am for the start of your first session.

Whereupon the Youth Governor left the chamber—

Mr SPEAKER (Hon. MF Reynolds, Townsville) took the chair at 10 am.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

YOUTH LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: My question is to the Youth Premier. As I am sure the honourable Youth Premier would know, today is 4 July, Independence Day of the United States of America. In the spirit of this day I would like to ask the Youth Premier to update the House on the status of relations between Queensland and the United States, particularly regarding trade and development.

YOUTH PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I thank the Youth Leader of the Opposition for his riveting and thought-provoking question this morning regarding the relations between Queensland and the US. I would like to assure the House beyond any reasonable doubt that this issue is of the utmost importance to the government and that we are committed to having viable relations with the US, ensuring economic sustainability and growth.

Currently the government is delving deep in its consideration of these issues in order for all relevant alternatives and viable solutions to be taken into account. This is done to ensure that the best possible solution is developed and that we reap the most benefits for this great state that is Queensland.

Relations between Queensland and the US are currently at an all-time high, and this government strives to maintain this position. The issues underpinning this relationship are certainly of great importance to this government, and the vision of this government is to act now and ensure that these relations stay as strong as possible in the future.

Of course international relations and global economies are important for us to continue and move forward as a nation. We the government put first and foremost the accountability and responsibility of our Queensland constituents. So, whichever solution comes about, it will be the ethos of this O'Dwyer government to ensure that it will be the most beneficial for this state.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BUNDABERG: My question is directed to the Youth Minister for Education, Training and the Arts. Could the youth minister please provide an update on the success of the introduction of the prep year across all primary schools in Queensland?

YOUTH MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, TRAINING AND THE ARTS: I thank the honourable youth member for Bundaberg for her question. This government values education to the utmost. Therefore, it has taken all appropriate measures to ensure that the Queensland education system is effective, productive and successful. The implementation of a prep year in primary schools statewide is a prime example of this commitment to excellence. Take, for example, St Joseph's primary in Childers. As one of the first schools to implement a prep year, St Joseph's primary has experienced an increase in enrolments and a higher standard of year 1 learning than previously experienced. Therefore, Mr Speaker, I am sure you will see that the prep system is proving to be a smart move by the government. I implore the entire House to embrace this system wholeheartedly. After all, if a system improves the quality of education for our leaders of tomorrow, who could contradict its success? It is certain that no-one with an eye on the future would.

Improving the standard of education is exactly what the prep year is doing. As its name implies, it is effectively preparing children to be students. It is increasing enrolments in Queensland primary schools and it is producing fantastic results. Yes, prep is still in its early days. However, this government is confident that its success will continue into the future, ensuring the betterment of the education system, Queensland youth and the state.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MOGGILL: My question is directed to the Youth Minister for Environment. Can the Youth Minister for Environment please inform the House of the military training base that is situated just 20 kilometres from the water supply for the town of Yeppoon, where it is said that the military is training with depleted uranium? What is the government's view and what is the potential environmental impact of this matter?

YOUTH MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT: In the month of April 2007, 30,000 US military personnel arrived in central Queensland to participate in Operation Talisman Sabre. Not only are the military personnel blowing up parts of the reef, disturbing natural habitats and destroying national parks; but there is substantial evidence from valuable sources to infer that the military is training with weapons that contain depleted uranium, just 20 kilometres from the water supply for the town of Yeppoon. Depleted uranium can cause birth defects, cancer, impotence and many more side effects too numerous to mention.

As the bombs explode and can be felt and heard throughout the entire Livingstone shire, the people of Yeppoon live in fear for their lives and safety. Depleted uranium takes 4.2 billion years to degrade and time fails to lessen the hazardous nature of it. Depleted uranium is said to be being used at present and has been used for the past three months just 20 kilometres from a water supply for 40,000 people.

I need not reiterate the potential consequences of the use of depleted uranium. So please allow me to instead convey the O'Dwyer government's complete contempt for this important issue. The government is utterly opposed to such an abhorrent abuse of the environment and neglect of the rights of Queensland citizens. The environmental consequences of continuing the training in Shoalwater Bay are eclectic and include the ocean, beach, land and water reserves. Military training in Shoalwater Bay is affecting every element of the environment, and the O'Dwyer government is completely opposed to it.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR WATERFORD: My question is directed to the Youth Minister for Transport and Infrastructure. Does the minister support a pipeline to deliver vital water supplies from the north to the cities of Brisbane and the Gold Coast even if the construction of such a project were to cause major disruption to the Sunshine Coast and, in particular, the minister's electorate of Kawana?

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE: I thank the honourable member for Waterford for her question. Whilst water is certainly a necessity and we in south-east Queensland are running desperately short of this vital resource, it is the responsibility of the Water Commission of Queensland to determine where this water pipeline will be built and where the required water will be relocated to. As the Youth Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, it is the responsibility of my portfolio and my department to determine the feasibility of constructing the infrastructure through which the water will be transported as proposed by the Water Commission. Furthermore, I would like to point out that as Youth Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, my department will be more than happy to consider any proposals put forward by the Water Commission and conduct studies as to the feasibility of such proposals. As always, this government is working towards a happier and better Queensland and we are committed to the wellbeing and happiness of every Queenslanders.

Mr SPEAKER: I welcome to the public gallery today those parents, families and, indeed, guests and supporters of this 12th Youth Parliament. You are very much welcome in our public gallery. As Speaker, can I say that it is very, very good to see how well attended this Youth Parliament is. Welcome to everyone in the public gallery.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

YOUTH PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: Australians embrace a fun-loving and easygoing culture. We thrive on mateship and generally think of any excuse to have a party and to join in celebrations with family and friends. My ministerial statement is addressing the ever so prevalent and contentious issue of teen parties. This government is committed to ensuring that this issue is handled in the most effective manner in order to elicit a responsible attitude to our endeavours.

Put a bunch of teenagers together and under the wrong circumstances egos exponentially expand, peer pressure mounts and inhibition drops, creating a surreal feeling where teenagers think they are invincible and can take on anything in this world and not be affected. This government is not about stopping the fun or eradicating these parties altogether, because if this were to be done teenagers would most definitely rebel against authority. Instead, we strive to create a safe environment by the establishment of well thought out guidelines for those attending and hosting parties.

It is imperative that this issue be addressed now in order to alleviate the consequences of such a party getting out of control. Far too often police have been called to complaints of disturbances of the peace, out of control teenagers rampaging through suburban streets, or to break up fights—all of which are fuelled by alcohol, boredom, lack of control and improper guidance which are all preventable. I ask youth members to consider the fact that over 30 per cent of road deaths are caused by alcohol. The extremity of this situation is exemplified by a recent party that got out of control in a Brisbane suburb. A young boy at the tender age of 15 was at this party and he became involved in a violent fight which he neither provoked nor wanted and as a result was killed.

It is the vision of this government that such a situation become extremely rare. We are currently implementing programs to make this vision a reality. Under the Department of Tourism, Fair Trade and Wine Industry Development, the Queensland government has launched an information and education program called the Smart party. Indeed, this is a proactive solution and a great initiative by this Smart State and, indeed, smart government. The main focus for this is ensuring that parties are adequately planned and that the party hosts are prepared for the party, ensuring a successful and enjoyable occasion for everyone.

This government cannot stress enough the importance of planning and preparing for such parties, for both the organisers and partygoers. This government wants to uphold our fun-loving Australian culture, and by developing this program it does allow us to do this. We, the government, have gone beyond the opposition in this area in leaps and bounds and have revolutionised the way we party.

The O'Dwyer government is best friends with safe parties; it is fergalicious! This government has devised a plan so that we can have our cake and eat it too and, boy, do we love the cake!

YOUTH DEPUTY PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: This fine government sitting alongside me deserves to be congratulated. It ought to be congratulated with regard to its truly innovative response to the lack of aqueous resources available to the fine people of Queensland during these times of drought. It ought to be congratulated for the integration of recycled water into our water management system. This government has done an extraordinary job because water shortage is a true crisis which Mother Nature makes positive that we cannot prevent.

Youth Member for Townsville interjected.

Mr SPEAKER: Order! Youth Member for Townsville, could you please stop interjecting.

YOUTH DEPUTY PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: The opposition is doing nothing, yet in the face of the big dry the O'Dwyer government has once again wiped its hands of the dust and got the job done. Not only is the use of recycled water a long-term sustainable solution, even during the worst of droughts, the extensive use of water recycling treatments will place the superb state of Queensland at the national forefront of water conservation and innovation.

Despite a small amount of opposition to the use of recycled water by citizens outside the walls of this fine chamber, many residents wholeheartedly commend the O'Dwyer government on its insight in dealing with such a pressing, important issue. In the O'Dwyer government we are for water. In these times of severe drought we will do whatever we feel is absolutely necessary in order to maintain a voluminous, clean, healthy supply of water for our residents. Because I assure members that the residents of this state deserve the best. They deserve the best in water supply, the best in innovation, the best in cleanliness and health and, most vitally, they deserve the very best from their government.

If the O'Dwyer government is giving anything to the residents of Queensland it is giving them the best. Queenslanders deserve a consistent, clean supply of water, an insurance policy against future water crises—exactly what recycled water technology offers. After all, this is what the residents of Queensland have come to expect from the O'Dwyer government—nothing but the best. The recycled water initiative is another example of excellence.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE: We, the government, are committed to developing a modern day, yet sustainable Queensland for the future. We all acknowledge that this state is the fastest growing in the nation and we must prepare and invest our funds into the development of future infrastructure along with rebuilding our public transport system.

To accommodate for the future number of Queensland commuters, this government is planning the construction of a Queensland coastal rail link. Currently, the main rail line which runs through Queensland runs inland and bypasses the coastline where the majority of our population reside. This piece of vital infrastructure, once constructed, will play a crucial role in the transportation system of Queensland. This is a Smart State that is run by a smart government that is constantly stepping over an incompetent mess of an opposition. This idea is a step forward for this state and is another reason why this government is in power and not the opposition. This new piece of infrastructure will connect Queensland. However, it will never be able to connect the opposition with the real world.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

YOUTH LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: I would like to bring to the attention of the House the issue of the creation of an Australian republic. I feel this important issue in our national evolution has been sidelined in the public arena for far too long. How is it that, in the dawn of the 21st century, Australia still does not have—to quote the Australian Republican Movement—a mate for head of state. I am an advocate for the bipartisan appointment model of a republic which was put forward at the 1999 referendum on the issue. This model calls for the replacement of the monarch in favour of an Australian president. The president would be selected from nominated candidates by a joint sitting of the federal parliament with a two-thirds majority. To ensure a non-political figurehead, both the Prime Minister and the opposition leader must agree with the candidate. This way we can keep party politics out of the presidency.

There are at least five other models of the republic designed by the Australian Republican Movement which range from the bipartisan appointment model to the Americanised popularly elected presidency. I do not agree with the other models but I do agree it is the job of the Australian people to decide for themselves. Polls in recent times have shown that the majority of Australians want a republic. I believe this was the case in 1999. However, our openly monarchist Prime Minister manipulated the process. The appropriate manner to go about a referendum would be to hold a plebiscite with the question: do you agree that Australia should be a republic? Then, if yes is the majority, have a referendum on which model to adopt. In 1999 the Prime Minister divided the republican vote by leaving models out of the initial questions and causing popular election republicans to vote with the monarchists against the indirect appointment republicans.

In no way do I disrespect the Queen and the role she has played in our development, but it is essential for Australia to stand on its own two feet and, most importantly, to have an Australian head of state. With talk of Prince William coveting desires for the Governor-Generalship, this need for a republic is more important than ever. We need a head of state who can work primarily for the advancement of Australia. When the Queen is overseas she is not referred to as the Queen of Australia but as the Queen of Great Britain. This is somewhat belittling to our country. There is also the issue of having Her Majesty's representative in Australia, the Governor-General, exercising reserve powers that the Queen has never enjoyed. The Governor-General may exercise these powers without prior consultation with the Queen, as happened in 1975 with the political manipulation of the monarchy and the overthrow of Australia's democratically elected federal government.

I believe that it is time for Australia to step up as a major power on the world stage. We have the resources, the commitment, the leaders and the future leaders to achieve such a goal. But how can Australia do so if we are living under the shadow of the British monarchy? Australia must reclaim its identity and show the world how great our southern land really is.

Mr SPEAKER: The Youth Leader of the Opposition has certainly, in a bipartisan way, given us a great deal of food for thought in regard to bipartisanship of parliaments and the role that it can play. I certainly commend the Youth Leader of the Opposition in that regard.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: The Queensland jury system fails, in too many instances, to provide the universal right to a fair trial. This system recruits normal people to determine the fate of a person based on the monotonous drone of legal jargon that few everyday citizens can comprehend in such an environment.

I am not calling for the complete abolition of the jury system, but I do think it is about time that we took into consideration some of the flawed aspects of the system. They can be reconsidered. These include the introduction of verdict justification, written submissions for the jury, consistent encouragement from the judges for all speakers to use widely spoken laymen's terms and, finally, increased pay for jurors.

At present, only the judge has to make a submission to the court describing why he made the decision he did, why he chose that particular outcome or why he chose that particular consequence. This essay has proven an invaluable resource for ensuring the decision was made based on fair and admissible evidence. Above all, it is a resource for ensuring a fair trial and that justice is served. Do we not want that for our jurors?

With the copious amounts of legal jargon, complex procedures and deliberation-room bullying, introducing written submissions will help problems with the jury system that have not yet been identified come to light. It may also act as a resource in the reopening of any case in the same way that the judge's submission does.

The next aspect of the jury system that needs to be reconsidered is the use of legal terms only generally understood by those with legal training and experience. Large or rare legal terms can be used by all lawyers to confuse the jury and influence them to return a verdict of guilty or innocent. I believe that this is absolutely abhorrent. Imagine being a juror in a courtroom while some person stands there and uses words that you have never heard and you are expected to use these words that you have never heard to determine the fate of a person. That is not fair, not just and is not a fair trial.

Most commonly the jurors become so confused or bored that disinterest causes them to completely disregard any evidence that could prove or disprove a person's innocence. They could, and occasionally do under the current system, wrongly convict a person. We should be encouraging the lawyers not to use conniving tactics to win another case. They should be serving justice for once.

We should be encouraging the judges to wake up and to listen to what is going on in their own courtroom. Listen to the confusing drone through the eyes of a juror and to do something about it, to do something real to ensure that the constituents of this parliament are represented in a fair trial.

I really feel sorry for the jurors of Queensland, forced to take an indefinable amount of time off their everyday jobs and livelihoods to listen to people go on and on about goodness knows what, then to sit in a cramped room and listen to some opinionated person tell you how to vote. They have no more training than you do, so why should they tell you how to vote? This jury room bullying is playground bullying effectively and should not be entering our justice system. My question is: when is anything going to be done to support these people? We need to boost compensation for what these people have to endure. The compensation or pay that they receive is hardly enough. They need to feel as if the job that they are doing is important because it is important. It is the lives of our constituents at stake. We cannot repay them but we can give them a fair trial and we can give them what they deserve.

Mr SPEAKER: In this opening session I have been tolerant with regard to the time that members are speaking for. It is the prerogative of the Speaker to do that. Once youth members get into debating the different bills they will probably find that the speakers will stop youth parliamentarians at a particular time. I have been a little bit more tolerant in that regard because we have had time to spare this morning.

Before we adjourn for morning tea, I say to all of the youth members who are here that you are sitting in the Legislative Assembly chamber at a time when we have just introduced some new protocols. On Tuesday, 22 May, which was the first sitting after a brief number of weeks break by the parliament, as Speaker I introduced a number of new protocols for the parliament. For example, I introduced, as you saw in the Legislative Council this morning, the recognition of the traditional owners of the land on which we are meeting. That is now the protocol that is used by the Queensland parliament. I brought that in under the Speaker's prerogative and in some ways we can say to ourselves why has it not been done in decades past. That is now the standard that will be adopted here in the Queensland parliament.

You see behind me four flags that represent Australia. Previous to 22 May there was only one flag behind me on my right and that was the Queensland flag. The Queensland flag has historically been flying here—not so much flying but present—in the Legislative Assembly chamber as we are the Queensland Legislative Assembly. I have added to that three other flags. By the protocol which is demanded in Australia they are, in order: the Australian flag, the Queensland flag, the Aboriginal flag and the Torres Strait Islander flag. You are the first Youth Parliament, the 12th Youth Parliament, to be observing the new protocols. In that regard it is something that I would like to share with you today.

The time for ministerial and private members' statements has expired.

Sitting suspended from 10.30 am to 11.03 am.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Good morning everyone. Before I call the Youth Minister for Transport and Infrastructure, I advise members that, as in all debates in this chamber, time is limited. Therefore, please keep an eye on the clocks in front of you and also to the sides. We have a lot of information to get through.

ZERO TOLERANCE ON BAC YOUTH BILL

Standing and Sessional Orders

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE, by leave, without notice: I move—

That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow immediate presentation to the House of a youth bill for a youth act to implement a no tolerance .00 blood alcohol concentration for all drivers operating a motor vehicle on Queensland roads.

First Reading

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE: I present a youth bill for a youth act to implement a no tolerance .00 blood alcohol concentration for all drivers operating a motor vehicle on Queensland roads. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Second Reading

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE: I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

For many years Queensland's road toll has been steadily increasing with more and more deaths occurring on our roads as a result of speeding, fatigue, inexperience behind the wheel and of course drink driving. This bill has been formulated in an effort to prevent drink driving on Queensland roads in a proactive, efficient and fair manner. In 2005 alone 29,761 people were caught drink driving in Queensland while a further 330 people were killed. Furthermore, from the start of this year up until the end of April, 1,772 bloody idiots were caught drink driving on the Sunshine Coast's roads. I strongly feel that these appalling and shameful figures are testimony to, and a result of, this state's soft approach towards drink-driving laws and penalties. In comparison with other jurisdictions throughout Australia and the world, it is evidently clear that we as a state are not doing enough to curb this growing statistic. Therefore, changes to the current light-handed legislation are necessary to ensure that Queensland's roads are the safest in this nation. Currently in this state drivers on restricted licences such as learners and drivers of trucks, buses, articulated vehicles, taxis and vehicles carrying dangerous goods are not able to record a blood concentration level higher than .00. Although those regulations have worked effectively, more must be done.

Under this bill the current blood alcohol concentration level of .05 for motorists holding an open licence will be replaced by a zero tolerance approach, which will ultimately lead to all drivers on Queensland roads being required to return a blood alcohol concentration level of no more than .00. We feel that this concept is a modern and socially beneficial approach to the prevention of drink driving in Queensland. Not only will the zero tolerance approach address the road toll of this state, it will also ensure that Queensland's roads are the safest. It will also lead to harsher penalties for those who do not follow the new regulations.

I openly acknowledge that the implementation and enforcement of this new policy will be a difficult and possibly costly process. Thus, under this bill a Zero BAC Authority will be established in conjunction with the department of transport and infrastructure and will administer the youth act. Because this state is home to such a diverse number of residents who all have various and meaningful opinions, the Zero BAC Authority will consist of 15 members ranging from emergency services, youth, political and regional community representatives. Essentially, this new authority, when established, will carry out the

obligations of the bill and will also implement an educational awareness advertising campaign, among other roles. As outlined in this bill, it will be mandatory for all licensed premises to advertise the zero tolerance BAC legislation while the Zero BAC Authority will promote the new legislation to the wider community through television and radio commercials, along with other forms of advertisement. This will ensure that all residents and road users are aware of the new legislation before its commencement. The advertisement of the penalties will also be a crucial part of this initiative and will effectively encourage road users to think twice about drink driving.

As I stated previously, in comparison with other jurisdictions, Queensland's sanctions against drink driving are soft and little more than a slap on the wrist. It is clear that we need to alter our state's current penalties and replace them with harsher sanctions. If this youth bill was enacted a decade ago, hundreds of deaths that have occurred in this state may well have been prevented. We cannot bring back the lives lost, but we can change the future and we must change the future. This youth bill will make Queensland's drink-driving penalties the harshest in Australia. It will be socially beneficial yet fair—

An opposition member: Radical!

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE: Radical? You are radical. It will be socially beneficial and will benefit all Queensland road users. Above all, it will make Queensland roads the safest in this great nation. Apparently, we are the Smart State, which is run by this smart government. In my eyes, this youth bill is the smart way to stop drink driving in Queensland.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MARYBOROUGH: Firstly, I want to make it completely clear that the opposition is against drink driving. We believe that drink driving is an issue that does need to be cracked down on, but it needs to be done reasonably and practically. This youth bill will in no way solve any of the current problems. In fact, it will create more. For a start, from where did the government pull the statistics stated in this bill? In relation to the 330 people who did sadly pass away, surely the government with the amount of resources available to them will know they are not all from drink-driving related incidents. There are other factors such as speeding, fatigue and freak accidents. How is it fair that we are compared to places like the United Kingdom and France—and from the 1980s, mind you? These statistics are probably older than all of the youth members. The UK has a higher BAC level than us and France is the same. So what is their point? Alcohol has been proven to take effect on an average person at a level of approximately .03 per cent, but of course it varies for every person. We want to see people educated to drink responsibly. If they are not educated responsibly and the limit is reduced to .00, can you imagine what this is going to do to the Aussie culture? There will be no more barbecues at your mate's place and no more Friday night drinks after work.

How will this bill be fair to all of the constituents who are wrongly accused? The innocent homemade rum balls, a few mouthwashes of Listerine, some chocolates or some over-the-counter cough medicine—these are some examples of everyday items that can produce a BAC reading. No matter how small the reading, you will still be fined. So be warned: if you have had a few too many Cherry Ripes today you could be done when driving home if the government has its way. In my electorate of Maryborough you can stand in one position and see 11 pubs within a two-block radius. How does this government propose to police something like that? Seriously! There are not enough police to enforce this bill across the state. Even if there were, there would be none left to enforce anything else.

Why is the government proposing such harsh penalties? Is it really that strapped for cash? There are fines of up to \$16,000. I say, 'Tell him he's dreaming.' We agree with the government that people should be educated, but let me deal with their suggestion of 2,048 hours. That is a lot of time. That is 85 solid days if you do not include our good friend sleep. Let us say that is 40 hours a week. That is a full-time job for an entire year of educational sessions. How much could you possibly learn in this year that you could not learn over a weekend—that is, that drink driving is bad? Do we want the people to hate the government more than they already do? I ask the government: do paedophiles and rapists sit through this same Communist re-education program? Are drink drivers being targeted more than murderers? When it comes to drink driving, Queensland already has world-class legislation. If it ain't broke, don't fix it. We are tough on drink driving and people should be afraid of the penalties, but we want to educate them to be responsible. We the opposition are reasonable and practical.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE: It is widely known and in fact has been proven that driving skills deteriorate as blood alcohol concentration levels increase—in such a matter in fact that the risk of a fatal crash doubles with each .02 increase. Therefore, a person with a blood alcohol concentration of .05 is 250 times more likely to suffer a fatal motor vehicle crash than a person with a .00 blood alcohol level. These are real statistics that have come from real people. The opposition may try to discredit these facts, but the fact of the matter is that hundreds of people die each year on our roads from drink driving. Although the opposition refuses to acknowledge the seriousness of the issue of drink driving, we the O'Dwyer government seek to make changes that will make Queensland a better place in which to live. I wish to inform the House that eight other countries around the world have implemented a .00

blood alcohol concentration limit for drivers for non-religious reasons. Each of these countries have had great success. All have seen dramatic reductions in the drink-driving fatality rate. This bill goes to show how seriously the government values the gift of life. This bill needs to be passed for the good of Queensland. Unfortunately, risk minimisation has failed, hence the introduction of this bill. Every P-plate driver has to live with these restrictions, so why cannot everyone else?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR STAFFORD: Present Queensland legislation is far from inadequate. This great state is not soft on drink driving. If we ignore the fact that the government in its infinite wisdom is using statistics from the 1980s as the foundation of its argument, it fails to mention the leaping progress made on Queensland roads in the past 27 years. In the objectives of the bill the government claims that because of the implementation of improved laws in the United Kingdom all of those years ago they experienced a 50 per cent decline in drink-driving offences. At the moment the legal maximum BAC is .08 in the United Kingdom. That is .03 per cent higher than the laws of Queensland. The government also mentions that France, Germany and the Netherlands on average recorded a 35 per cent decline. They, too, have .05 laws.

I know the government, statistically speaking, is living in the era of Duran Duran and Billy Idol, so I took the liberty of finding some contemporary facts. According to the Centre for Accident Research and Road Safety Queensland at QUT, since the .05 law was introduced fatal accidents have reduced by 18 per cent. Since the introduction of random breath testing, there has been a further 29 per cent reduction over five years. RBT is considered one of the greatest countermeasures against drink driving. As youth members can see, Queensland has world-class standards against drink driving already that easily match the antiquated examples dug up by the government.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MAROOCHYDORE: Picture this: it is late at night and you are waiting for your teenage son to come home from his friend's 21st birthday party. The phone rings and, just like that, your son is dead, killed in a drink-driving accident. In the year 2005 alone 29,769 people were charged with drink-driving offences and a further 330 people died on Queensland roads. These numbers continue to increase every year, all because of our state's soft approach towards drink driving. The current laws on drink driving only restrict learner drivers, truck drivers and drivers of buses, articulated vehicles, vehicles carrying dangerous goods and taxis to record a blood alcohol concentration of .00. Although these laws have been fairly effective, it is obvious that harsher penalties such as the ones in this bill need to be implemented to stop Queensland road users from drink driving. The .00 blood alcohol concentration limit for all drivers operating motor vehicles on Queensland roads will make our roads the safest in Australia, reducing the amount of drink-driving accidents resulting in serious injuries or death as well as enforcing harsher penalties in an effort to strongly deter repeat offenders. We cannot bring back the lives lost on Queensland roads as a result of drink driving. However, by implementing this bill we can change the future and ensure that no family has to feel the grief of losing a loved one as a result of drink driving, because enough is enough.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA SOUTH: Today I would like to speak about the impact these damaging penalties will have on our families and communities. Penalties in this bill are far too harsh and have the potential to seriously cripple our society. The penalties impose a ridiculous number of drink-driving educational sessions on offenders. I agree that persons found guilty of drink driving should be educated as to the seriousness of such an offence, but in all honesty 2,048 hours is insanity. These so-called rehabilitation camps sound more like a Communist re-education camp. Families will not be able to cope with the financial burden this bill seeks to impose. What would the average family income be? The average income is about \$1,000 and then you have to pay your usual expenses such as petrol, rent, education and food as well as your usual weekly savings. The government needs to be looking at a different approach of enforcement. It is simply absurd to the good people of Queensland. Honourable youth members, do you really want to see Queensland families impoverished by such a bill? What consequences will we see upon the passage of such a bill? By how many will homelessness increase? What about the children? How will these enforcements affect their welfare if parents are not able to pay the debt of such extraordinary fines while trying to have a steady home and quality of education for their children?

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT: The purpose of this bill is to rid Queensland's roads of drunk, irresponsible drivers in their killing machines in order to make Queensland a safer and better place. This bill will see the introduction of harsh yet fair penalties that will demonstrate to all Queenslanders that we have had enough blood spilled on our streets. This government is committed to stamping out drink driving. These penalties are drastic yet necessary to change current legislation, and it is through penalties such as these that this government will be leading the way in Australian road safety with a zero tolerance on blood alcohol concentration. The penalties that this government are proposing will see a heavy increase in fines. If you get done for drink driving and the fine is \$2,000, would you do it again? If it is \$50, would you do it again?

Government youth members: Yes!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SOUTHPORT: I thank youth members. As for the number of hours of education, they have been worked out specifically to fit in with an eight-hour day, five days a week during imprisonment—whilst people are in prison. We are not taking them away from their jobs; they did that to themselves. If the opposition cannot support the government on this bill then they clearly do not care about drink driving and are more than happy for the situation to remain how it is. It is a proven fact that the harsher the penalties the more likely that they will act as a deterrent and thus people will be much less likely to get behind the wheel after a few drinks and ultimately end up killing somebody. I now leave the decision to the opposition: are they happy to have more Queenslanders mowed down by drink drivers?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BUNDAMBA: To be Aussie means to go to the pub after knock-off on a Friday arvo and share in a few yarns with some mates and colleagues over a few cold ones. I do not agree with drink driving, but there is nothing wrong with having a few cold ones after a long day of hard work. This bill will tarnish the Australian culture in all walks of life. In the pub on a Friday afternoon the lawyers mix with the tradies and the tradies mix with the chefs and everyone else. This mingling is the start of business relationships and how people find jobs. The carpenter will help the electrician with his renovations. The electrician will help the carpenter with his wiring and then they will both help the lawyer who in return will help with their business contracts. It is a system of business mateship and the Australian form of bartering. If the government gets their way, there goes mates helping mates and the Australian way.

What about the outback? What about the people out in the bush? The local watering hole is the heart of the town. Out there there is no public transport. There are no taxis and there is no pub courtesy bus. After blowing off a bit of steam at the local pub, the only way to get home is to hop into the old ute with Barry and Mike passed out in the back tray and drive the 40 kilometres back to the farm. Now, the driver has only had two schooners over four hours. He is perfectly fine to drive. But under this government's law, he will not be able to drive home. Barry and Mike's wives will not be happy, because the boys cannot get home. Their wives will be very angry in the morning when they get there.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: I take this opportunity to thank the honourable youth member for Bundamba for correctly describing the opposition's position on this bill, that is, that it is okay for the lawyer, the carpenter and the tradesman to go home together and die on our streets of shame. The government is appalled at the points that the opposition has made today. Opposition members are perfectly happy to bury another young child on our streets simply to prevent their chances of gaining office by being buried in a similar manner.

The shadow youth minister and honourable youth member for Maryborough claimed that the opposition was acting responsibly in opposing this drastic yet necessary legislation. However, the government believes that any opposition that opposes a bill that protects our youth from the horror of burying a mate, from the tragedy of burying a brother or sister or from the fate of being reduced to a paraplegic, is not being responsible in any way but is condemning our youth to such things. In fact, we are ashamed of the opposition for not having the courage to oppose this legislation.

The honourable youth member for Chatsworth, the frequent interjector, made a powerful point when he said that we cannot change our culture through legislation. However, I remind the honourable youth member for Chatsworth of the P-plate legislation that is currently before the parliament. The aim of that legislation is to change the culture of hooning, drink driving and speeding among young drivers. It is just another example of how our shameful culture is being changed by the legislation of this government. In fact, the practice of using legislation to make positive cultural change is what separates this government from the opposition.

I remind the opposition that we do not quote facts from the days of the 1980s and rock idols AC/DC. We quote modern statistics from 2005 proposed by the University of New York.

Youth member for Springwood: Two years ago!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: It was two years ago and I can guarantee that every person in this House was born then. I challenge the opposition to produce any statistics from after 2005 that prove their point of view, which is that it is better to be drunk behind the wheel than it is to be a sober man.

Obviously the opposition is so drunk on its own arrogance that it would rather condemn the youth of our state to a death on our roads of shame than make the tough but necessary decision to ensure that no young person—or, for that matter, no 40-year-old father of three—can hop behind the wheel and condemn their families to a life of poverty or misery, simply because of one poor decision to visit a pub with a few mates.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BROADWATER: Queensland's police force is strong and honourable, but unfortunately it is struggling with recruitment numbers. If this bill is in fact passed, I am certain that the opposition would love to see how the government will attempt to enforce it. As stated previously by the honourable youth member for Bundamba, pub culture is Australian culture. If the Australian culture is so dependent on the local pub, particularly in small country towns, how can we expect our own loyal

police officers—who are human, after all—to comply and enforce this law? Indeed, after their shift has finished many officers drink at their local pubs—responsibly, of course. However, if the government's bill is passed, many of Queensland's own police force could be driving with a blood alcohol level of over the unreasonable limit of .00. That is simply unnoticeable.

On a practical level, this bill is implausible. There is simply no method known for enforcing it. Firstly, there would need to be at least one police officer outside every licensed venue in the state—repeat, outside every licensed venue—yet there are thousands of them.

There is no need for this law as the best measures are already in place. We live in a real world and we need real laws that can be accepted by all in society. The bill is unrealistic, unnecessary, and utter nonsense. It would create more problems than it could ever solve.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA: Unlike the opposition, the government supports saving lives. We want Queensland to continue to prosper and grow in size, not to decrease. However, the opposition clearly fails to strive for the same goal. For too long innocent lives have been lost due to reckless drink driving. For too long the number of collisions and our road toll have increased. For too long the opposition has sat back ignorantly and allowed the atrocity to continue, but not anymore. The O'Dwyer government is making a stand. We are taking a revolutionary step towards making a minimum .00 blood alcohol concentration level.

In order to reduce the unnecessary fatality figures and the unnecessarily high number of road collisions, drink driving must cease. The roads of our great state must be safe again. Our loved ones must be safe again. There should be zero tolerance.

What the opposition seems to overlook is that a person cannot possibly control a vehicle 100 per cent safely and 100 per cent efficiently if they are under the influence. The true incompetency of the opposition is reflected in its desire for the concentration to be higher. That is pathetic. Unlike the opposition, the government cares considerably about the lives of Queenslanders and knows that, unlike a zero blood alcohol concentration level, a level of .05 or higher still has the potential to kill.

The government is proposing this bill because it cares. It wants to ensure the safety and continuation of the people of Queensland. I ask opposition youth members: do they want to see the next generation?

Youth member for Springwood: Yes, I do. That's why I don't think this is going to work.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The youth member for Springwood will please direct her comments through the Chair.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA: The immature opposition is twiddling its thumbs and waiting for someone else to pick up the issue. Guess what? The government just did!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE: It is apparent to the opposition that this youth bill, which introduces a zero blood alcohol concentration for all drivers, is absurd. This is a deprivation of liberty. It is an impractical and infeasible solution to the problem. By implementing this bill, the government is depriving hardworking Queenslanders of their money, their rights and, ultimately, the ability to provide for their families as the penalties are far too harsh, particularly as the proposed offences are not presently covered by Queensland law.

This bill will also have a negative effect on Australian culture and local economies. It is unreasonable to allow the passing of this bill as at present BAC levels for drivers on Queensland roads are more than adequate. Indeed, they are of a world-class standard. If I may reiterate what has been said by my fellow committee members, if it ain't broken, don't fix it.

There is a flaw in the notes provided, which suggest that a decline in drink driving occurred in the 1980s in France, Germany and the Netherlands which, in fact, have the same BAC as Queensland of .05 per cent and the UK which exceeds present Queensland BAC levels with .08 per cent. The evidence provided by the government simply does not make sense.

I turn to a few important points raised by government speakers. The countries that presently have a .00 per cent BAC for drivers have vastly different cultures to Australia. They also have much smaller land masses to police when compared with Queensland. Presently, drivers with restricted licences such as taxi and bus drivers have those licences for work purposes, just like me and you. Learners and those with provisional licences require special laws to maintain their integrity and their ability to learn. It is unfair to impose these absurd laws on all Queensland drivers.

Also, motor vehicles are killing machines only for those people who are drink drivers. What the government describes as an education is really brainwashing. The opposition believes that education should be about responsible drinking, to educate people before these absurd penalties are imposed.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR TRANSPORT AND INFRASTRUCTURE, in reply: If Australian culture is all about getting drunk, hopping behind the wheel of a vehicle and killing yourself, I think it is time to change. I am absolutely disgusted with the opposition. I cannot believe that opposition youth members are willing to sit back and watch countless lives be lost on our roads as a result of drink driving. That is disgusting, it is appalling and it should not happen. This government will not allow it to happen. It is not going to happen.

The people of Queensland deserve the best. They deserve to be safe on Queensland roads. They deserve to be safe. They deserve to know that they can drive home without getting killed by some drink driver.

This bill will save lives and anybody who says otherwise had too many last night. It is appalling. This bill is revolutionary. Opposition youth members said that other countries have seen decreases in their road tolls, yet they have higher BAC levels. But Australia does not have to conform. Indeed, Queensland does not have to conform. We will lead the way with this revolutionary bill. It is a bill of the future. This government is for the future. This government is for the people of Queensland and the opposition is not.

The opposition is willing to sit back and let people die. I am not going to sit back and let people die. Opposition members may do that, but the government of Queensland will do something about it. We will stop drink driving on Queensland roads once and for all. That is all I want to do. Queensland will become a better place following the introduction of this legislation. Queensland will become a safer place and people will be alive. They will stay alive. People will not die.

Question put—that the youth bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in detail

Clauses 1 to 7, as read, agreed to.

Clause 8—

YOUTH LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: I move—

1 Replacement of clause 8 (BAC from 0.00% to 0.05%)

At page 7, lines 13 to 27 and page 8, lines 1 to 11—

omit, insert—

'8 BAC from 0.00% to 0.05%

- '(1) The penalties for the first offence with BAC reading from 0.00% to 0.05% inclusive re—
- (a) \$250 fine; and
 - (b) loss of 4 demerit points from driver's licence.
- '(2) The penalties for the second offence with BAC reading from 0.00% to 0.05% inclusive are—
- (a) \$500 fine; and
 - (b) loss of 6 demerit points from driver's licence; and
 - (c) required completion of 3 hour drink driving workshop.
- '(3) The penalties for the third offence with BAC reading from 0.00% to 0.05% inclusive are—
- (a) \$1000 fine; and
 - (b) loss of driver's licence for a 6 month period.
- '(4) The penalties for additional offences with BAC reading from 0.00% to 0.05% inclusive are—
- (a) \$2000 fine; and
 - (b) loss of driver's licence for a 12 month period; and
 - (c) 100 hours of community service.
- '(5) All of the above mentioned penalties can be legally disputed in a court of law.'

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9—

YOUTH LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION: I move—

2 Replacement of clause 9 (BAC Exceeding 0.05%)—

At page 8, lines 12 to 33 and page 9, lines 1 to 5—

omit, insert—

- '(1) The penalties for the first offence with BAC reading over 0.05% inclusive are—
- (a) \$500 fine; and
 - (b) loss of 6 demerit points from driver's licence.'

- (2) The penalties for the second offence with BAC reading over 0.05% inclusive are—
 - (a) \$1000 fine; and
 - (b) loss of driver's licence for a 6 month period; and
 - (c) required completion of 3 hour drink driving workshop.⁴
- (3) The penalties for the third offence with BAC reading over 0.05% inclusive are—
 - (a) \$2000 fine; and
 - (b) loss of driver's licence for a 12 month period.⁴
- (4) The penalties for all additional offences with BAC reading over 0.05% inclusive are—
 - (a) \$3000 fine; and
 - (b) loss of driver's licence for a 12 month period; and
 - (c) 150 hours of community service.⁴
- (5) All of the above mentioned penalties can be legally disputed in a court of law.

'9A Passenger penalties

⁴All passengers in a car with the driver found guilty of drink driving will be each required to pay a fine equating half the monetary value of the driver's fine.

'9B Lapse of time

⁴7 years of clean record will wipe the slate clean.¹.

We may save a few hundred lives, but we will sink thousands into poverty. As it stands, this bill is ridiculous. The most ridiculous aspect of all is the draconian penalties inflicted on the good people of Queensland. My amendment will bring the penalties back from the stars to a real world level. The opposition is in no way denoting the seriousness of drink driving. The penalties in this amendment are 10 times less severe than initially proposed in the bill. However, they are still far harsher than those under the current legislation. We have cut the time spent in drink driver re-education programs and replaced it with a weekend seminar and community service. The government proposes thousands of hours of re-education. What possibly takes that long? How will it work? Will it be a like *A Clockwork Orange*, where people will be strapped to a chair, eyes kept open, with Beethoven playing in the background?

The amendment also puts peer pressure on those passengers who drive with drink drivers. I implore the honourable youth members of this House to use common sense and not inflict such pain on working families and the people who appreciate Cherry Ripes everywhere in Queensland.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE: The opposition's amendment is a joke. A \$250 fine? Is that really an adequate consequence for such a serious offence? After considering this question it has an easy answer: no, of course not. I ask youth members to consider that a driver could be responsible for the loss of numerous lives if he or she is behind the wheel while under the influence of alcohol.

The opposition youth members obviously do not regard drink driving as a serious offence. So I remind them that drink driving results in the loss of hundreds of lives every year. The O'Dwyer government puts the people of Queensland first. Under the opposition's amendments, at the third offence violators will lose their licence for only six months, not even a year. What message does that send to them? To get behind the wheel and drink again?

The opposition youth members have stated clearly—well, not so clearly—that drink driving is not serious. I refer to a statistic from 2005, which states that the risk of a fatal crash doubles with each 0.02 increase. Therefore, a person with a blood alcohol concentration of 0.05 is 250 times more likely to suffer a fatal motor vehicle crash than a person with a 0.00 blood alcohol level. That is serious enough for me.

The opposition youth members keep on talking about the pub culture. We are not banning people from drinking, we are not banning people from going to the pub; we are banning them from drink driving to save lives. This bill is for the good of all Queenslanders.

Honourable youth member: For the government.

Honourable youth member: You just want to get drunk.

YOUTH LEADER OF THE HOUSE: That interjection by a youth member of the opposition is offensive to the government.

Madam DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

Ayes—42

Noes—39

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Clause 9, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 10—

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE: I move the following amendments en bloc which fall outside the long title of the bill—

- 1 **Clause 3 (Definitions)—**
At page 5, line 17, definition 'Zero BAC Authority'—
omit, insert—
'BAC Authority'.
- 2 **Clause 4 (Zero BAC Authority)—**
At page 5, lines 19 and 21, 'Zero'—
omit.
- 3 **Clause 10 (Education and awareness)**
At page 9, line 14, 'Zero Tolerance on'—
omit.
- 4 **Clause 11 (Advertising)**
At page 9, lines 18 and 22, 'Zero Tolerance on'—
omit.
- 5 **References to 0.00 BAC**
All references to 0.00% throughout the Youth Bill—
omit, insert—
'0.03%'.

These amendments propose to alter the bill as it stands to change all references to '0.00 per cent' to '0.03 per cent' in terms of blood alcohol content. Without these amendments this bill is simply impractical, unfeasible and downright ridiculous. It does not take into consideration the effects of substances other than alcoholic beverages that contain alcohol that may lead to a higher than 0.00 per cent BAC and it does not allow people to have one drink to relax and have a good time with friends.

It is the belief of the opposition that the application of a 0.00 per cent BAC is far too harsh. All youth members of the opposition are definitely against drink driving, but we believe that there should be a reasonable but fair system for all Queenslanders. The opposition has moved amendments for this incredibly harsh 0.00 per cent BAC level outlined in the bill to be changed to a more reasonable 0.03 per cent BAC. This is justified because a 0.03 per cent BAC is a reduction in the current 0.05 per cent BAC level. It still allows for a small amount of alcohol to be in someone's system, but it is not nearly enough to affect a driver's concentration and ability.

It must be brought to the attention of the House that those countries who currently impose a BAC of 0.00 per cent do so for religious purposes or they are predominantly western European, Asian or Middle Eastern countries which have cultural practices that are vastly dissimilar to the Australian way of life. Laws that work in those countries may not necessarily work in our country.

The opposition proposes the change to 0.03 per cent BAC to preserve the rights of the Australian driver. We propose to still make Queensland roads safer by reducing the present legal BAC level by almost half. The government might suggest that the opposition does not care about road safety in Queensland, but by meeting in the middle at the reasonable level of 0.03 per cent BAC the opposition, unlike the government, is providing for both the safety of Queenslanders and their right to a good time.

If the House agrees to pass this bill, the opposition requests that members at least amend the bill to a satisfactory standard.

Time expired.

Division: Question put—That the amendments be agreed to.

Ayes—39

Noes—42

Resolved in the **negative**.

Clause 10, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Motion agreed to.

Long Title

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

MATTER OF PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

YOUTH PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH, by leave, without notice: I move—

That this House calls on the federal government to urgently negotiate wide ranging free trade agreements with all APEC Member countries to maximise Queensland's and our partners' economic performance.

The Asia-Pacific region, consisting of 21 countries, produces more than half the world's gross domestic product. It is the intent of this government to maximise Queensland's position by moving this motion pertaining to free trade with the other 20 countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

Free trade reaps countless benefits. It maximises production levels, it develops production efficiency, it lowers the rate of unemployment, it broadens Queensland's business clientele and it encourages economic growth and the diversity and availability of goods to Australians. Therefore, it is imperative that this motion be passed.

The principles underpinning this motion are bountiful and invaluable to Australians, and particularly Queensland farmers and those other people who work in primary industries. This motion will encourage Queensland farmers and primary industries to invest in enhanced protection lines. It will also strengthen the level of output. Moreover, such investment will enhance production efficiency resulting in high demand for a superior quality of Australian products. This investment also involves more employment opportunities for Australians and, subsequently, lower rates of unemployment for the people of Queensland.

If the opposition is interested to find out where all this money is coming from, it should refer to the initiatives of this great government. It should refer to the increased potential for business clientele that could be found overseas only through free trade agreements. Subsequently, implementing this motion will inject millions of dollars into Australia's and, indeed, Queensland's economy.

Economic growth will result in escalating benefits for Australians. Business will grow and unemployment will drop in a constant cycle. The opposition is confused if it thinks it can argue against this. Not only will this motion benefit business and the economy, but it will further add to Queensland's prosperity through diversification of the availability of goods for the people of Australia. Surely even the opposition can see the advantages of this. If the opposition is ignorant enough to argue on the grounds of import and export tax revenue to the government, it will only be exhibiting its lack of economic knowledge of the matter. This is due to the fact that the government's losses in import and export tax will be met from income tax from those who would otherwise be relying on welfare and social security payments. Subsequently, government expenditure will be minimised due to the decrease in the rate of unemployment. It is regressive to think that the opposition will try to argue against this goal of the Australian economy, depriving Queenslanders of the chance to move forward to economic prosperity.

The opposition will try to mislead youth members with its ill-defined arguments. Furthermore, increased rates of employment will mean more money for households of average Queenslanders to spend, to save or to invest in business for further growth. Moreover, increased household expenditure will result in higher demand for goods and services which will not only strengthen the cycle of economic growth through increased employment provisions but will also result in larger revenues for the government which in turn means increased funding for all portfolios. This additional availability of funds has the potential to ultimately enhance the standard of living for Australians dramatically. Why would the opposition want to argue against this? The benefits of free trade with the Asia-Pacific region are not only abundant but invaluable to Australia. This government is committed to leading the way to economic growth and prosperity through these free trade agreements. We must move forward by taking action now if we hope to improve the quality of life for Queenslanders, unlike the aggressive position of our counterpart, the opposition.

YOUTH DEPUTY PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: I second the motion moved by the Youth Premier. Between 1984 and 1994 over 400,000 Australian jobs were created through export growth. This is a fact, circulated by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It is also a fact that previous expansion of exports has strengthened Australia's industrial base. These facts are indisputable and combine to showcase the benefits of negotiating wide-ranging free trade agreements with all APEC member countries. This absolutely necessary movement will be aggressively pushed by the government to secure the maximisation of economic performance for our great state.

The government has the numbers to show that \$1,000 is the monetary saving of the average Australian family per year due to the reduction of trade tariffs. Not only this, but businesses that export goods pay more to their workers and sell a larger number of goods per worker. Clearly, wide-ranging free trade agreements are excellent. They are excellent for the economy, they are excellent for employment and they are excellent for families. Most importantly, wide-ranging free trade agreements are excellent for our state. This House must use all the power vested in it by the fine people of this state to secure economic success. We must place urgent pressure on the federal government to negotiate free trade agreements as they would be beneficial to every single citizen of this state. The O'Dwyer

government is not here to play games. Whilst the opposition might sleep easy while depriving Queensland families of the proven economic advantages of free trade, if this motion is opposed this government will have a bad case of insomnia tonight.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE: I move the following amendment—

After 'countries' insert the following—

'except, by way of sanction, those nations failing to uphold minimum human rights standards as defined by the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights'

Free trade will stifle the Queensland economy. The O'Dwyer government is once again not considering anyone outside the south-east corner. With free trade, rural communities will have their economic base ripped out from under them. The EU is a prime example of protecting its farmers. Queensland should follow suit. Our agriculture and aquaculture is under threat. My electorate of Mulgrave is a major producer of bananas. Not only will our farmers be put out of business due to the sheer volume of bananas coming in from other APEC countries, but we are under threat from disease that can and will be brought in with these imports. The government is proposing a bill which, if passed, will be another kick in the side of a town which has been damaged by Cyclone Larry. With free trade, industry will be flooded with a supply of cheap produce. For example, when was the last time you had a good Aussie prawn on the barbie? More than likely the last time you had prawns they were from another APEC country, an economy which can produce a prawn for next to nothing. The opposition cares about small businesses and our farms. There is a reason why the other APEC economies produce cheaper prawns: their workers are paid less.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR KAWANA: This is just another shameful display of the opposition. The opposition was happy to slander the government before for using other countries and what they have done as examples, yet it is very happy to use the EU as an example which is a completely different circumstance to Queensland. So that is just another example of the opposition's incompetence. As the House would be aware, Australia is one of the strongest performing economies in the world and APEC is the premier forum in the region to achieve the goals of development and consolidation of open and transparent markets. The federal government currently holds free trade agreements with the United States, Singapore, Thailand and New Zealand. These agreements have opened up many new benefits for this nation and this state. However, if the federal government were to invest in further free trade agreements, this would open up many more opportunities for this state and would advance our already booming economy. This state is currently China's second largest trading partner. Imagine the social and economic benefits if Australia and China developed a free trade agreement and further relations. Think of the economic opportunities for this state. It is clear that we have an amazing opportunity in front of us not just to advance our international relations and not just to strengthen our state's strong economy thanks to this government but also to advance Queensland as a state into the future.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CAIRNS: What an amazing opportunity for Queensland. Let us just throw our agriculture down the drain and let us get rid of the farmers now! I am the honourable youth member for Cairns. I grew up in a small town and I have seen the tobacco industry ripped from a town called Mareeba. This town was pulling in resources beyond any other town. It was known as the tobacco industry of far-north Queensland. When the tobacco industry was ripped out by government legislation, this town turned into a ghost town, so to speak. Let us look at the social and emotional side to things. Farmers are already struggling to make ends meet. It has been shown that farmers who cannot perform on their farms because their market has been ripped out from under them and cannot do anything else are more likely to commit suicide. The opposition is not going to make our agricultural systems commit suicide. Unlike the government, we do not agree with this motion and we will not let it pass. Higher rates of employment? I think not. How many people in this chamber know about seasonal work? We get people from interstate coming up to far-north Queensland to do seasonal work. Higher rates of employment? I think not. I quote our wonderful Youth Premier, Sheree, who said, 'We must move forward to ensure a better quality of life for all Queenslanders.' The opposition thinks this.

Time expired.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I remind all honourable youth members to address members by their title, not their names.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND: In relation to the motion that the Youth Premier put forward, I too would encourage the Australian federal government to actively negotiate free trade agreements with APEC countries. However, I would also encourage the federal government to keep the needs of Australia's agricultural industry and the whole of Australia and Queensland's economy in mind before it signs anything. The bilateral free trade agreements Australia has signed over the past three years have all worsened Australia's and, in turn, Queensland's economic trade position in the global market. For instance, the agreement that the Australian government has with the United States since it came into effect at the end of January 2005 has increased our trade deficit figure to \$14.7 billion. Furthermore, the agreement that Australia has with Thailand has increased our trade deficit by a further \$1.6 billion. Quite possibly the worst free trade agreement that Australia has ever signed is the SAFTA,

the Singapore-Australia Free Trade Agreement, which came into effect in mid-2003. Australia's trade position with Singapore prior to this agreement being signed was a trade surplus of \$165 million. After Australia signed this agreement, the surplus turned into a trade deficit of \$7.6 billion. A free trade agreement with Japan, China or any other nation needs to improve Australia and Queensland's trade positions. Trade needs to be front and centre of the agenda when APEC leaders meet in Sydney in September 2007.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MACKAY: Mr Deputy Speaker, as I am sure you are well aware, Australia is a Western country with Western values. I do not think anyone in this House could say that Australia is not a shining example of what every country should aspire to be like. We need to remind ourselves that this debate is not only about free trade but also about free trade with countries that violate human rights.

As a country that is affluent and wealthy, I think it would be a great travesty if Australia was to endorse governments that abuse human rights by going into free trade agreements with such countries. As a first-class nation sometimes our diplomatic efforts do not always work to ensure that countries do not abuse and break the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. We sometimes need to refuse to enter into free trade agreements. Because diplomatic efforts do not always work, we need to get into the trade which means that the debate is about human rights. How else will we change the world for the better if countries that rampantly abuse human rights continually are able to receive our exports which often are technological superior to those in those countries that violate human rights?

We need to remember that if we as a country say that countries that violate human rights are bad and then we enter into free trade agreements with them which prop up their regimes we are doing a disservice to the world and ourselves as a country. We are an affluent, Western society and a shining light of what occurs in a democracy.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MIRANI: This government seeks to encourage the establishment of free trade agreements with APEC nations regardless of whether they fail to uphold human rights as set out by the UN. I wish to remind the youth member for Mackay and the other supporters of this amendment that in Australia's past and even more recently Australia has been found to be violating said standards. It would be outright hypocritical of this government to refuse to negotiate free trade with these countries as outlined in the amendment as Australia has indeed been found in violation of UN human rights and equal opportunity commissions with regard to indefinite detention of asylum seekers, particularly children, and our previous treatment of the Indigenous population.

The youth member for Mackay mentioned China. China is an APEC nation that fails to uphold minimum human rights standards. However, with a mere population of 20 million when compared with China's 1.2 billion Australia's market power is clearly overshadowed by that of China. Regardless of whether we sign free trade agreements, we as a nation fail to hold the political power or gravitas on the international stage to force China's hand on human rights. To think otherwise vastly overestimates the value China places on Australia as a potential trading partner.

A free trade agreement with China and other APEC nations does nothing but benefit Australia's economy and the people of Queensland by opening up new markets and providing customers for our products.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: The government has stood before us in a very shameful attempt to choose economy over social values. Our social policy as the opposition is one of strength and patriotism. The government has stood before us with nothing but economics. However, it has not fully discussed what is needed. It has failed to discuss the issue of macro-economics. Macro-economics is a situation where a new industry opens up in our state therefore building new infrastructure due to private funding that the government failed to fund anyway. Keeping these industries in our state is imperative to our state as macro-economics explores the fact that we are building new infrastructure through private industries.

We are the patriots of the House, we are the Queenslanders of the House and we stand for what Queensland believes in. We stand for our nation and we stand for our rights. Our social policy is simple. Our social policy is that everyone deserves a fair go and we are going to give everyone a fair go by keeping out the free trade agreements which hold us apart from other nations.

As an individualised country we are Australian, everything from our accent to thongs and how we dress is individual. We do not want to become global citizens; we want to remain Australians. As Australians I say this motion cannot be passed. It will not be passed as it is a social failure—and go the Maroons!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE: Free trade agreements bring endless advantages to the economies of the Australian and Queensland governments. Currently the Queensland economy under our government is experiencing record growth. Free trade agreements with all APEC nations are essential if the Queensland and Australian economies are to continue to expand. With economic growth comes a better standard of living, better facilities, as well as countless other benefits.

A opposition youth member: Including suicide?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ASHGROVE: No, not suicide. If free trade agreements were to be agreed with all of the APEC nations, not only will the Australian and Queensland economies benefit but also the people of Queensland. The APEC 2007 conference is the perfect chance for the federal government to negotiate free trade agreements. This needs to be done urgently both to maximise our economic performance and our partners' economic performance. Free trade agreements do not get rid of our farmers, as the youth member for Cairns would like youth members to believe. In fact, Australia exports heaps of beef and seafood. This has done wonders for the industry and the economy. Increasing our state and our nation's GDP is great for the economy. Therefore it is essential that free trade agreements are reached with all of the fellow APEC nations.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SOUTH BRISBANE: This motion is all about unrestrained free trade with all APEC members. This opposition believes that such unrestrained free trade will result in dire consequences. By allowing free trade with these countries we will be allowing markets with an excessive labour supply and cheap competitive economies to infiltrate the Australian market and ultimately lead to the demise of the Australian economy.

The secret to economic success and continuation of economic growth within the country is to have an even and stable balance between local industry and participation in the international economy and trade. This motion will jeopardise the Australian economy by removing this balance. Without a strong localised industry how can people thrive under their economy? Cheap and unreliable imports will flood the Australian marketplace and result in lost money for Australians and lost jobs.

Will this motion be beneficial for the Australian people let alone the Australian economy? Furthermore, this motion is most likely to be detrimental to many APEC nations. I refer back to the importance of local investment in the stability of an economy. Countries such as China can accredit their economic success to the retention of wealth within their own economy. China plays a major role in supplying goods to the whole economy in the world. However, they have very limited imports increasing their GDP. This motion will jeopardise China's economy by allowing easy infiltration into the Chinese economy. With the world being so dependant on China as a provider of cheap goods, what ramifications will this have for the world economy?

How will Australia's uranium supply be affected by this free trade agreement? We all know how dangerous and unstable uranium can be in the wrong hands: flowing easily into the hands of countries that have been known to grossly violate human rights. These regimes are already dangerous to their own people. Imagine how dangerous they could be on a world stage?

People in the House, I encourage you to vote against the motion as it will destroy local industries and have a detrimental effect on the Australian economy.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR REDLANDS: Free trade is a step for economic and industrial progress. I would just like to remind the opposition that this is not about giving up our culture but sharing it with other nations. We economically benefit from getting Australia and Queensland's name known as the best quality agricultural exporter amongst APEC. APEC represents countries which comprise 60 per cent of the world's economy. This is not to mention how Australia can improve our own industry standards when the industries can easily access free trade products which would otherwise be too expensive because of the tax barriers. These tax barriers have previously held back our agricultural industries while other industries have moved forward. APEC free trade is a chance to advance.

Free trade will allow Australia to also make a positive global change. Our coal is the cleanest coal in the world and, through free trade, can be traded with nations that would have otherwise produced their own black coal. This therefore reduces the global carbon emissions and is a major environmental incentive and economic fountain for Queensland.

This free trade could also allow big business for small businesses, to open the doors for more Australian owned and founded businesses to give the young business a wider range of consumers for their products and at the same time bring them more materials to work with in the first place. Holden would not be such an Australian success story without a little bit of international give and take. For a young nation we have a lot to give and a lot to gain from APEC free trade.

The opposition will have Australia remain economically rigid and our industry will fade into the past, and for what, I say? For unfounded fear. The opposition can remain in fear, but Australia and Queensland is moving on without it.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: I would like to tell the government a term that it has probably never heard before. It is called trade justice. I have to ask: when will the APEC countries care? When will they care that people are tragically being exploited and oppressed by industrialists and the imperialist trade system that is rife with corruption in favour of the individuals instead of the people that they are supposedly representing?

A government youth member: What are you, a communist?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: It is not about communism, it is not about any of the 'isms'; it is ultimately about the people. It is about giving the people the power to not have to be oppressed by Nike

or McDonald's, to not have to be destroyed by the countries that want to ruin their livelihoods in the name of apparent profit. How are these people supposed to be making profits if the people are unemployed with no money to buy the products? We have towns that are turning into ghost towns. We have children that are making Nike shoes until their hands bleed. I say no more blood. The only blood that I see now is on the hands of the APEC countries.

It is a flawed ideology that believes that one person's happiness can be at the sacrifice of the life of thousands. Around 30,000 children die every day as a result of extreme poverty. Two thirds of that is in areas covered by APEC. Do the math. For me the sum is simple. Australian government's ignorance plus free trade equals an exponential increase in poverty. Poverty is destruction. This amendment is suggesting that we ban any country that is not adhering to the millennium development goals in relation to human rights in the Human Rights Declaration of Independence. I reckon any amendment that even slightly suggests that one of these countries is going to slightly improve their human rights record is something worth discussing because I think that there are people out there who need representatives who are actually going to care about their livelihoods.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: I pay tribute to the members of the APEC forum who might be watching today, and I also pay respect to our comrades on the opposition trying to put in place communist and totalitarian regimes.

Opposition youth members interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MACKAY: I rise to a point of order. The member for Burnett has implied everyone on this side of the House—

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I call the youth member for Burnett.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: Before I speak any more about this issue, I would like to congratulate the youth member for Chatsworth on his 12th interjection for today. He also spoke about economic growth which I believe is somewhat contradictory as his electorate is quite possibly the most run-down, low-growth area in greater Brisbane.

In earlier debate the honourable youth member for Cairns suggested that Mareeba was a ghost town. I feel that I speak for the 10,000 citizens of the greater Mareeba region when I assure the parliament that Mareeba is not the most haunted town in Queensland but is a thriving metropolis. Since the opposition cannot even get simple geography right—

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MACKAY: I rise to a point of order. The youth member for Burnett is speaking about something that is irrelevant.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order. I will deal with frivolous points of order as an abuse of the House. I call the youth member for Burnett.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: I would like to speak for the remainder of my time about my great electorate of Burnett. I have quite possibly one of the strongest sugar industries in Queensland. I would like to issue a challenge to the honourable member for Hinchinbrook, who also holds a sugar seat, and ask him how he can speak in good faith on an initiative that would grant the sugar industry leave for free trade, something it desperately desires, with the international community. I ask the member for Hinchinbrook, who is speaking after me, to contradict the Canegrowers organisation when it says that free trade is quite possibly the saviour of the Queensland sugar industry.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK: It is a matter of public importance that we in Queensland protect the economy that has been strong for many years. If we are going to continually protect our economy, we need to say no to free trade altogether. Imports will destroy agriculture. Australia is not up to human rights standards because the O'Dwyer government is not keeping up to scratch and it is their fault. It is easy to sit in this chamber and say, 'We will benefit from free trade.' However, it is not by any means easy for farmers, the miners or the station workers who work their hearts out. There are people who keep this state alive. They are the people who pour their sweat and blood into this economy. Over time these dedicated, noble and humble people will not be able to deal with yet another blow dealt by free trade.

I have lived on a sugar farm in north Queensland for 15 years. I have seen the repercussions of deregulation, flood, drought, market saturation from imports and the careless control of disease. The Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries denies any statistics of financial wellbeing for primary producers. That is surely because there are no statistics it would want to expose. Any person who has travelled to a rural area knows that the problem with the rural industry is dire. It is time we opened our eyes and ears to the problem. If we say yes to free trade we can say goodbye to our economy and we can say goodbye to regional and rural Queensland and Australia. I believe it is time for the Australian government to put aside party politics and take a step forward and protect the people whom we have relied on for so many years. We need to say no to continuous deregulation and no to free trade.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR YEERONGPILLY: The O'Dwyer government is committed to representing the interests of the people of Queensland. The opposition, however, is made up of close-minded and ignorant people who have no understanding of the wants and needs of Queenslanders. It is

for this reason that I will not hold the youth opposition leader responsible for the blind-sightedness of his people. I implore the youth opposition leader to correspond with his side of the House and convince them to support the much more superior side in the interests of the people of Queensland. This single action could well be the most intelligent thing that the House will witness of the youth opposition leader on this motion. The Youth Premier has outlined many of the benefits of free trade agreements for the people of Queensland. I have not heard one decent, justifiable point by the opposition. I cannot possibly see how this House could reject the motive for free trade with the Asia-Pacific region.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR TABLELANDS: As my opposition colleagues have already stated, the effects of free trade on our agriculture will be devastating. I would like to say to the youth member for Yeerongpilly that far-north Queensland is part of Queensland. As we all saw after Cyclone Larry struck, Australians are quite happy to buy cheaper imported agricultural produce and are unaware of its effects. The government is not only not protecting its farmers, it has not considered the obvious dangers of importing produce. Even with the best quarantine measures, the government cannot and will not succeed in blocking diseases from crossing our borders. If diseases such as black spot were able to cross our borders, the government can kiss goodbye our precious banana industry, and other forms of agriculture will follow soon after. It seems that the government has forgotten that not only is agriculture one of our greatest economic factors, it is also one of our greatest icons. By allowing free trade we are not only destroying our agricultural industry; we are leaving it open to crippling diseases and 'made in China' stamps. I encourage my fellow housemates to remember that quarantine matters. Do not let free trade muck with it.

YOUTH PREMIER AND YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The opposition is like a kettle on the boil: all hot air and noise. Where is the validity in their statements? The opposition have put forward preposterous and ill-defined arguments, reflecting that they are misguided and confused on this motion. They have failed to understand the fundamental concept of this motion. Let me put it clearly: we are a state for the future; we are a government for the future. This government's intention is to increase Queensland's economic prosperity, and free trade will do this. I would like to thank the honourable youth member for Mackay for his comments. Yes, Australia is a country that others should aspire to, and this favourable position is due to this government. Now is the time for us to improve on this position, and that is through free trade. In reference to the youth member for Chatsworth, it is clear that the opposition are living in the eighties. Social values are built on a strong economy. Although values are important in the world today, the economy is what keeps us in jobs, keeps us under a roof and keeps food on our tables. Let us talk about small and regional businesses without free trade. These businesses have a market of approximately 20 million—the Australian population. Now let us consider the situation with free trade. These businesses have a global market—approximately five billion. It is a clear boost to the economy which will mean more money in the pockets of families. There is a global market for the expansion of businesses. If the blindfolded opposition cannot see the value, it is about time they opened their eyes.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

Ayes—38

Noes—42

Resolved in the **negative**.

Division: Question put—That the motion be agreed to.

Ayes—36

Noes—39

Resolved in the **negative**.

Ms O'BRIEN: Before we move on, I just wanted to talk about that briefly and thank you very much and congratulate you on that debate. You may or may not be aware that this particular debate is part of something bigger and is part of the APEC 2007 program arranged by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and will be passed on to the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and presented to APEC 2007. We currently have here the state director of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Richard Palk, who has come and watched the debate today—and it was quite a passionate and broad debate. As a memento of your time, we have for each of you a key ring, which is made in Australia, to remind you of your participation in this debate. I ask you to welcome Mr Palk.

Mr PALK: Mr Deputy Speaker, ladies and gentlemen: it should be me applauding you for an excellent debate. Let me first of all say a couple of quick words so you can move on with the program of the day. First of all, I would like to compliment you very much on being part of the Youth Parliament program. It is excellent for you to be involved. I would also like to compliment you on the calibre of the debate today, which was first rate. It was very good. Having some knowledge of APEC issues and some knowledge of free trade agreements, I thought all of the speakers did an excellent job. I was thinking there were a couple of points I should tell you about free trade agreements and APEC, but I probably do not need to give you much information, because from what I heard today you seem to be very well informed. Just for the record and not taking sides with the debate, it may be interesting to know—if you

do not already know—that as far as APEC countries are concerned the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, on behalf of the Australian government, is currently negotiating free trade agreements with China, Japan, Malaysia, ASEAN and Chile. We are also negotiating a free trade agreement with the Gulf Cooperation Council, but that is obviously beyond the APEC area. That is happening at the moment.

Just to let you know the relevance and the currency of what you have just debated, the APEC trade ministers meeting is taking place here in Queensland—in Cairns—tomorrow and the next day. We have actually had a couple of trade ministers fly through Brisbane Airport this morning transiting on their way to Cairns for the APEC trade ministers meeting, which is extremely relevant to what you have just been discussing. At the end of this month, the finance ministers for APEC will be meeting at Coolumb, also in Queensland. We are very closely aligned to what is happening in APEC. As one of the speakers mentioned, in September the APEC leaders summit will take place in Sydney.

May I just finish by again congratulating you on the program and congratulating you on the stimulating debate which you have just had and suggesting to you that we would be very keen to see a resolution from you in some style the week of your APEC debate which we could present to appropriate ministers and senior officials in Sydney at the APEC leaders meeting. If your organisers can come up with something and pass it on to Foreign Affairs, we would be very happy to pass it on to the summit in Sydney to let the summit leaders know the involvement that people throughout Australia, particularly the youth of Queensland, have had. Again, thank you very much and congratulations.

YOUTH DRUG AND ALCOHOL COURT YOUTH BILL

Standing and Sessional Orders

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES, by leave, without notice: I move—

That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow immediate presentation to the House of a youth bill for a youth act to establish a Youth Drug and Alcohol Court where charges relating to all drug and alcohol related offences of persons aged 12 to 25 will be heard.

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: I present a youth bill for a youth act to establish a Youth Drug and Alcohol Court where charges relating to all drug and alcohol related offences of persons aged 12 to 25 will be heard. I present the explanatory notes, and I move—

That the youth bill be now read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Second Reading

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: I move—

That the youth bill be now read a second time.

The Youth Drug and Alcohol Court Youth Bill needs to be passed because there is a need within the community to address and tackle drug and alcohol related problems among young people. I admit that this bill can appear harsh, but we do not want to have a soft line in the justice system. We created this bill to implement a hardline approach because there is no excuse—no excuses—for the use of illicit substances, dealing in illicit substances or providing substances to minors. Because of our zero tolerance approach, we have created an innovative and practical bill to reduce the number of young people reoffending in relation to drug and alcohol offences. The current method of punishment is conducted mostly within a juvenile justice conference whereas our bill proposes an open court. If young people believe that they are big enough to do the drugs, they are big enough to sit before a judge in an open court.

We believe that the structure of the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court needs to be operated by a commissioner who has had at least 10 years experience in the area of youth affairs and extensive knowledge with regard to such offences because we want the court led by a qualified, competent and confident professional. Furthermore, if we do not have a person with these credentials, it will not benefit all parties involved. Within this court we would implement all traditional roles, such as the judge and Crown Prosecutor. However, in order to best examine and assess the defendants to ensure equality and provision of sentence, we require an expert in drug and alcohol rehabilitation and arresting police officers will need to provide a detailed description of the defendant's behaviour and environment. Finally,

there will be a cultural liaison officer to ensure that cultural and language misrepresentations do not occur.

Sentencing guidelines have been implemented with the intention of allowing a fair and just trial. Too often the Queensland community witnesses sentences imposed that are too lenient or perhaps too harsh. Yes, it is the judge's discretion of what category the young person will fall under. However, we believe that we do not want the judge's mood persuading the sentence. Therefore, having mandatory sentences enables all defendants a fair and just trial and sentence and they are aware of their consequences. This is an innovative and assertive approach in the delivery of justice. This government understands that a fine or a secure lockup is not always the answer and it is not acceptable, and that is why we are enforcing a zero tolerance bill with an individual approach.

Drugs and alcohol are an individual problem. That is why we have responded with individual sentences. It is unfortunate to witness so many young people needing drugs or alcohol to feel better about themselves or using drugs and alcohol to have a good time. Therefore, having these sentences imposed delivers the capacity for the individual—the offender—to understand why they took drugs in the first place and also to understand who they are.

A commonality within society is that when the government fails using taxpayers' money the community believes the government has abused their trust and their wallets. Therefore, the consequence if they fail to comply with their sentence is to reimburse the taxpayers through the government. That way society does not feel that the government has used their money unwisely.

Drugs and alcohol are only the beginning to many more crimes and health problems. Using drugs and alcohol can give the user an illusion or the belief that they are invincible, and thus we have seen an increase in suicide because they think that they are not going to die and also because they can drive cars recklessly. In addition, drugs and alcohol fuel people to do other crimes in order to feed their drug use. It is a very sad sight to see so many young people go into prostitution in order to feed their drug addiction. This bill needs to be passed because there is an epidemic out there and because there is too much talk and not enough action. This bill is an assertive, innovative and comprehensive approach to reduce drug and alcohol related offences.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: This bill will never work, and not just because it is another one of the government's ridiculous ideas. Persons over the age of 18 who are charged with drug and alcohol offences should be tried as the adults they are. If the government needs an extra debate, why should these young people—young 23- and 24-year-olds—be let off lighter or extremely harsher simply because the government cannot make up its mind and do a copy and paste job from the Victorian government? If we are talking about addicted users, then we should offer them rehabilitation through the effective systems that already exist. This is an abhorrent rebranding of the current programs, only wasting more resources along the way. If we really want to be helping these young people, we should be targeting the social problems that are making these young people turn to drugs. We should not be adding an extra load of resources to waste because we should be helping these young people through education programs.

The sentencing of someone over 18—recognised legally as being an adult—and somebody who is 12 and on ice should have two different sentences, yet this intolerable bill fails to differentiate between the two. A truly understanding government! In relation to the sentencing, the bill is hardly approaching mentally disabled people fairly. This bill suggests that these mentally incompetent people should be put under house arrest—that is great—and giving urine samples. Like these people want to give urine samples! These people should be in a facility. These people should have nurses making sure that they are safe. We should be looking after these people in their own homes by giving them safety and giving them prosperity, not denying them the rights that other people have.

An honourable youth member interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: They should be in an institution so that they can be offered rehabilitation in a practical way, not putting them at home. House arrest is yet another ridiculous idea from the government. A person should be placed under the arrest of a qualified nurse and, if the circumstances are deemed necessary, in a facility.

An honourable youth member: More resources!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: Yes, more resources; exactly. The example yet again is using more resources. If we are going to have this bill, we should at least have a practical bill. If we are going to copy and paste the Victorian government's laws, we should at least know that the Victorian government knows what it is doing. This bill has no spine or legs to stand on. It is a tragic attempt to have something to debate to make it look like the government is caring and creative. The appointed board of establishment is a waste of the House's time. It is highly comprehensive, but it should never come to pass if any youth members opposite care about the livelihoods of our future.

An honourable youth member: Should we let them die in the streets?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: Absolutely not! Facilities already exist for these young people to be rehabilitated which provide the housing that they need. We have the systems in place, yet the government is coming out with yet another one to try to convince us that somehow we should be offering these people something else, which is another waste of resources. The opposition is far more committed to fixing the social problems that cause 13-year-old girls under the influence of cocaine to shoplift—social problems that the government created. The opposition recognises that some people cannot be rehabilitated and they can go through the current jail system, not just have created for them a law copied from Victoria.

An honourable youth member interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: The member says that nobody falls through the cracks. If that is true, then why do they need to go into the court in the first place? The court itself is open, bringing shame and embarrassment to the victim and the accused. The O'Dwyer government brings shame and embarrassment to the people of Queensland. This entire bill is borderline unconstitutional. It is a copy and paste from Victoria's drug act. A normal judge is more than competent in handling these young people and we do not need to waste time and facilities setting up another one so a judge can make a similar decision there. This will never work and I hope that the people of Queensland understand that and recognise that. We should make sure that these young people are offered what they need, not what the government wants to propose to fill in debate time.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROCKHAMPTON: This bill offers opportunities for those youth who have fallen into the grim grasp of drug abuse to partake in a revolutionary court that focuses on rehabilitation. The O'Dwyer government has seen this need and has sought to fill it. The establishment of this court is not new. It has been trialled in two other states and the reports have shown that it was a success. Each of the professionals involved in running this court are required to have prior experience in both drugs and youth so that the sentences handed out are of the most appropriate nature. It cannot be denied that our current legislation is not working. Countless youths every day use and abuse substances and many believe that they receive little more than a slap on the wrist. Should we not endeavour to find a more efficient way to deal with these problems? Should we not strive to overcome the underlying problems before their future is too bleak? The O'Dwyer government is interested in investing in this future. Socially, the establishment of this court allows the youths to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into society instead of terrorising their neighbourhoods through drug-induced crimes—breaking and entering, theft and vandalism.

The opposition cannot be so naive as to tell me that these crimes do not occur in their electorates. They are documented and the cause is preventable. From previous trials it has been seen that to imprison a youth for such crimes is more expensive than running the rehabilitation programs that this court wishes—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER: First, I extend my congratulations to the author of this bill, which presents a mostly successful proposal to the House. However, the fundamental flaws of this bill shine through and make themselves most apparent. These flaws are present for one reason: a total and utter lack of understanding.

The upper middle-class members of the O'Dwyer government lack the experience to understand. The members have not experienced the effects of drugs at ground level. They have not experienced the pain of seeing their best friend, father or uncle caught in the web of addiction, struggling to cope with life every day. These members have not experienced the sadness of seeing a person they once held in high esteem acting as no more than a baby, crying out for what they need—yes, need.

Drug addictions are just that: addictions. Yes, a mistake was made initially but every case has a back story. The back story needs to be considered.

The self-righteous prats of the O'Dwyer government are of a socioeconomic demographic that makes them the doctors and lawyers of the future with expensive cocaine addictions. But, alas, they stand a minimal chance of being caught because they will be able to afford it. Those professions are charged with some of the highest honours in our society, yet their addiction is not so looked down upon. Those with such high professions do drugs for fun. It is an extra kick in their poor hard lives. The addicts—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR STRETTON: Two minutes will not allow me to point out all of the flaws in the speech of the honourable youth member for Barron River. However, I will attempt to address a few.

The honourable youth member for Barron River claimed that addicts struggle to operate in day-to-day life. However, had he bothered to read the bill more clearly he would have seen that it will, in fact, take the addict out of everyday society and allow them to recuperate in a facility that caters to their needs.

A key and distinguishing feature of the proposed drug and alcohol youth court is the criteria assessing the eligibility of the defendants. This government recognises the needs of young Queenslanders and the fact that they are ever changing. As a result, the age group to be considered 'youth' will be deemed to be 12 to 25 years. At 12 years, a person is young enough to kick the habit, to nip it in the bud. Extending the range to 25 years acknowledges a trend that the opposition may not have taken notice of, that in today's society young people are becoming independent at later stages of life, evidenced by the nesters who stay home until they are up to 30 years old.

This government understands the adverse effects that drugs and alcohol have on crime. Any person who commits a crime while under the influence of drugs and alcohol or who commits a crime in order to obtain drugs and alcohol or who commits a crime wholly connected with drugs and alcohol, with the exception of selling or supplying, will be eligible to appear before this court. This bill will ensure that no young person slips through the cracks.

This government is trying to give every young Queenslander the second chance that the opposition does not wish to give them. By creating this Youth Drug and Alcohol Court, we—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR GREENSLOPES: While I am very happy to be here in this lovely green House, like my fellow opposition members I am deeply disgusted with the government opposite. Today I stand here on behalf of the opposition to refute the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court Youth Bill 2007.

The government is trying to pass a bill that has gaps in it that have not yet been fixed. The aim of the bill is to reduce the number of young people who reoffend in relation to drugs and alcohol abuse offences. However, I ask members to imagine that they are a young person who has been affected by drugs for long period and the government tells you to attend a counselling program for three to eight months. To be honest, I do not think that such a counselling program will overcome the problems and achieve its goals.

This bill will not be passed because there is not enough evidence and there are no facts to support it. My fellow opposition members are curious about the long-term effects of the counselling program on the youth who access it, as individuals and as a whole. As Queenslanders, each and everyday we strive to build a better place for our young ones and to support whoever needs our support. However, when I look at this bill, I see it as an excuse to hide the real facts. It does not provide adequate support for the young ones of this generation. As a strong and united opposition—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR WARREGO: In response to comments made by the youth member for Greenslopes, I say that this is a bill for the future. It will catch first-time users and stop them before they become addicts, resulting in further travesties within the state.

The O'Dwyer government is an innovative government and this bill reflects that. The youth drug court is especially innovative for the way in which youth are sentenced. The government has recognised that the traditional sentencing options are outdated and do not work, which is why there is a 90 per cent reoffence rate.

To give the youth of today and tomorrow a fair chance in life, this bill must be passed. Sentencing is mandatory and each defendant is classified by a panel of experts. A first-time user will be sentenced to drug and alcohol counselling for a minimum of two sessions each week for two to six months. For a first-time offence an addict will be sentenced to drug and alcohol counselling in a drug and alcohol free facility under the following conditions: they will live in the facility 24 hours, seven days a week and remain there for a period of three to six months.

This bill is important as it seeks to break the negative cycle that drugs and alcohol cause. This mandatory sentence is essential because the youth of today are different and the sentencing options must reflect that. This government aims to reduce the reoffence rate and the way to do this is through a new innovative approach. This is a bill for the youth.

This government does all in its power to help the youth of today and tomorrow. To the short-sighted, such as the opposition, the bill looks harsh and unnecessary. However, the O'Dwyer government looks to the future and we can see that, in order for our good state to move forward, innovative bills such as these must be implemented.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR GAVEN: Drugs and alcohol are major issues for the youth of Queensland, but the rubbish that the government puts before us today is simply a quick fix to a problem that needs much more time and consideration. This government has not thought about the future and the long-term effects of the legislation. Instead, it has attempted to fix the problem the quickest way that it can, thus producing a highly flawed bill.

This bill may momentarily drop the rate of drug and alcohol offences, but in the long run the program will fail. According to the bill, if the offender does not comply with the sentence given, the offender must reimburse the government for the cost of their first counselling session. This will lead to a rise in crime. Where would a drug addict or alcoholic get the money to reimburse counsellors and possibly doctors after three to six months in rehabilitation? After all, if they are reoffending, the program is obviously failing.

This bill, which supposedly protects the rights of the youth of Queensland, contradicts itself by allowing the youth court to be open to public viewers and the media, taking away the protection rights of the youth offender. How exactly is this government protecting the youth?

Unamended, this program will fail causing more damage than good, not only to the young offender but also to the whole community. This quick fix to the drug and alcohol problem is not solving the problem. It is simply covering it up.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR THURINGOWA: I firmly believe that the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court Youth Bill should be passed. For too long have the Australian youth who abuse drugs and alcohol been totally neglected. For too long has it been put off; the topic comes up and everyone seems to shut it down.

This criminal act should be addressed immediately and dealt with front and centre. Society is so caught up in and focused on more serious crimes and big bar criminals. It does not seem to see the abuse of drugs and alcohol by our youth and the increase in the numbers of young people involved.

A person does not just wake up one day and say that they will steal something, kill someone or use drugs and alcohol. It goes much further than that. It happens over time. In saying that, it goes deeper than the crime itself. We may never know why today's youth abuse drugs and alcohol, but this bill is sure to do something great in the state for the battle against that abuse. It is not just about punishing; it is about dealing with the problem and guiding young people in life, not just giving them a smack on the wrist and sending them away, knowing that in a few months they will be back doing the same thing.

I say: deal with the problem where it is at, and that is among our youth. This bill will do that. Some of these punishments may come across as harsh but, as the word of God says, discipline those you love. Are we really looking out for the best for our youth or for ourselves?

In the case of possession, this will determine that an offender whose drug addiction is considered to have contributed to the offence and is found in possession of a drug amount over 10 grams will be given a combined custody and treatment order.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CALLIDE: The courts of Queensland sentence those who have done wrong and, if possible, help them along the path of rehabilitation. Thankfully, the government has caught onto this and, through its proposed court system, has made sure that the rehabilitation of those convicted is undertaken during their sentence. However, the government has provided nothing more than a substandard consequence for those who fail to comply with the imposed sentence, which negates the aim to remove the offender from negative influences. This bill is simply a quick fix to a big problem which deserves much more consideration.

I pose a situation: Mr Hypothetical has just been sentenced by the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court following a drug offence that he committed earlier in the year. Now he is to attend two sessions of counselling a week for the next four months. This man realises that he has a problem and attends counselling for the first month, but then he falls off the rails and stops attending his sessions, thus failing to comply with his sentence. Under this bill he will be required to reimburse the government for the cost of the counselling he has received.

I ask members: where will the money come from? Usually money is slim for those who use drugs, and the chances of employment for someone who has failed to comply with a sentencing order over a drug offence would be rather low. Can members imagine banks rushing to help somebody in this situation? Certainly I was unable to find any insurance policies that would help somebody in this situation.

Changes need to be made to this bill. Although I believe in what the bill is trying to do, it simply does not address the problems adequately. The effectiveness of this bill as it stands is one of serious decline.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR GLADSTONE: Drugs and alcohol in today's society remain a huge problem. Whilst these substances are being abused by young people, the Youth Drug and Alcohol Court creates a way for anyone who is convicted of a crime under the influence, possession or seeking of an illegal substance between the ages of 12 and 25 to receive a fair and just trial to which the consequences of their actions will be dealt with. Furthermore, measures will be taken by the relevant parties. These further actions include the convicted person reimbursing the government for the full cost of rehabilitation and the counselling service that they have received. If the convicted person fails to comply with the sentence, the sentence will be doubled and it will be compulsory for the criminal to serve their time.

This bill needs to be passed as too often we see young people ruining their lives through the abuse of drugs and alcohol. If a young person is frightened after experiencing one of the court appearances, then they are less likely to reoffend. They will have a second chance at a life that everyone deserves. Furthermore, if this bill is not passed and a person continues to reoffend, taxpayers will be taking more responsibility for criminals. This will result in people losing faith in the justice system.

The O'Dwyer government is strong. The O'Dwyer government cares about the wellbeing of our young people. It will stand up for the young people. So if members want young people to live safe and happy lives, then this bill must be passed. Unlike the scum of the opposition, we are planning for today, not for the past.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind all members of parliamentary language.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: The government's reaction is simple. Its answer to everything is to let the problem happen and then take care of it. I must remind the government that only 4.7 per cent of all youth offenders who commit drug or alcohol crimes face court.

A government youth member: Is this a 10-year-old statistic again?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: No, indeed it is not and might I remind the member that the Juvenile Justice Act 1992 is the overriding precedent of criminal law in our state. If the member has any objection to that, that member should look for herself.

Further, clause 3 of the bill refers to the youth justice conferencing set-up. Youth justice conferencing is a huge benefit in that, instead of sending kids to court, it makes them confess to their crimes, apologise and take care of their actions. Youth justice conferencing is already in place, along with the Queensland Drug Court, which was founded in 2002.

A government youth member: Adult Drug Court. There's no youth drug court.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: Must I say that part 11 of the Juvenile Justice Act 1992 states that drug and alcohol offences can only be charged at a certain rate for 17-year-olds and under. Therefore, from the ages of 18 to 25, the government's bill is useless. Further, the government has stated that the bill will focus its sentencing on a Victorian act, which is against Queensland's constitution. We must base this bill on the child sentencing act of 1992, because nothing has been done since.

Must I say that, in terms of the very appointment of the staff for this program, the government is willing to appoint a police officer who is still at the academy. That person is not even qualified as a police officer and has not been checked. The staff alone for this bill are pathetic. The bill itself is pathetic. This bill should not be passed.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY: The honourable youth member for Robina, along with the other youth members of the opposition, constantly seeks to remind the government that there are already facilities in place to address these issues. We do not disagree with that. However, if there is still a problem, then obviously more action needs to be taken. This proposition will address these continuing issues.

This bill needs to be introduced to address the issues that relate specifically to drug and alcohol abuse among youths. The opposition youth members call this a quick fix. They also condemn the length of our counselling sessions. It seems to me that the opposition is highly hypocritical.

The opposition might condemn the reference to Victorian legislation. However, if they prefer to dance around with feeble ideas in a foolish act of pride, why should our state suffer? If legislation is effective in that state, why should we not also use this proven legislation?

This bill might not be favourable with drug users. That is obvious. This government is taking a tough line. We are not trying to make friends. This is commonly referred to as tough love. Yes, this bill may be harsh, it may be strict, but in the long run it will pull offending youths out of cycle of drug and alcohol abuse.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD: I would like to ask a question of the government. If somebody reoffends or does not finish their counselling sessions, they go to court. That takes more money. Then they go to counselling sessions, which the government pays for. Then if that person does not pay the fine—they do not reimburse the government—they get sent to jail, which the government pays for again. I do not see any logic to that.

The Beijing Rules, which is the United Nations principles of administering juvenile justice as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child make mention that, one, when a child is deprived of their liberty, being in a court hearing, or being punished, you cannot go and tell the whole world about it, which is what the government youth members are doing with having an open court. I am sorry about that, but you cannot.

A government youth member: They are cognitively developed to understand that at 12 years old?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD: They would. I remember being 12 and I had a pretty good understanding of what was going on around me. Not only that, the government youth members are allowing the media to come into the courts. There is a thing called the privacy act. If I was involved, I do not think my parents would want photos of me plastered all over the newspapers for using drugs.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: I must condemn the impudent charlatans of the opposition. It must be said that their understanding of this bill is similar to that of a floozy dog. They seem to wander bemused around the issue. They have seriously undermined the entire concept of this bill.

The youth member for Chatsworth frequently referred to existing legislation as a reason for not passing this bill. This government is talking about improving the existing legislation. Obviously, the youth member for Chatsworth does not want any progress on these issues just as he did not seem to want any progress on issues in his own electorate.

YOUTH LEADER OF OPPOSITION BUSINESS: I rise to a point of order. The youth member for Chatsworth has been misrepresented.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: Introducing minors into a court situation allows them to see the full consequence of their actions. It shows them what may possibly happen to them 10 or 15 years down the track when they are addicted to ecstasy. It allows them to see the consequences right now before them when they can be judged under child law rather than adult law.

Let it be said that, on observing the opposition youth members in their seats, upon seeing this legislation they were so afraid they were sweating more than an ecstasy dancer on a Saturday night. They are sweating in their seats because they can see the value of this legislation.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: Once again the honourable youth member for Chatsworth is living in the past recalling figures from over 10 years ago.

An honourable youth member interjected.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: Yes, we are making new legislation. Come up with it. Get with the go. The reason youth falls through the cracks is that some people are loose cannons and senseless, like the youth members of the opposition. Yes, we are taking on ideas from Victoria, which is unfortunate, because we are the Smart State, the leaders. But if we have to follow some kind of system that works, so be it. Seriously, is it better paying for the social consequences of drug and alcohol abuse?

Youth member for Chatsworth interjected.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: Again, I reinforce that this bill needs to be passed. Not only will these changes affect the youth directly but it will be of benefit in other legislative portfolios.

YOUTH LEADER OF THE HOUSE: I rise to a point of order. I heard a comment from the opposition about Paris Hilton. I ask that that be withdrawn.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Will the youth member for Chatsworth withdraw the remark?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: It was not about Paris Hilton.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The remark was found to be unparliamentary. Will you withdraw the remark?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: Yes.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: Our tough, progressive bill will impose penalties that complement the transport and infrastructure bill because of its zero tolerance of drink driving. I support what the youth member for Kawana stated regarding driving: 29,761 people were caught drink driving and that is simply unacceptable. Those people who are under the influence of drugs and alcohol within our eligibility age—those 29,761—will come into this Youth Drug and Alcohol Court and face the consequences. We will have a competent and confident commissioner—a qualified judge and an expert professional—not a judge which the youth member for Robina stated. Yes, no-one will fall through the cracks because of our mandatory sentencing. No-one will be affected by the judge's mood.

Yes, people may feel that this bill could breach child safety concerns, but if the opposition youth members read the bill they would realise that we have ensured that all offenders are mentally secure by providing counselling. We have included special arrangements for offenders with mental disabilities—a fact which, I believe, the opposition has ignored—to ensure their safety and the safety of the community. Does the honourable youth member for Robina really think that a nurse can defend herself against an attack by a person who has a mental disability? This bill will disable drug trafficking by recording convictions. This, in turn, takes another step.

Time expired.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 13, as read, agreed to.

Clause 14—

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ROBINA: I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 14 (First offence of an addicted user)—

At page 7, line 25—

omit, insert—

'(b) remain for a time decided by a panel of examiners, which will consist of the facility's resident medics and psychologists.'

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 14, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 15 to 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER: The non-compliance policies of this bill are nothing less than laughable. I move the following amendments—

1 Clause 18 (Failure to comply with sentence)—

At page 8, lines 19 to 25—

omit, insert—

'(1) Failure to comply with a sentence a first time will result in the following—

- (a) revocation of any privileges a sentenced person may have been eligible for in a treatment facility;
- (b) a sentence of no less than 2 years probation, during which the defendant will be subject to random blood and urine testing no less than twice every month.

Examples for paragraph (a)—

visiting rights, leave rights

'(2) Failure to comply a second time will result in the arrest and imprisonment of a person for a period of up to 12 months.'

2 Clause 19 (Failure to comply with open sentences)—

At page 9, lines 2 to 5—

omit, insert—

'(1) If a person fails to comply with an open sentence on the first occasion, the sentence will be doubled.

'(2) If a person fails to comply with an open sentence on a second occasion, the person will be deemed to be an addicted user and the person will be sentenced under section 14.'

Division: Question put—That the amendments be agreed to.

Ayes—40

Noes—42

Resolved in the **negative**.

Clause 18, as read, agreed to.

Third Reading

YOUTH MINISTER FOR JUSTICE, POLICE AND CORRECTIVE SERVICES: I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Division: Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Ayes—41

Noes—39

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Long Title

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

Sitting suspended from 1.43 pm to 2.40 pm.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Youth members, fate has conspired to make me your Speaker this afternoon but I will enforce the standing orders just as vigorously as every Speaker you have had so far this morning. I call the youth member for Brisbane Central.

HEALTH EDUCATION YOUTH BILL

Standing and Sessional Orders

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL, by leave, without notice: I move—

That so much of the standing and sessional orders be suspended to allow immediate presentation to the House of a youth bill for a youth act to implement a uniform mandatory health education syllabus across all Queensland schools for students in years 1 to 12.

Motion agreed to.

First Reading

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL: I present the bill and explanatory notes and I move—

That the bill now be read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Second Reading

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL: I move—

That the bill be now read a second time.

Queensland is facing a crisis of gargantuan proportions and something must be done. No longer can we stand back with our hands in the air claiming it is not our problem. We need to take the initiative and take control to prevent both current and future generations of young people from wasting away their lives and their potential, from being swallowed up and spat out by an unforgiving society and a remorseless justice system.

This crisis to which I am referring is the numerous health issues that are plaguing this nation, this state and, most unforgiving, the inexperienced youth of today. The issues of body image, drugs and alcohol, sexual health, unwanted pregnancy, mental health and suicide are destroying lives. These issues are killing young people and we can no longer leave it to an inconsistent education system, parents and society to educate young people on these issues because they are failing miserably.

This bill stands out and says that we, the opposition, care about the youth of Queensland and that we are interested in preventing these issues, not waiting until the problems are taking effect and then using a government bandaid approach and hoping it will go away. Yes, it is sad that we have to begin this education program in year 1, but it is necessary. Our society, however unfortunate, is one that promotes overt sexuality and the perfect body image and holds stigmatising attitudes towards illness. What is more, popular culture aimed at youth as young as six shows TV and video games with gang members, violence, abuse of women and drugs and disrespect of authority figures.

The only way that we can fight this is to prevent it. In fact, the Australian Bureau of Statistics stated in a report released as early as 1999 that 'one in three Queensland parents describe emotional or behavioural problems in their children'. It is also a fact that children are exposed to sex, drugs and alcohol and the pressures associated with these at an earlier age in life. They are often doing these things without understanding the magnitude of their decisions, decisions that have long-lasting effects and consequences on their young lives.

Many youth members think that we should not expose children to these issues at such an early age, but I ask: how can we prevent these issues from destroying young lives if people do not understand the consequences and risks before they are exposed to them? At this stage there are many programs in place to address these issues but the sad fact is that they are usually addressing the issues too late and there is no uniformity in the system or consistency in what is being taught. Young people do not know where to turn to for help or where to get access to answers.

The health education program that this bill proposes will effectively increase the resilience of young people so that they are better equipped with the skills and information to make informed decisions in demanding and difficult social situations. The news recently is evidence of the need for these issues to be addressed at a younger age. The recent problems concerning child sex abuse in communities holds lessons for all of us. Young children who are being sexually abused do not understand what is happening. The naivety of this leads to unreported cases of sexual abuse and, in many cases, leads to further problems such as mental illness, drug and alcohol abuse and unwanted pregnancy, thus increasing the problem.

I implore this chamber to recognise and accept the fact that these issues are happening at a younger age and therefore need to be addressed at a younger age. These issues are preventable through proper education and the accessibility of proper tools. This bill aims to, and I believe will successfully, change the future for the youth of Queensland.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: The opposition are nothing but the equivalent of a bunch of high school dropouts themselves. If they spent more time reading their textbooks this bill might not be the dismal attempt it is. This bill produces nothing more than a weak and inadequate solution regarding the health issues of the youth of Queensland. The fact of the matter is that the functions of this bill undermine its fundamental purpose. It is therefore useless and should not be passed. The health of today's youth—our future generation of adults—is an important matter for the government. With increasing obesity, issues of drugs and alcohol and a growing awareness of mental health, there is mounting concern for its management. At such a crucial stage of development we must not risk a wrong turn by misguiding the direction of our improvement. This is exactly what the opposition will lead us to do if this bill is passed.

The opposition has produced this bill in an attempt to educate young people about health issues. It has, however, failed to seriously consider the consequences of pushing a bill that is so ill-defined and poorly researched. This bill is completely off target. The opposition has thrown together some thoughts and tried to call it a bill. There is no cohesion between its components and the intention. There is no follow through. If this bill were to be put in practice very little would eventuate, contrary to what the opposition will lead youth members to believe.

The children and youth of Queensland are its future. Any logical person will tell you they do not want to be part of a program that is going to set children up poorly for adult life and possibly worsen the position they started in. Parents want to be involved in a child's life and in the spirit of supporting and nurturing a child we, the government, believe that parents should be encouraged to be involved in a child's schooling endeavours. They most certainly will not be held criminally responsible for trying to interfere which is what the opposition is somehow trying to put forward. The opposition has set out stringent requirements for health professionals, yet none pertain to the health professional having any teaching abilities or knowledge of how to teach whatsoever. Without actually educating children, this program is utterly useless. As the saying goes, 'Give a man a fish and he can eat for a day; teach him to fish and he can eat for a lifetime.' The opposition's proposal is nothing but a red herring.

Just about every step of this program must be authorised by the Youth Minister for Health, who has an overarching discretion in any situation regarding this program. This is, in fact, contrary to the separation of powers doctrine, essentially allowing the minister to make the law on the run. This is exactly why those opposite are in opposition and not government, as we prefer more well thought out and solid legislation. Dividing topics into categories is not the best approach. What the youth opposition overlooks by doing this is that as each area overlaps no single issue is independent of the other. Take, for example, the effect of drugs and alcohol, mental health and indeed general nutrition. The organisation of how and when the topic should be taught should be done in consultation with educators and indeed young people themselves. This is an important detail the youth opposition has again overlooked.

Yes, we the youth government do acknowledge that there are health issues and youth issues that need to be addressed. This is why serious thought needs to be put to this bill—substantially more than has gone into the attempt before parliament today. This youth government will not settle for the first solution. We will not settle for an easy solution. We will not settle for this solution. The only solution this youth government will settle for is the best and most effective solution. The youth opposition will lead you to believe that this bill is the solution as it will eventually lessen the effects of health issues to prevention. However, introducing topics such as body image to a seven year old is paving the way for more problems than solutions. The youth opposition's arguments are like Swiss cheese: full of holes. The youth opposition proposal merely creates a further mess which we will have to clean up. Yes, that is what we need to do today: wipe ourselves clean of this mess; wipe ourselves clean of this bill.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NOOSA: The youth of our state have been failed with regard to health education. Previously health education had been left to parents and society. You only have to look at the large numbers of anorexic and obese teenagers and children, the high youth suicide rates, the increasing incidence of mental health problems among our youth and high levels of drug and alcohol abuse to know that the current health education program is ineffective and is not doing enough to save the lives of our youth. This bill will rectify the situation. It will take the responsibility from parents and society and place it in the hands of the state and our schools. The bill is about prevention and harm minimisation. It aims to stop the problems before they occur rather than attempting to fix them when they are already destroying the lives of our youth. Beginning a program in year 1 will allow and encourage very young children to establish good nutrition and exercise habits for life. By focusing on nutrition and body image in the early years, we can begin to raise a generation of healthy minds and bodies and lower the incidence of health problems related to poor nutrition and exercise habits and the incidence of mental health problems among the youth of Queensland. By educating and arming our youth from an early age with information and knowledge, issues such as obesity, anorexia, poor self-esteem, mental illness and poor body image will decrease, transforming our youth into happy, healthy, confident young people.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ALGESTER: Today I stand before the House in total disgust of the youth opposition. This bill is a total waste of time and effort and is not even worth the paper it is written on. This bill is nothing more than a thorn in the side of the youth government and one we will not stand for. The mandatory imposition attached to this bill will prove to be unenforceable; it is worthless. This bill will cause more stress to our healthcare regime. By making this health education syllabus mandatory for all Queensland students, the youth opposition is taking away the rights of both the parents and the individual students. Parents have the right to raise their children according to their values and beliefs. This includes enlightening their children with regard to sexual education and mental health issues. The students have the right to choose what they are learning about. This really is a disgrace any which way you look at it.

The youth opposition needs a reality check. They would have you believe that this syllabus is the best possible solution for the youth of Queensland. But I pose to them this question: how many of you would like to be forced to do something by your parents or your teachers? This syllabus is just another ploy to suppress the rights of today's youth and their parents. We as a government will not stand idly by while human rights are being violated. We would not be considered Queenslanders—heck, we would not be considered Australians—unless we did something to stop this injustice. I plead with you not to vote for this bill for the sheer fact that it would be ineffective. When youth are forced to do something against their will—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD: Firstly, I would like to make a point in response to the honourable youth member for Algester. She mentioned that this bill is a waste of time and effort. Personally, I think that my children going to school and having a proper education about something that is as important as health and mental health is not a waste of time. I put forward to the House that the actual definition of mental health is outlined in the early years of the syllabus. Those of you who have actually read it would know that. It refers to self-acceptance, self-confidence—

A government youth member: There is no mental health in the early years of the bill.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD: There is.

YOUTH LEADER OF THE HOUSE: I rise to a point of order. The honourable member made reference to the bill directly. From what I have heard, we are not meant to do that.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: There is no point of order.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD: These issues are extremely important today when we have Bratz dolls dressing up in little miniskirts and mini tops and the little kids are going to be going, 'Oh no. I have no idea. This is making me feel uncomfortable.' It is important to target the causes of ever-increasing eating disorders like anorexia and obesity—things that gel with body image—early. We need to provide young children with this vital information like the importance of one's self and how to be confident. Because the best friendships you make are during the first four years of primary school, young people need to have the confidence to develop these friendships and understand how they and other people are feeling. These are vital skills that we really need to know to go through our whole schooling life. If you guys on the youth government side honestly think that you do not learn it now—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SANDGATE: The education syllabus that the youth opposition has proposed is poorly thought out in content and is simply off target. This bill sets out a weak preventative measure which has turned out to be a mess in its layout with unrealistic ideas of valuable resources. The syllabus is disorganised and the timing of the topics being taught at each stage is simply inappropriate. Anyone with at least a small understanding of young people would clearly be able to see that the commencement of the program at grade 1 is simply too early. Is a six-year-old really going to choose an apple over chips simply because it is the right choice, let alone actually remember which food group is actually the best? A young student barely begins their 12-year education and already they are having thrown at them the confusing and hard issue of poor nutrition, something which is purely the responsibility of the parents when students are of such a young age. At least by year 5 the children will actually understand the importance of looking after their health and make use of this information. At that age the significance of the content can actually be absorbed and understood.

What the young people of Queensland really need is an education syllabus which has been designed to address each health topic at stages of their education which are in line with each age group's psychological and emotional maturity level. Teaching information to very young and unresponsive students is just not going to work. The topics of the syllabus which are being taught are extremely important life lessons for Queensland students and therefore should be taught as such, not as a school subject. Making it compulsory for students to complete a program as if it were a basic school subject from year 1 to 12 is the complete opposite of how it should be done. Furthermore, the resourcing of this program is completely unrealistic.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CAIRNS: I wish to reiterate what the great youth member for Brisbane Central had to say about sexual health. Sexual health includes many things. It includes knowing about your body and how it works; understanding the physical, social and emotional changes that come with puberty, pregnancy and ageing; keeping yourself and others safe; and finding information to support yourself and others when something goes wrong.

A government youth member interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CAIRNS: It is grade 5. Read the bill! Starting to create a generation of children who will know what to do when something is up or when something is wrong is what the bill is about—creating a generation of people changing, because we have all been through this and we have seen how hard it is for us as children to find the right resources when the youth government is not providing them for us. At the most, the recent national figures for child abuse in Australia indicated that during 2002 and 2003 there were 198,355 reports of suspected child abuse and sexual abuse in Queensland alone. If the youth government were dedicated to their people, they would fix this. The youth opposition came up with this bill that will revolutionise this state. The youth opposition have seen the issues and we are making a difference. Like the wonderful government youth members have said in many of their other bills: this bill is the future. I rest my case.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NANANGO: The government would like to acknowledge the kind thoughts behind this dismal attempt to solve the problems of health in this state. The main concept that the opposition tried to target is without a doubt very important and desperately needs to be addressed. Unfortunately, the manner in which they wrote this bill is less than perfect. It should have been a simple bill, but it has turned out to be nothing but a waste of paper and a waste of space. Along with the views of the other members of the government, I want to point out some gaping holes in this bill. Firstly, this bill basically destroys the meaning of democracy by allowing the youth health minister to have the final say. This bill also states that two compulsory classes are to be taught each week. This may be acceptable for some grades, but for grades such as grade 1 it is totally unacceptable. Does the opposition know anything about children in grade 1 or their education schedule? Those children cannot even spell the word 'cat'. I suggest members of the opposition refresh their memories and go back to grade 1!

With regard to the teacher involvement as noted in this bill, the whole notion is contradictory. Why must teachers assist in this lesson if health professionals have been brought in to do the job? This is nothing but a waste of resources. The very general and very vague concept of this bill was created with good intention, but unfortunately many aspects are a disgrace to this parliament. This bill is ineffective, unacceptable and cannot be passed. It should be scrapped so that a bill worthy of such an important topic can be created that will actually fix the problem. This bill is dead and rotting and we want it in the trash where it belongs.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: The bill put forward by the opposition is one of great strength and ambition. This state is in crisis at present, with 96 per cent of all adolescents drinking on a regular basis. Some 49 per cent of those drink at least once a week.

A government youth member interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: It is theirs; that is why they drink. We have significant health issues in our state which the government is not addressing, and I will give a great example of this. In 1997 statistics showed that marijuana use had increased by one-third.

An honourable youth member interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: Wait until I am finished and then interject. The government put in an education program based on marijuana. As a result, marijuana used dropped between 1997 and 2005 by 66 per cent. That just goes to prove that being taught issues of health appropriately makes a huge difference to the health issues that take place. I pose this question: how many government members have actually had lessons on alcohol and drugs? How many government members have had one or more? I can tell youth members this: 46 per cent of all people in our state have had no lessons whatsoever on alcohol or drugs and 35 per cent have only had one. This is pathetic, and so is the health system put forward by the government. Quite simply, it is pathetic. We are actually taking a proactive approach rather than a reactive approach. What they want to do is try to get kids on drugs and then fix them. We are stopping them from getting on drugs in the first place. If anyone opposes this bill, then indeed they must be on drugs!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND: Today is a very embarrassing day to say the least for the opposition. I ask the Leader of the Opposition: how could he let his shadow minister for health submit this pile of paper that he calls a bill? Enough with highlighting this blunder, because as I cast my eyes out over the opposition I notice many red-faced members. There are a number of flaws in this bill. I am not sure where to start, so I will just dive right on in. The first problem I have with this bill is that parents are prohibited from classes whilst teachers are forced to attend. This makes no sense whatsoever.

Opposition youth members interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CLEVELAND: I know I am on the right track when they start squealing. If so-called health professionals are teaching these classes, why do we force the teachers to stay behind? Presumably to help out, but then why do we not let parents? It is imperative that parents are aware of what their children are learning at school in relation to sex education so they are able to help their children during important stages in their lives. The next issue that I have with this bundle of paper is the age we are going to be teaching the syllabus to. It is an absurd proposal that the opposition has put forward to teach students in year 1 topics such as dietary substance, food composition and hereditary illnesses. How are we meant to teach five-year-olds these topics when they have trouble comprehending the alphabet? This bill is terminally ill and I would encourage the opposition to do the humane thing here and switch off its life support.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR DARLING DOWNS: A common statistic in a variety of independent surveys conducted in this current decade on the subject of stress among senior level students concluded that a staggering one in three students suffer from depression as a result of overwork. These same surveys have also indicated that one in five students are suffering from chronic levels of anxiety. This bill was written with the intention of educating adolescents who are more susceptible to mental illnesses and affiliated issues in this period of time. It is hoped that the implementation of this bill will assist in the prevention of long-term previously untreated mental disorders. Many of the mental issues today that plague Queensland's youth can be linked back to a lack of awareness of symptoms, a socially stereotyped perspective on mental issues and a further lack of knowledge regarding treatment and alternatives. This bill seeks to remedy this by raising awareness of symptoms, treatment, alternative measures and associated issues while breaking social misconceptions of mental illness through education. This is an issue that transcends the division between government and opposition. The opposition recognises this to be the case, which begs the question: when will the government realise the importance of addressing these issues as opposed to sticking by policies which clearly have not worked?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR IPSWICH WEST: Before I begin I would like to congratulate the opposition health team for its collective 50 interjections. I would like to address what the youth member for Cairns has said about the many facets of sexual health, and this is exactly what is so ineffectual about the bill. It is laid out in a way that means we cannot progress with the issues contained within the bill as they become appropriate and relevant to the children of our state. The bill proposed by the opposition is a preposterous attempt to pander to a voting demographic by using nothing more than smoke and mirrors. By presenting important life issues to children at an age before they are able to comprehend them, this bill appears to be deliberately ineffective as it compromises the nature of the very lessons it intends to impart to our children. The opposition needs to do more research and put some real thought into the bill if it ever intends it to be appropriate to be included in state legislation. The matter at hand is simple: teaching five-year-olds to respect and like their bodies will not stop a teenager from hating the way they look because they are not as skinny as a model on a magazine cover or a teenager becoming desperately depressed about their acne. Similarly, teaching 10-year-olds who have no experience of hormonal drive or sexual desire about STIs and teenage pregnancy will not have the same effect as communicating the consequences of adult decisions to those people beginning the transition into adulthood. The health and wellbeing of our youth is one of the most important issues within Queensland and by presenting a jumbled—

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER: First of all, I agree with the youth member for Ipswich West, but the sad thing is that puberty is occurring earlier and earlier in the lives of teenagers. It seems the schools of Queensland actually support this idea. The federal government last year announced a \$95 million chaplaincy program. After the first round of applications, 33 per cent of successful applicants were from Queensland. It was so successful that an extra \$25 million has been committed to the program. Members opposite might think this chaplaincy program would be about religion, but it is not; it is about spiritually, acceptance and helping yourself. It has nothing to do with religion whatsoever.

Government youth members interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BARRON RIVER: Not through the program. Schools support this. As I said, 33 per cent of successful schools were in Queensland out of 1,500 schools Australia-wide.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: I would like to share with the House a story of a boy, and this boy's name is Billy. Billy is 10 years old. He has just blown out the candles on his birthday cake. It is a Monday morning and he is going to school. First up in the day is maths and he will learn his times table.

Honourable youth member for Chatsworth interjected.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! The member for Chatsworth is warned.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURNETT: Billy is learning his four times tables and then after lunch he is going to sit down with the rest of his class in front of the television and watch a Paris Hilton video thanks to this legislation in front of us here today. In this ridiculous proposal by the opposition, we have this absurd belief that it is an offence for a parent to deliberately interfere with one of these classes. Isn't

it a parent's right to interfere with things that they believe their child should not be seeing? Should it not be their right to protect them from things that the opposition would rather them see? I condemn the opposition for putting forward a bill which promotes sexual education to 10- to 12-year-olds but not to people who are 13 to 17 years old. I find this suggestion a joke that we only educate boys about sexual health when they do not want to be going anywhere near girls.

It is obvious that the opposition has put very little thought into the bill. It has simply thrown together a few figures, including, remarkably from the member from Chatsworth, the statistic that 96 per cent of youth are regular users of drugs or alcohol. That is a remarkable statistic.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR TOOWOOMBA NORTH: Currently, as we all should be aware, throughout Queensland there is absolutely no uniformity in health education. This bill provides the opportunity to implement much needed uniformity, yet the incompetent government is willing to throw it away. Perhaps it does not realise that issues such as suicide, self harm and body image, all of which are contained in the bill, are just as important if not more important as math and English.

I refer to a comment made by the youth member for Algester that this bill is a violation of human rights. I would like the government to explain just how implementing vital health education is a violation of human rights.

In addition, I do not think that the government realises that we are trying to prevent things before they occur. The opposition is not in denial about important health issues within our community, yet the government evidently is.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL: I refer to the comment of a previous speaker about Paris Hilton videos. Obviously that shows that government members have not learned sexual education; if they had, they would know that Paris Hilton videos are definitely not educational.

I thank government members for proving my point that all their conservative minds can handle is a bandaid approach to this problem. Health issues are destroying lives. Our bill will create an educational environment that promotes good habits and harm minimisation. When our children are young, don't we teach them what are good things to eat? Will government members all have fat children?

The government cannot accept the fact that it is detrimental not to learn about health issues from an early age. However, the opposition does accept that challenge and we will fight for the bill to be passed, as our progressive minds look to the future and accept that the current situation calls for a uniform health education syllabus that prevents—I repeat, prevents—these issues from arising and saves the youth of Queensland.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to.

Consideration in Detail

Clauses 1 to 10, as read, agreed to.

Clause 11—

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NANANGO: I move the following amendment—

1 **Clause 11—**

At page 6, lines 22 to 24 and page 7, lines 1 to 6—

omit, insert—

- '(a) be trained health professionals permitted to practice health care in Australia: and
- (b) not have been disqualified from practice for any reason: and
- (c) have a university degree or equivalent certification allowing them to practice in health care: and
- (d) have applied to and have been accepted by Queensland Health as a registered health professional; and
- (e) have completed a 6 months training course conducted by Queensland Health, which prescribes the required teaching practices and outlines the content of the syllabus.'

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 12—

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NANANGO: I move the following amendment—

2 **Insertion of new clause 11A—**

At page 7, after line 6—

insert—

'11A **Employment**

'Where the necessary qualifications have been verified, the health professional will be—

- (a) employed on a full-time or part-time basis by Queensland Health; and
- (b) designated to teach in schools in a prescribed region by Queensland Health.'

This government has already outlined why this sad and sorry excuse of a bill should be chucked out. However, if some of you feel that this problem should be targeted no matter how bad the bill is, necessary amendments need to be added otherwise this will be nothing but an embarrassment to the parliament. The bill is poorly written with little consideration given to real world application.

The government puts forward this amendment due to the fact that this waste-of-space bill neglects aspects directly concerning health professionals. Excluding non-Australian citizens to work in such positions limits this state, the Smart State, and relegates it to a potential educational back water, reducing its standards and also potentially its resources. That is totally unacceptable.

The real problem can be solved simply by inserting paragraph (d), which states that health professionals must apply to and be accepted by Queensland Health. That fixes the problem without any limitations that could be possibly labelled as discriminatory acts.

The bill also neglects any training or teaching methods for the health professionals on the actual syllabus. This program is necessary as the bill allows unspecifically qualified health professionals to teach in Queensland schools. According to the opposition's views, a health professional may teach in our schools with no direct knowledge of the syllabus or any teaching methods. That is pathetic and shameful.

The government is like a mother to this state and to the parliament. We know best and we are getting sick and tired of picking up after the opposition. This bill is an embarrassment and a disgrace. The problem could have been fixed much more simply. These amendments are necessary and this bill is disgraceful.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Before I call the youth member for Chatsworth, I compliment him on the totally excellent dance outfit that he wore last night.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: Thank you, Mr Deputy Speaker. I keep hearing government members saying that they do not like the bill but they support it, they do but they don't. The government is constantly tossing and turning, because it is trying to debate against a solid bill and it is absolutely necessary that we implement it throughout our state.

Furthermore, I am embarrassed to stand opposite the government for this reason: according to its amendment, Dr Patel can teach in our schools. To me, it is not very hard: in Google, you simply type in 'Dr Patel' and what happens? You learn about his several disqualifications in numerous countries, including Australia. However, the government has said, 'That's all right. That's fine. They're cheap and we'll pay them to do our work.'

I have to say this: these amendments weaken a bill that is already strong enough. For the bill to achieve its full implications and repercussions on society, it is imperative that the amendments are not passed because with them the bill is nothing. At present the bill has such strength that taking anything away would be an absolute catastrophe.

Youth member for Mount Coot-tha interjected.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CHATSWORTH: May I comment that the government whip is a catastrophe. Our bill is strong and the amendments simply make it weaker. We want a strong bill, and a strong and healthy Queensland. The opposition will stand by it.

The amendments weaken the bill, and we want it passed. We want our kids to be the Smart State kids. We want them to have knowledge of health and we want them to be our future. They cannot do that when they are struggling with HIV and obesity. They cannot do it without health knowledge.

Time expired.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: I remind all youth members that this is a conscience vote and not a buddy vote.

Ayes—43

Noes—38

Resolved in the **affirmative**

Clause 12, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 13—

YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move the following amendment—

1 Clause 13—

At page 7, line 15, 'Year 1'—

omit, insert—

'Year 5'.

Clause 13, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 17, as read, agreed to.

Clause 18—

YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move the following amendment—

2 **Clause 18—**

At page 8, line 2, '12 years'—

omit.

Clause 18, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 19 to 21, as read, agreed to.

Insertion of new clause—

YOUTH MINISTER FOR HEALTH: I move the following amendment—

3 **After clause 21—**

At page 8, after line 24—

insert—

'21A Duration of each stage

'Students will undertake one stage of the syllabus per school term, so that students will complete the study of four stages each school year.'

If for some ludicrous reason this bill is passed, it is of the utmost importance, to make this bill even remotely plausible, that this amendment be included. The government is gravely concerned about the consequences of teaching complex issues at such a tender and impressionable age. This is why we must lift the commencement age of the program to year 5.

The member for Greenslopes is struggling to stay awake through the opposition's proposal of this bill. I ask youth members to imagine teaching these topics to a six-year-old. It would have the same ineffectual result. The year 1s would be sitting there like the member for Greenslopes is with blank expression on their faces. At year 5, students will generally be more aware and knowledgeable, enabling them to draw their own conclusions. How is the opposition proposing to implement this syllabus for year 1s? 'A' is for anorexia, 'B' is for bulimia and so on? Exposing children to these issues at a younger age than at year 5 will not serve this bill's underlying purpose. Without a basic understanding of the world, this program would not be informative; rather, it would operate similar to scare tactic programs and will not enable children to view these issues objectively.

Furthermore, the opposition has tried to enforce the stringent requirement of what must be taught and when. It is imperative that this bill be amended to allow some control to be given to schools and health professionals by allowing a minimum requirement. As such, they can then facilitate the teaching of topics if they are required. This will allow for more tailored programs to address issues as they arise and for programs that are of particular concern to certain electorates. The opposition has not learned about health issues and issues relating to educational effectiveness. The opposition has obviously failed to research this issue and to consider the potential consequences of this bill.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR SPRINGWOOD: The amendments are not only pointless but completely detrimental to the system that we have outlined throughout this bill. The syllabus begins at year 1 and is structured the way it is for a reason. The topics covered are extremely broad and with constant changes in technology in society there is more and more information on these issues being released every day. I am going to put forward a little bit of information for our wonderful Youth Premier and youth member for Indooroopilly. She said that complex issues will be taught from year 1 to year 4. I do not know if many youth members know, but these complex issues are taught in a system called the Life Education van, which travels around Australia. We are bringing this into the classrooms because we need the uniformity from all schools. There are enough problems with our subjects and our systems in our schools as it is. If we keep the schools exactly the same—everyone is teaching the same thing at every school—there is going to be more uniformity and it is going to be an equal level playing field and equal assessment.

With regard to the other amendments, I personally do not believe that a term is long enough to address such broad and continually changing information. There is so much information, but this is going to be taught in term 1 of year 1 and then it will not be taught until the end of year 2. That is a big gap. The government is trying to get the main focus on the kids when they need it the most. Those early years of schooling are the most important parts of schooling for all children. We learn how to spell, we learn maths; why do we not learn about these important things in year 1? We are teaching them from the early ages. We are getting to the problem before it happens.

Division: Question put—That the amendment be agreed to.

Ayes—45

Noes—33

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Clauses 22 to 31, as read, agreed to.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BRISBANE CENTRAL: I move—

That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Division: Question put—That the bill, as amended, be now read a third time.

Ayes—41

Noes—41

The numbers being equal, Mr Deputy Speaker cast his vote with the ayes.

Resolved in the **affirmative**.

Long Title

Question put—That the long title of the bill be agreed to.

Motion agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT**YOUTH LEADER OF THE HOUSE:** I move—

That the House do now adjourn.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR ASPLEY: With my two minutes of fame today I would like to address an issue that is very close to me and something that I feel passionate about. Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land and also acknowledge many of the diverse and different cultures that we have present with us today among our youth members. As Youth Minister for Indigenous and Multicultural Affairs, I feel that I should talk about something within my community that affects us with the Indigenous people. So therefore I thought it is time to bring about an awareness and it is time to bring about a change. What am I talking about, members ask? I am talking about the racial attitudes that I hear about within my community all of the time. I continually listen to and tolerate the racist comments from other youths in my community. The racist attitudes of students of my age disgusts me. Populations are continually being generalised all of the time. I hear things like, 'Muslims, they are obviously bombers,' and 'We are being swamped by Asians.' It is absolutely ridiculous, it is revolting and it must stop today.

In such a multicultural society, I find it extremely surprising to feel as though the generation in which I live and I was born into is so absolutely racist. The traditional values of other generations, of course, have some of these views. However, I thought in today's world that we were a little bit different. Obviously not. I would like to remind everyone that it is time to change and that it is time to bring about this awareness. So I urge everyone—each and every one of us—to not tolerate that racism in society. However, if you have a racist attitude yourself, I would like you to remember that we all bleed, we all breathe and we all cry. We are all equal and we are all human, so stop being racist.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BEAUDESERT: The bush is being bled dry. The life is being sucked out of our rural communities by the leech that is our state government. While they sit gloating from their propaganda-justified murder of Queensland's regional areas, thousands across the state do their level best to make sure that democracy does not come in the naive notion of years past. If forced council amalgamations go ahead in Queensland, many communities will lose their sustainability. Let us look at some of the realistic outcomes if the amalgamations are pushed through. In a short-term perspective, which is obviously what the powers that be are seeing, hundreds of council related jobs will be lost throughout the state. The shadow local government and planning minister has informed us that only \$12 million has been set aside to compensate for loss of jobs and infrastructure throughout all of Queensland by the state government. That is hardly a sufficient amount.

In November 2006 the Department of Local Government, Planning, Sport and Recreation released its strategic plan to cover the five-year period from 2006 to 2011. It is ironic that it made no mention of forced council mergers. One seriously has to question our leader's credibility when it seems that these initiatives are being put in place with the sole purpose of giving us a false sense of security. In terms of a more long-term context, a lot of hard work and progress has been made in regional and Indigenous communities in recent years. A lot of this will be undone by the new anti-community super councils which are being forced upon townships. In my electorate, both the Boonah and Beaudesert shire councils are facing extinction and will be forced to amalgamate with the Ipswich, Logan or Gold Coast councils. The people of our communities feel that the saddest loss will be of their rural area's sense of identity.

Rural and regional communities have spent years making sure that their townships did not become urbanised or, at the other end of the spectrum, fade away into ghost towns. This is the ultimatum being served to them now by our state government. Our choice is either to lose our values, urbanise and forever lose the identity that our communities once held in order to survive or to fade away into obscurity. It is up to the rural people of Queensland to fight for their townships.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BULIMBA: As a current youth student of Queensland I feel it is most important to address the current issue of Queensland education. The lack of education skills in our state, especially when it comes to dealing with numeracy skills, I must say is appalling. The number of students who meet the education benchmarks is continually decreasing and this is even more drastically noticed when compared to other states like Victoria and New South Wales. It is time to change this. Queensland truly needs to become the Smart State that it claims itself to be. The government proposes to provide more funding for higher education and improving school outcomes. One of the ways to do this is by recognising and rewarding teachers who do well in teaching students. It is fair to say that our teachers definitely do have the most responsibility and influence in shaping our students and the capacity of our students to learn. Even from my own experience, the difference between a good and bad teacher is noticed not only in the grades but also, more importantly, in the attitudes of students towards learning.

I want to stress to youth members today not only the lack of education skills in Queensland but also the way in which we should approach improving it for our youth. It does not matter how much funding we put into acquiring the resources unless we have the correct teachers to effectively deliver it to our students. We need to understand the significance of addressing this issue now, to successfully educate our future leaders and build on our Smart State.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BUNDABERG: Do youth members know someone who is deaf? The chances are they do. Having just celebrated its 60th birthday, Australian Hearing helps more than 330,000 Australians every year, including many people in my electorate of Bundaberg, one of these people being my younger sister, Melissa. Melissa has been deaf since she was 17 months old due to an accident and has now lost almost all the hearing in her left ear. Each day she faces deafness in a hearing world plus bullying and a lack of understanding. A teacher's aide who signs and carefully explains her schoolwork is constantly needed. Many people cannot be bothered to converse with a deaf person because that person needs time to comprehend what has been said while watching the speaker's lips. I see this every day with my sister struggling to take part in our society.

Australian Hearing has been there to support her and us as a family since the very beginning and I thank them with all my heart. But what would youth members do if they could not get treatment? What if a youth member was 17 years old and their hearing deteriorated so much that they needed a \$30,000 cochlear ear implant which could replace what little hearing they have? This is the case of Kayly O'Sullivan, a teenage girl in Bundaberg, who now faces this huge cost. I wanted to bring her story to youth members' attention as she also faces a three-year hospital waiting list due to her age. This is an awful thing to say, but if Kayly's hearing had deteriorated just one year earlier she would have been classed as a child and placed at the top of the waiting list. But at 17 years and classed as an adult, Kayly may have to wait three years in which time her hearing could deteriorate completely.

I believe all people in Kayly's terrible situation should be able to have a cochlear ear implant without charge. We take our hearing for granted. Why should we cripple a disabled person with such debt? Waking up to silence for the rest of one's life is an awful disability.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURDEKIN: The population of north Queensland is going through a drought, but not one that involves water: one where hospital beds are in limited supply. The Townsville Hospital services the majority of the people of north Queensland, from Mackay north and as far west as you can go. Yes, there is the new 78-bed facility, but it is still in the design and planning stage. The population is growing at such an astronomical rate that by the time this one is built there will probably be need for two new facilities of the same size. The wards are overflowing with elderly patients because there are not enough nursing home beds. Because of this, patients have to wait for long periods of time on waiting lists, being pushed further and further down the lists with people getting placed in front of them. Patients are being transferred to remote facilities just because the Townsville Hospital cannot accommodate them. Just the other day a man was transferred to the Atherton Tablelands Hospital. This put a great burden on his family to drive the four hours to see him and they could only do this once a fortnight, a stark contrast to the daily visits he was used to getting.

The people of north Queensland deserve better. It is about time something was done about the hospital bed crisis in Townsville to reduce the pain that these people already have to suffer. By the time the new 78-bed facility is built it will be too late and the hospital will need double the number of beds to deal with the demand. By the time the new 78-bed facility is built there will be need for another and we will still be behind. We have been behind for the last nine years.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR BURLEIGH: I come before this House about a matter of grave importance. The constituents of Burleigh, and indeed the entire Gold Coast, currently live in fear. The lack of a police presence at night in this area is nothing short of frightening. No longer can friends take a trip down to Timezone, go bowling or late-night shopping without the anxiety generated by hoodlums who roam the streets.

Only 10 days ago five teenagers were brutally stabbed by two violent cowards. This happened at only 11 pm at night in a popular and populated part of the Gold Coast. I had been standing in the exact same spot half an hour previously. Five teenagers were stabbed by two men. Were police present? No. Instead, the victims were savagely attacked and the attackers escaped covered in their blood.

Countless fights break out in public on the Gold Coast every night, often ending with the hospitalisation of people. This has to stop. We want—nay, need—an increased police presence on the Gold Coast. No longer shall innocent people live in fear of a few disgusting and dangerous ones. Something needs to be done and quickly before others are hurt.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CALOUNDRA: I would like the House to reminisce with me. Have youth members ever had one of those days where their alarm does not go off, their hair will not go the way they want it to and they cannot find the other shoe? After frantically rushing around you finally finish getting ready, you run down the road heading to the bus stop only to see the bus speed straight past you. You missed the bus by one measly second and now you are stranded. Picture that and then times it by 365 and youth members get my life. I am not the only one. The beautiful Sunshine Coast is experiencing the same situation.

Fellow youth members, I stand before you with a problem for my electorate of Caloundra: there is a significant lack of sufficient transportation. Taxis are expensive and unreliable. You ring them and they either waitlist you or not pick you up at all, which is completely pathetic. The other form of transport is trains. The closest train station to Caloundra is 25 minutes away in Landsborough. In order to get to one form of transportation you have to use another one, which is weird. The only other possible alternative is buses and everyone knows how bad buses are. Caloundra buses are rarely on time and hardly ever get you where you want to go—your exact destination. Planning to go somewhere with Caloundra transportation is a traumatic nightmare. You are either an hour early or an hour late. There is no happy medium.

So what are the repercussions of this serious problem? The lack of sufficient transportation is one of the primary reasons Queensland youth are rushing off to get their driver's licences. The state government questions why over the past three years driver's licence applications have skyrocketed and so have the number of accidents. The answer is that over the past three years the population of the Sunshine Coast in particular has expanded from just under 280,000 to 290,000. With this growth our needs have grown as well and our need for sufficient transport has, too.

I believe that instead of the government changing the rules for learners and P-platers they should take a look at the provoking source of this licensing trend: the unreliable, pathetic transportation system. The government needs to wake up and see the important concern for Caloundra and other parts of Queensland and meet the needs.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CAPALABA: Earlier today there was discussion of whether all the members of the House were born in the post Duran Duran era. Now, while I cannot say for sure, it is safe to assume that everyone here today, because they were born, had a mother and, because it takes two to tango, a father. However, in the first precious weeks of life whoever cared for them had no legal right to paid paternity or maternity leave. Australia has failed to legislatively provide for paid maternity leave and we are the only developed nation not to protect this right at a state or federal level.

With federal government disinterest abounding, I call on Queensland to step forward on this issue of need as a leader among states. Paid maternity leave is vital in those first weeks of life as it enables a mother to bond with her child and recuperate without financial pressure. Organisations capable of funding paid maternity leave have also benefited, experiencing increased return rates and saving on retraining new staff. Yet paid maternity leave is available to less than 40 per cent of Australia's employed women. Awards and workplace agreements fail to deliver for many, including women employed in small business, women not employed full-time and those with lower job skills unable to negotiate such payments.

This is a matter of creating equity between rich and poor in their financial ability to have children. To do so, government assistance is needed to support families at this critical time—government assistance which is viable due to a thriving Queensland economy. State paid maternity leave for a period of up to 14 weeks at the minimum wage topped up by employers at their discretion is one viable model supported by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunities Commission. Paid maternity leave is not a substitute for existing government support but it is a vital addition to increase women's real choice in how they combine care for their families with paid employment.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CUNNINGHAM: After a riveting statement by the Youth Leader of the Opposition I feel that it is my duty to do the exact opposite. I speak before this House about the British monarchy. In the past week there was a report that Prince William wished to pursue the role of Governor-General. This was grossly dismissed by the Prime Minister himself, who said that the role must be undertaken by a true Australian citizen. This is a very reasonable and sensible condition of the Governor-General's position because there would be the potential for a British sphere of influence which of course none of us, with the exception of one, would want.

It is the principle, however, of how the possible future king was pushed away so aggressively. It must be remembered that today's Queen is not only the Queen of the United Kingdom but also the Queen of Australia, New Zealand, Canada and other smaller nations. It is shameful to think that today's society loves to hear about the occasional wrongdoings of the monarchy—'Oh, my God, Prince Harry is

a Nazi!—rather than some of the more glorious parts. For instance, Windsor Castle just to name one is the only fully operational castle in the world. Then there are openings of great architecture by the Queen worldwide and various other things. Is it really that bad? To put it in perspective, would you rather the democratically elected George W Bush to be in power?

So I ask everyone in the House and in this state to think about what the monarchy brings to us. It brings to us glory—glory, glory and nothing but glory. This House was built on glory. This country was built on glory to the throne. In respect of a republic, think of the cost—I am not going to mention figures because it would be an unbelievable amount. The principle of getting rid of a queen or a future king is to me simply absurd. The Queen has no affect on the Australian way—you do as you please, you drink your beer, you sleep around, you do as you wish. So the question is: do we want the extra glory for this great state of Queensland or what? God save the Queen.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: Order! I draw to the youth member's attention the standing orders relating to sobriety of other members.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR CURRUMBIN: Of major concern in my electorate of Currumbin at the current time is the placement of social security officers, needle exchange and the housing commission in the suburb of Palm Beach. As acknowledged by the member for Burleigh, there is a lot of problems with gangs and youth on the Gold Coast at the moment and specifically at Palm Beach. These are widely publicised. However, they may not necessarily always be true. However, Palm Beach is also home to some of the Gold Coast's most beautiful beaches. Within metres of this picturesque and ideal landscape is a needle exchange, the housing commission and social security offices. Problems abound.

The social security office has remained in the same place for more than eight years, resulting in localisation of the problem and the further exacerbation of it. The housing commission is a further problem, having been built on prime real estate metres from child-care centres. As well as these issues is the implementation of a needle exchange located within a few hundred metres of the social security office and the housing commission and directly behind a pub.

Needle exchange is a term that should probably be used very loosely as no exchange of needles is actually required—'needle distribution' would be more appropriate. As a result of this, countless numbers of needles have been haphazardly discarded on the beaches and streets, posing a major threat to the rest of society. Now the government has said that these things have been put where they have because that is where the problems are. But by placing these facilities in the positions that we have—with no public consultation, mind you—what are we really achieving? I am not denying that these facilities are a necessary part of society but by centring them in such a close radius in the location that they are instead of working towards solving the issues are we not just exacerbating them?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR EVERTON: Mr Deputy Speaker, I am in love. That is right: I am in love. Do not be mistaken. I like you a lot, but I am not in love with you or anyone in here. The love is not a normal love but a love with loyalty, a love with dedication and a love with pride. My love is for surf-lifesaving. That is right: surf-lifesaving. It is unbelievable that for 100 years surf-lifesavers have risked their own lives for the protection of other beach goers. They risk life and limb to save the lives of people they do not even know. From a humble beginning in 1907 on the shores of Bondi beach to today, 100 years later, surf-lifesaving has saved over 500,000 lives, has 306 clubs nation wide and has an increasing membership base which currently stands at approximately 350,000 active lifesavers. Did you know, Mr Deputy Speaker, 2007 is the year of the lifesaver—a year dedicated to the hard work and loyalty of the surf-lifesavers who volunteer hundreds of hours each year? I wish to give a massive thank you to all the lifesavers in Queensland and particularly my own club, Bribie Island. Mr Deputy Speaker and all youth members, always remember from Coolangatta to Cape York and all over Oz to swim between the flags.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR FITZROY: We are suffering as a community in my region of Fitzroy. I know the name does not sound very flamboyant but we are losing a side, our more artistic side, for public schools are being undermined and overlooked. It seems that the government has been viewing private schools as some form of higher superiority. But the worst part of this is that some state education departments are being ignored as well as the schools themselves. Schools have excessive funding in physical education, science and maths departments, with top of the range equipment, while students who study the arts are being disrespected for their studies. Our government is jeopardising our future.

Regardless of my regional area, the standards of education should be the same everywhere across the state. However, I do believe in this case that double standards are present. I ask honourable youth members to imagine the impression that this high school leaves. Student-wise, this high school has the highest standards artistically, but the students suffer without much needed funding. This school, educating 1,000 students, has one computer which has the required program for numerous assessments for those students studying music. Even better, the one computer is now no longer working. Drama students are performing on stages bearing broken curtains, sound equipment and lighting. Art students are finding much needed materials not supplied. By ignoring these vitalities to keep the arts alive we are killing the hopes, dreams and careers of the artists to come.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR GLASS HOUSE: The youth of Glass House and south-east Queensland need water for the future. The current government of Queensland has outlined a number of assurances, including new dams for south-east Queensland. The plans are inclusive of a total \$97 million package from a state government that insists that if nothing is done today then there will be no tomorrow to worry about.

I am talking largely about the Traveston Dam, which is scheduled to be built over the next few years. The Traveston region was selected because it would provide maximum yield for towns between Gympie and Brisbane, although more needs to be done. It is a simple task for residents of the selected dam sites like Traveston to move for the greater good and for the good of their children and grandchildren. It is highly irreparable to conserve water once we have lost it, and the Queensland government is spending the money and building these dams for this just cause.

Building the Traveston Dam would lose some 1.5 per cent of the population in Glass House. However, it was ranked first in a government report for the highest amount of water it would supply, which is obviously the more important issue at hand. Furthermore, it was ranked fourth on the basis of cost, failing only to the first—being the Cambroon region, which was rejected as it supplied inadequate yield and because it would involve flooding of the nearby town of Conondale. The second plan that was rejected included the raising of the Hinze Dam and the third plan that was rejected was Obi Obi Creek because of serious environmental concerns.

The state Minister for Natural Resources, Mines and Water stated, 'Traveston is the only site capable of providing such large yields to help secure this region's future water needs.' I am not being insensitive to the people who are in opposition to these dams or the residents, nor will I be insensitive to the needs of a growing 1.5 million population residing in Queensland. Those residents have to move. We have to build a dam at Traveston and look to the future water needs of this great state of Queensland.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR GREGORY: Living in a rural and remote area can sometimes be a challenge to young people. Receiving an education cannot be taken lightly when before you leave for school in the morning you can be up at 4.30, whereby you feed your livestock, check waters, do general household duties, have a shower and breakfast and leave for school at 6.30. Some schools are 100 kilometres away from where kids live, so they travel 200 kilometres every day just to attend a school. This will then have you home from school at 5 o'clock, remembering that this happens to kids from prep, five years old, to high school, although your closest town may not have a high school to attend. When the time comes for young people to attend high school they may have to leave home at the tender age of 12 or 13 and travel a round trip of thousands of kilometres.

Tertiary education is another stage of life if you are fortunate enough for your parents to afford to send you there, where you face the world by yourself. Transport is another major issue for rural and remote young people. If you cannot afford a car let alone the fuel to go in it, the cost of a plane, a bus, a train all adds up over a period of time. For young people from Longreach, where I am from, to attend training in Brisbane for one day is a three-day trip—one day to travel down, the day of your training and a day to leave—as there is only one flight per day. This cost will then add up as you need taxis and buses as well as your accommodation while you are away.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR HERVEY BAY: Australia has a dynamic political landscape. There is no doubt that the structure of Australian democracy nurtures our social structure and global identity, with policy decisions made for the betterment of the nation and the advancement of Australian communities. It must be recognised that the majority of policies and bills are submitted for consideration by the various arms of government in response to a particular issue which is of concern. Each day Australian citizens are bombarded with political information and advertising in response to figurehead action upon various contentious issues.

Whilst I acknowledge that a portion of these campaigns are informative, it must be recognised that some are simply designed to influence the opinions of voters. Of course, it is vitally important that voters have an understanding of Australia's political situation, yet I question the worth of persuasive, mud-slinging advertising. Do all political campaigns truly inform the voter? I think not, as every advertisement shown is laced with party bias.

My question is: does negative imaging have a positive influence on voters? I feel that a play on positive politics is a much more influential and worthy form of campaign. Rather than demeaning the policies of other parties through unconstructive advertising, it is my opinion that fighting policy with policy would be a better situation for all involved.

Every issue which affects Australia needs to be dealt with in a constructive manner. Whether the method through which this issue is addressed is adequate is a matter of public opinion. However, I feel that if a party does not agree with a motion introduced by the opposite side of the House then it needs to be countered with another policy which seeks to address the issue. Not only would this remove the amount of petty, mud-slinging advertising seen but it would also provide voters with an option.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR HINCHINBROOK: Mr Deputy Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to bring to the attention of honourable members of parliament, such as yourself, the dour future that faces the sugar industry in the event that the current policies affecting sustainable development remain unchanged. Queensland's second biggest export commodity is sugar, with its roots firmly entrenched in this great state. Sugar exports generate a substantial amount for the Queensland government, with meagre amounts being reinvested into the sugar industry to the detriment of the continuous development of the industry.

One way to revitalise the sugar industry is to consider an increase in spending that is specifically targeted towards sugar research in the areas of genetically modified crops and the development of sugar by-products through BSES. In considering genetically developed cane, this will allow for a high CCS average, for a higher disease resistant rate and for further development of sugar by-products which will allow for true value adding, not the current value adding that is recognised by the Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries.

Value adding ethanol could be a practical and accessible step towards utilising already available sugar and sustaining the sugar industry as a short and long-term remedy. If ethanol production was to become a reality, then the benefit would be both an economic and environmental saving which would contribute towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions, which we all know is a very high priority. A benefit to all would be the reduction in the cost of petroleum which we know is hurting all Australians at present and the prospect of significantly reducing greenhouse gas emissions for Queensland.

We consider ourselves the Smart State, pioneers in world-first technology. Let us be brave. Consider further development of primary production basins, increased economic liability and the future for the cane industry. I ask all members of parliament to put party politics behind and take action on an industry that has a dire future but an important one.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR INALA: I would like to talk about good things in my electorate. On the 16th of last month I attended the Carole Park Festival held in Southampton Park, which is the main park in Carole Park. A number of community organisations assisted on the day, including Inala Lions Club, Carole Park Neighbourhood Watch, Mission Australia, Community Renewal, Boystown, Carole Park residents and Inala Youth and Family Support Services. Elorac Place coordinated the festival and the festival was funded by the state government through Community Renewal and the Brisbane City Council.

The purpose of this festival was to encourage local residents, especially young children, to have a great day. Local young performers entertained the crowd with a rap from Indigenous Intruders and also from Democracy X and a hip hop dance from the Girls of the Carole Park Troopers. Also at the festival we announced that Craig Cranston has been appointed as the youth coordinator and mentor for young people. He will be employed over the next three years and will encourage young people to go on adventure camps and become leaders of their community.

The government has committed over \$300,000 to this project and it is a project that I fully support. Through Community Renewal the state government engages with Queenslanders to improve the quality of life in their communities. The programs that are delivered are sometimes small but they have a dramatic impact on the local area. The state government will spend over \$20 million over the next five years upgrading houses in my local area and our community centre. Streetscaping supports the community festivals such as the Carole Park Festival. New bikeways, employment of youth workers and promotion of healthy schools, literacy projects and sport mentor programs are just a few examples of how the funding is being spent.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR IPSWICH: Ipswich—most of you will hear that and snigger. It is viewed by the youth and many of the adults of the state as a poor man's Brisbane. Not even many of the young people who live there actually like it. Every chance they get they jump on the train to get away, although it is not such a bad place.

Sure, there is the odd trackie-daks-wearing bogan around the CBD, but that happens everywhere. There are some nice places, such as the new River Heart Parklands and the Riverlink Shopping Centre. It is only the utter lack of respect for the area that makes it so bad. For a young person it is probably safer to walk through the streets of Ipswich than through the streets of Brisbane and the cost of petrol make it cheaper and easier for people to live in Ipswich and train it to work.

There has been a huge population boom in Ipswich and the new shopping centre, international hotel and our very first high-rise building are bringing the town overlooked to be the capital out of the slums. Yet there is still the problem of the youths' respect. Ipswich's young people are afraid to say that that is where they live and are also afraid to be seen there. The city, as everybody fondly calls it, is where Ipswich youth hang on the weekend. Brisbane is cool; Ipswich is not. There is no problem with wanting to shop on Queen Street or see bands in the Valley as long as you give Ipswich a chance. The youths' disrespect is bringing down the city in constant competition with its capital counterpart. It is time that Queensland's young people stood up for the underdog, because like the slogan says, 'Ipswich: it's a great place.'

YOUTH MEMBER FOR KALLANGUR: An increase in educational funding and air-conditioning in all school classrooms is needed not only for my electorate but for the whole of Queensland. The budget for education stands at \$7.4 billion for this year. This may appear as a large amount of money. However, this money is given to 2,185 regional and metropolitan schools.

My secondary school received an average of \$1 million in 2006. After this money was spent on maintenance and replacement or improvement of basic facilities there was not much meant for resources such as new text books and updated technologies. Air-conditioning is needed for both mainstream and disabled students. Our summer temperatures are rising and this is having an effect on the concentration levels of students. Disabled students are at the most risk. They can suffer from epileptic seizures, rashes and an inability to control their own body temperature which results in dehydration and heat stroke. These students cannot attend school if temperatures exceed 32 degrees Celsius. Mainstream students can also suffer from both dehydration and heat stroke.

I cannot emphasise enough that there is a need for more educational funding and air-conditioning in all school classrooms across Queensland.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT: In December 2005 a facility of national acclaim and international uniqueness opened its doors to the youth of Yeppoon. verbYL is a youth space. It combines library facilities with outdoor areas and advanced gaming television and computer systems for the 500 members. verbYL provides a safe, free and pleasant place for young people aged between 13 and 25 to be and act as young people. With an average crowd of 60 people in an area that is equivalent to a small house, verbYL has proven to be a rather popular place. However, not all residents and businesspeople in Yeppoon are as supportive of verbYL, the \$150,000 youth space.

Whilst my intention of this speech is to applaud the phenomenal youth facility that is verbYL, it is also to bring to the attention of the House the inane and ridiculous complaints and assumptions from my community members regarding verbYL. It appears that my community is fervently supportive of hitting up the council for facilities and structures, yet once the facilities are up and running their support dwindles and eventually becomes nonexistent. Some members of verbYL are smokers. Some even swear and then there are the ones who wear whatever fashion they please. From a young person's perspective this is quite normal—if not the definition of what it means to be young. In the eyes of the community, those who typically fashion themselves in lesser outfits than the average Brisbane bum are completely unacceptable.

It has become part of the nature of Yeppoon residents to blame any and every crime, incident or issue on the comers and goers of verbYL. They have been perniciously placed into a category that implies that their actions are worse than any other group of young people. This is an abhorrent assumption. The same young people who refuse to associate or even walk past verbYL are the ones passed out in someone's backyard every weekend. The business owners who complain about underage verbYL members buying alcohol in the neighbouring pub are the people selling it to them. Unfortunately, verbYL has acquired a ridiculous and highly exaggerated reputation of being a drop-in or drug rehabilitation centre all because some members of my sad little community are too narrowminded and xenophobic to step inside the place. For this reason I am standing before you to say that verbYL is a fantastic facility.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR KURWONGBAH: I have lived in the state seat of Kurwongbah all my life and through school, sporting and community activities I think I can safely say what is uppermost in the minds of the youth of Kurwongbah. What are Kurwongbah generation Y and generation text dissing when in the tuckshop line, bus stops, train stations and Westfield malls? I will tell you what they are talking about. No, it is not boyfriends, fashion or the latest antics of Paris Hilton. What the youth of Kurwongbah want to know is what does the state government have against them? There are nearly 14,000 young people under the age of 18 in Kurwongbah, and about 1,500 17- to 18-year-olds. None of us have the right to vote or have our say—and lucky for the government we do not, for if we did we would say loud and clear, 'Stop picking on us.'

Since 1998 the Queensland state government has made an art form of passing laws and making policy to restrict the life of under 18s in every way in which we turn. The latest of course are the new driver's licensing laws. We seem to be regulated in what we can say, think, wear, who we can associate with, how to hold a party, whether we can have tattoos or piercings and even what we can eat and when we can eat it. This is so sad, given that these same adults have worked hard all of their lives to ensure that we are the most educated generation ever—not the 12 years they endured, but now 13 years of school—and the most responsible generation ever. We are not even allowed to sit at home and do nothing, no matter how much our parents support us. Learn or earn is what they demand. Yet they do not trust that we will ever learn to think for ourselves—except of course if you break the law and you are only 17. Then you are treated like an adult and put in an adult jail. All of us who do the right thing have become the most watched generation ever. The youth of Kurwongbah just wish the baby boomers in the cabinet would stop babysitting us.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR LOCKYER: With an increasing portion of the population at retirement age, it is important for young people to learn from the elderly. In my electorate of Lockyer, a program to bridge the generation gap has been developed. Gatton, a main town in the Lockyer Valley, has in conjunction with the local high school and an aged-care home implemented the Adopt a Grandparent Program. This is a new and innovative development that invites students from year 10 upwards to adopt a grandparent at Regis aged-care facility. Each student is paired with a Regis resident and visits them regularly to add some enjoyment to their day. In many cases the students and grandparents fill a gap in each other's lives as some do not have grandchildren or grandparents that they are able to visit. Learning from the past can aid us in the future. History gives us meaning and an understanding of our place within our societal time line.

I challenge and encourage the youth members of Queensland to take the time and initiative to implement change and to open communication channels within their communities. The positive work that has seen this program evolve should be acknowledged for its identification of a facet of society that is often overlooked. Lockyer is taking a positive step towards building and bettering the leaders of the future.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR LOGAN: It is my great honour to stand before you all and share a problem I witnessed in my local area of Beenleigh in the Logan district. The problem I am expressing to you all is one of the homeless teenagers I see around me. The teenagers have been forced out of their homes due to many reasons, one being abuse both sexual and mental. There are no shelters within 45 kilometres—maybe safe homes. If youth members are not aware, a safe house is located in every suburb and is a place teenagers can go to feel safe if they are feeling unsafe. They are indicated by a little yellow sign and/or sticker—and I stress it is little—on the front door of the house or on the front gate. Of course, the young person can scope out such a thing. I would like to put the question forward: can you find your local little yellow sticker? A child at 10 pm running scared from his abusive parents cannot. The closest homeless shelter is in the Brisbane city. Honestly, how does one expect a 15-year-old person to walk 45 kilometres to get to a safe place?

The results of the trauma these young people go through can result in drug addictions, alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, suicide, depression, mental problems and harm to others. What a horrible list of disgraceful problems! With a passion for helping my peers, I would like to see more help, more guidance, more compassion and less judgement. These young adults are our future. They are your future. They do not deserve to be homeless and forgotten and pushed under the rug.

An honourable youth member: What's the solution?

YOUTH MEMBER FOR LOGAN: The solution I would like to see is a large facility and/or shelter to cover the homeless youth of Logan.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR LYTTON: I come to youth members today with a problem. In Lytton there is a major lack of facilities available for youth in the area. This causes other problems that not only affect the youths but all in the area. For instance, the lack of facilities and entertainment options has caused a huge rise in juvenile crime. Another problem created by this lack of options is that the business behind entertaining the youth base of the area has moved away from Lytton and therefore created somewhat of a business void. I have lived in Lytton all my life and it saddens me to say this, but Lytton has become a hole. There is a simple yet effective way to solve all of these problems: make Lytton a place that youth can actually enjoy. This will not just benefit the youth in Lytton, but the whole area will benefit from pushing new business in and making Lytton a safer place by curbing juvenile crime. This can be done by putting just one single cinema in the area and/or a sporting/activities facility containing everything and anything from a pool to a basketball court which will be accessible not just to youths but to the whole community. There are many locations in Lytton that could easily be turned into a sporting facility, and most are already halfway there. There are also plenty of options for places for a cinema such as many local shopping centres. So youth members can see how simple yet beneficial it would be to make Lytton a more fun, more enjoyable place for the youth of the area.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MACKAY: I wish to speak on the state of the franchise in Australia in light of the recent tightening of electoral rules. It is a well-known fact that young people are underrepresented on the electoral roll as well as other groups such as those who are renting or those from non-English-speaking backgrounds. The fact that these people are less likely to be on the electoral roll than others is bad enough without the recent changes to electoral rules by the Commonwealth government. For those who are unaware of what these changes are, from now on, including the federal election to be held later this year, when an election is called by the Prime Minister people who are not on the roll and who wish to get on the roll for the first time will only have until 8 pm on that day after the election is called. Previous rules allowed for a seven-day window after such an election had been called for people to get on the roll or update their electoral details, which 400,000 people did at the last federal election.

Any move by a government that will make it harder for a person to exercise one of their most fundamental rights—that is, to exercise their vote in our democracy—should not be tolerated and the reversal of these changes should be demanded. These changes will weaken the integrity of the roll—not strengthen it—against fraud, as the Commonwealth government claims to be its motivation. When tens of thousands of people miss out on voting in an election, there is no way that any government could claim that the integrity of the electoral roll can be strengthened.

On that note, I would like to encourage all youth members that, once they turn 17, they are eligible to go on the electoral roll in preparation for when they do turn 18 so that they are on the roll before the election is called. If a person misses out on making one of the most important decisions of their life just because their birthday is on the wrong date, that would really destroy the integrity of this roll and be quite awful for everyone.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MANSFIELD: Increasing youth crime is an extensive issue in my electorate of Mansfield and I am sure in many other electorates across Queensland. Increasingly, the youth of Australia are getting involved in under-age and excessive drinking, under-age driving and taking drugs. When under the effects of alcohol and other drugs, young people risk becoming violent, exploited and exposed to potentially dangerous side effects from illicit substances. Under-age drinking and driving whilst affected by drugs or alcohol endangers young people as well as all other road users.

Rather than joining the nay-sayers of the community who shake their heads in disgust and declare that something must be done, I wish to propose some solutions. Currently, many initiatives to counter these crimes are reactive—that is, they attempt to fix the problem after the activity has occurred. Punishments such as curfews, large fines or custodial sentences—an approach often supported by the media—are unsurprisingly ineffective in preventing young people from reoffending. Why is this? Maybe because there is not always an obvious connection between the crime they commit and the punishment. To be proactive and preventive with youth crime, punishments need to be implemented that help young people to understand the impact that their crime has had on the victims. They need to hear the victim's impact statements and see evidence of the distress, grief and loss that their actions have caused.

A personal connection needs to be created so they better understand why they are being punished. Thoughtful and individual punishments need to be created that match the original crime. If you cause an injury to another person, you need to be involved in helping other people with similar injuries. We should place young people in hospitals, rehabilitation or welfare settings so they can see for themselves and be involved in repairing damage and making amends. Initially, these solutions may be costly to administer, but if they prevent young people from reoffending they will be cost effective. Other preventive solutions may need to be trialled, such as having activities in places of recreation for youth and education about the consequences of illicit drug use and drink driving. To ensure that today's youth become the responsible citizens of tomorrow, action is required.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MIRANI: An ideal that has lingered in the hearts of Australians for generations is under threat. The great Australian dream—the aspiration of owning your own home—is fast becoming an unrealised ambition in this state. Queensland is in a housing crisis. House prices and rising interest rates are pushing homes beyond the reach of a large portion of the population. People today are less likely to buy a house than people in that age group were 20 years ago. Some 400,000 Australians are in housing stress, meaning that they are spending 30 per cent or more of their income on housing. This crisis has even spread to my electorate of Mirani where people are forced to look for alternative living options. For some the situation is so dire that they are forced to resort to living in shipping containers and caravan parks due to the fact that they cannot afford homes or cannot find rental properties.

Queensland is facing the death of the great Australian dream due to the housing crisis. I encourage this government to make this worthy aspiration of owning your own home more affordable for all Queenslanders who are being denied their piece of the great Australian dream.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MOGGILL: I would like to bring to the attention of the House an area that Queensland lags behind in when compared to other states in Australia. In April of this year a relationship declaration register was established in Melbourne, allowing both mixed sex and same-sex couples to formally declare their relationships. These same systems have been established in Tasmania and Sydney. The city of Melbourne's relationships declaration register enables Melbourne couples, regardless of their composition, to formally declare their relationship. While the register will not confer legal rights in the way traditional marriage does, it may be used to demonstrate the existence of a de facto relationship in relation to the Property Law Act 1958, the Administration and Probate Act 1958 and other legislation involving domestic partnerships. This system would be a massive step forward for our state and an important one in concreting our position as a socially progressive and free state.

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. By denying homosexuals the right to declare their relationships and gain the benefits of doing so, we are denying human rights.

The establishment of a relationship declaration register is important to Queensland because, while it will open the door to finally recognising same-sex couples and their rights with regard to hospital access, medical decision making, superannuation, inheritance rights, property tax, landlord or tenancy rights, mental health treatment and victims of crime procedures, it will also pressure the federal government to amend the Marriage Act to include homosexual couples. Who are we to deny the rights of some people simply because of their sexual orientation? We no longer discriminate on the basis of gender, colour or race, so why sexual orientation? It is time that our society spoke up for itself and discontinued denying gay and lesbian people the ability to formally recognise their relationships.

Our state is at the forefront of Australia's population, economic, education, infrastructure and political growth. With the introduction of a Queensland relationships declaration register into this parliament, we as the representatives of our state can ensure that social growth can keep up with all other areas. Our state needs this register if it is to be at the forefront of global equality.

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA: This morning as I was trying to think of a topic for my contribution to the adjournment debate an idea came to me in the form of one of the executives. I made this speech in a debate a long time ago and it not only affects people in my community of Mount Coot-tha but people all over the country. I am going to present it in the form of a metaphor, almost in a child's terms. I am not going for or against it; I am just presenting an alternative view. Imagine you could make a fuel out of poor people. The only downside is that the poor people have to be converted into a combustible liquid in the process. Imagine that, although there are many alternatives to using poor people as fuel, those alternatives cost way more. In fact, the alternatives are so much more expensive that widespread use would impact on your standard of living by about 20 per cent.

Obviously, using humans for fuel would be wrong and you would not do it, but I am not done confusing your moral compass. Let us say those who are used for fuel are volunteers of a sort. For every 20 people who volunteer to become fuel, only one will be randomly selected. The other 19 get a host of benefits including pensions and paid education. Let us say that human fuel is so economical that one human converted to fuel pays for the benefits of the other 19 and the one poor person fuels an entire town's energy for a year. In this scenario you would be powering your car with liquified poor people, but your conscience would be cleared by the knowledge that they all volunteered. It is a free country. They took the chance of being one of the 19 lucky ones, but it did not work out. Some volunteered because they thought it was their best chance for upward mobility; some thought it was their patriotic duty. But it was their choice; nobody forced them.

Let us say the politicians argue in the long run that this policy of using poor people for fuel will save lives. The thinking is that we will eventually develop other fuel sources, but for now we need the strong economy to pay for health care and a strong national defence against terrorists and what not.

Mr DEPUTY SPEAKER: The honourable youth member's time has expired.

Honourable youth members: Oh!

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MOUNT COOT-THA: For bonus points, are we already doing this?

Time expired.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MOUNT ISA: Parties. Drinking. Driving. It is every parent's nightmare to imagine what their kid is doing. Parents have even more reason for concern when there is nothing for their teenager to do. This is a huge issue in Mount Isa. With only a skate park and the biggest shop being K mart, it is to be expected that trouble will arise. I believe there is a need for more activities that youth are interested in and are also able to enjoy. In other places all across Australia youth are enjoying music concerts, park festivals and other such youth-oriented events that allow youth to enjoy themselves in a safe and supervised environment. I believe that the development of such activities should be a priority for the electorate of Mount Isa to ensure that the youth are positively influenced within their community so that they may develop into outstanding young adults which will bring pride to all around them. As youth members can see, even though Mount Isa may still be a small community, there is still youth living there and they still need things to do.

The other problem is that there are no qualified people who are willing to give up their precious time to babysit a bunch of teenagers. This is the attitude of many adults living in Mount Isa. This attitude is one that needs to be changed, as teenagers do not need someone to babysit them; they just want an older person who knows when to say no but also knows when to have fun.

YOUTH MINISTER FOR EDUCATION, TRAINING AND THE ARTS: The wheels on the bus go round and round. However, in my electorate of Mount Ommaney—and as I have found in the surrounding electorates—these wheels all too frequently roll into bus stops behind schedule. How to avoid this? Catch the train. Though, then again, when train routes are constantly changed mid-journey and those changes are merely broadcast through a static, indecipherable announcement system, the potential for confusion and becoming lost is high. Whilst this may seem like a mere trial of patience, it presents a valid safety concern when one considers that public transport is such a utilised mode of transport for young people. Waiting at an isolated bus stop, being unsure of whether to change trains or not or missing connecting services due to delays is all too common and all too dangerous.

This is especially so for young people travelling alone or at night. It is completely unacceptable for the youth of Queensland to be faced with these potential situations when they are relying on our public transport system. After all, travel by public transport should be encouraged as an alternative to receiving lifts from parents not only to minimise the number of cars on the road but also to promote independence among young people. Therefore, these issues need to be rectified immediately to make it easier for Queenslanders to get from A to B. Thus, when this happens public transport will be a safer and more valid mode of travel and those wheels on the buses will be going around and around a lot more reliably.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MUDGEERABA: Throughout the electorate of Mudgeeraba there seems to be an issue of truancy among school students. Although this applies to a minority, youth need to be consciously assessing their future goals. In my electorate this seems to be the root cause of the issue—of youth knowing what they want from their education but not being certain enough of how they can get there or if it is going to be too hard to get where they want to get in life. In some cases, these youth just give up on the idea of an education due to the fact that they are confused with where they want their education to take them. In the end, they start skipping school.

The youth of today need to be made aware that they can get what they want to achieve from their education. They need to be reminded that they can indeed have a positive impact within the community. Most definitely, they need to be reminded that they can achieve their goals. All that is needed is a little motivation and guidance to get them to where they want to get and to ensure that they have a better understanding of how to do so. It is imperative that these students in my electorate are given a wake-up call as to how important and valuable education really is. Not everyone in this world is able to access the educational opportunities that we so fortunately have in Australia. Therefore, students should be reminded of how lucky they are to have education to begin with. Trying to help students understand how going to school is important to them would ideally be a good option. After all, it is the youth of today who will inevitably determine the success of this nation.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MULGRAVE: Oil and gas are depleting resources. Currently, we are totally reliant on them for food production—not only for domestic food consumption but also as an important export income. Oil and gas are used to run mechanical equipment and in the production of essential chemicals and fertilisers. It is critically and strategically important to break the nexus between food production and fossil fuels.

Biofuels such as ethanol, biodiesel and 2,5-dimethylfuran are a realistic and achievable solution now that we have reached peak oil. The conversion to biofuels requires an intelligent restructuring of our agricultural sector. Genuine incentives created for and by primary producers are needed to encourage the use of some of their land to produce biofuels. This can be done by encouraging the utilisation of idle land possibly through the revegetation of previously cleared riparian zones. Also critical is encouraging state funding into research and implementation of new technologies in this field with public ownership. New technologies are emerging. The journal *Nature* of 21 June 2007 exposed a new efficient fuel called 2,5-dimethylfuran, which is derived from fruit sugars, which could be readily produced in the Smart State.

Another problem is centralised food distribution. Currently, a banana from my electorate—the biggest banana producing area in the country—travels 3,000 kilometres to be sold at a local supermarket. Why? Because there are too few retail chains. It is frightening that our food is so dependent on a vanishing resource. Breaking our dependency on it for food production is an achievable goal. People in my electorate are major sugar producers and they will need to be at the forefront of its implementation. Here is an opportunity for Queensland to set an example to the Western world by breaking the nexus between oil, gas and food production.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA: What is sustainable development? To many youth, sustainable development sounds like some unimportant government jargon that has no relevance to the average teenager. That is not true. We live in a technologically ever-improving, developing and expanding society. Development is inevitable to mankind, but the destruction of the environment is not. What is the point of taking one step forward and two steps back? Sustainable development is being able to improve our standard of living without having to compromise and destroy the environment.

I have noticed in my electorate of Mundingburra and also in bordering electorates that the youth of today do not understand the importance of sustainable development. The youth of today do not understand that every little act makes a difference. A lack of care and respect results in a dying and suffering environment. I want to live in a world where I can see the stars at night wherever I am. I want to be able to take a walk through any city and see bins with rubbish in them, not rubbish littered on the ground. It may not seem like much—picking up the lolly wrapper and putting it in the bin, refusing to buy aerosol cans, fixing a leaky tap or turning off a light—but in the grand scheme of things it is those individual contributions that really count. Nothing will happen until the individual takes responsibility and makes the effort to make the world, the nation, the state—our dreams—a reality. The youth of today, as

the citizens of tomorrow, need to understand that the world is continuously growing and developing, becoming more and more complex and complicated. In a world like today, youth need to be mindful that the conservation and preservation of our environment is a priority second to none and that everything we do makes a difference. The choice is ours as to what difference we make.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR MURRUMBA: I think all of my fellow honourable youth members will agree with me that our society is lacking in many areas. There are fundamental needs that are not being met not only in my electorate of Murrumba but also across this great state in which I am proud to live. One such need is the need for security and safety, as previous speakers have indicated. People do not feel safe walking the streets of their towns. They live in fear, hiding behind locked doors, afraid of their next-door neighbours. People stop exercising due to the risk of using our bike paths. They do not allow their children to walk or cycle to school, bringing in the issue of lack of exercise and the increase of obesity in our society. People drive everywhere, increasing carbon emissions.

This need for a feeling of security affects everyday life and impacts globally on the environment, health and transport. I ask: why is it that crime is allowed to rule our society, causing people to fear walking out of their front doors? What has changed our communities over the past 50 years that neighbours do not trust each other, that people walking through our beautiful parks are raped and robbed and people standing at bus stations are bashed and stabbed? We are living in the 21st century and people are prisoners in their own homes, locked away behind closed doors and barred windows. Something needs to change in our society, whether that be the regular patrolling of walkways by police, surveillance and lighting of footpaths or the obligatory Neighbourhood Watch system—anything that will allow people to be able to enjoy all of the wonderful things that this great state has to offer without being afraid.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NICKLIN: I would like to take this time to publicly congratulate a group of people who are setting a positive and absolutely necessary example for our youth. The people to whom I refer are a small group of teachers from my electorate of Nicklin. These teachers, from completely diverse backgrounds, are working together not for a pay cheque but for the benefit our youth's education. They organise amazing extracurricular activities and events such as participation in Earth Dialogues Brisbane 2006, United Nations Security Council debates, Voices for the Voteless, seeing His Holiness the Dalai Lama on his Australian visit just last month and many other events, including links to Baghdad and the Islamic School of Brisbane. Not only this, these high school educators create classrooms of friendship and learning rather than just classrooms of teaching.

I believe it is this innovative and futuristic approach to teaching that truly motivates our youth and inspires them to reach for the top. One of these women, Ms CJ Jones, lived in Africa for over 10 years. However, she was forced to leave four years ago when she was shot by Robert Mugabe's child soldiers for refusing compulsory acquisition of her Zimbabwe farm. Rather than dwelling on the terrible aspects of life, she is out there sharing her stories and filling our youth with passion and knowledge. The efforts of these people demand respect, and it is teaching methods like this that will be required in the future so as to have our entire country informed, passionate and hungry for life as they step out of our classrooms and into the world.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NORTH WEST: Parliamentarians familiar with the Queensland education system will know that the religious instruction program—or RI—under the Queensland education act permits ministers of religion or their representatives to deliver a program of religious instruction to students whose parents have religious affirmation or simply agree with the RI program. Parents who do not want their children attending these classes may withdraw their children from the program. The schools must provide other instruction in a separate location. However, these other instructions are taking the students to an empty classroom or library where they procrastinate. The humanities society of Queensland has lobbied the government and suggested that an amendment be made to legislation so that students not participating in the RI programs should receive ethical humanities programs in a secular environment. RI programs provide moral and ethical teaching. However, they bring bias and prejudice and force teachings such as anti-abortion and antihomosexuality and a belief factor—the belief in the supernatural. A humanities program—a study of the humanities—would give children an ethical analysis of our society and basic human rights, not religious stories that cannot be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. Humanities will create law-abiding, just citizens, which is what Australia needs. If the state government ever complains about the rate of crime or the injustice of one Australian to another Australian, it has only itself to blame, knowing that some children did not have the ethical upbringing that they deserved.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR NUDGE: Who are we? The general community would have us believe that we are ungrateful, lazy rebels who have no value at all in society. But don't we know better? How many times in the media do we see youth dragged down and criticised as being rebellious and dangerous? Too many times, that is for sure. The public image of the youth of today is based around shoplifting and violence being the rule rather than the exception. Even though many youth like those gathered here are intelligent and respectable members of society, we are still placed under the same banner as being untrustworthy and unreliable. It is very sad that that is the case, but if anything is to be

done about it I believe we have to change that image ourselves. We need to get out there and serve our communities, drawing the media attention away from the violent minority. We need to show Queensland that there is hope for the future in the next generation and that we are not just a bunch of uneducated criminals. This is our image and I believe that we can change it, no matter what electorate we are from.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR PUMICESTONE: I am going to talk about water, because water is a major problem in south-east Queensland. But I am not going to talk about any kind of water. On Bribie Island—part of my seat—they want to put in a desalination plant. Personally, this is bull stuff. It should not be there. I am going to give the reasons. A desalination plant takes water from out of the ocean. It takes the salt out of that to make us clean, drinkable water. Then it has leftover salt known as brine. It wants to wash this out into Moreton Bay, which is attached to Pumicestone Passage, which is in my seat. It washes that brine up to Moreton Bay, back down Pumicestone Passage, destroying two major marine parks.

This issue is all about the environment. Pumicestone Passage is the fourth largest Ramsar site in the world. If youth members do not know what a Ramsar site, it is bird migration. When the birds fly south, they stay at Pumicestone Passage. It is one of the largest areas where birds fly to in the world. If Pumicestone Passage turns to all salt, then the birds will leave. They will have nowhere to go—they might have somewhere else to go but we do not want them to leave.

There is a proposition to move the desalination plant up the coast and then pump all the brine out to sea where it can be silted down, not in the Pumicestone Passage. Basically, that way we do not hurt anyone: we do not destroy any marine parks and we do not ruin the Ramsar site, although it might cost absolutely millions to pump it back down to us.

YOUTH MEMBER FOR REDCLIFFE: I believe Brisbane transport is a problem contributing to many issues in Queensland. It is constantly trying to be improved by government policy. It relates to issues such as environmental damage, drink-driving problems and the general safety of Queensland citizens. That is a right that we should definitely strive to uphold.

At times of congested peak hour traffic in Brisbane, it has become clear that a major shortage of buses and trains forces Brisbanites to resort to personal transport modes. This lack of public transport directly contributes to the state's carbon emissions, which are among the highest levels per capita in the world.

Furthermore, the current running times of Brisbane's transport system does not generally accommodate the more sociable members of Brisbane, in particular our youth. At present, there are very few services, in particular train services, that run after midnight. This jeopardises the safety of our youth. They attempt to illegally drive home from parties under the influence as they are unable to afford a hefty taxi fare or depend on the transport system, which rarely exists after midnight. On top of that, increasing media reports of sexual and violent assaults only heightens the fear that Brisbanites feel towards utilising our transport system.

If our parliament was to set up security measures, for example installing video monitoring at bus stops in the Brisbane region, there is a high chance that transport usage would increase. The youth member for Caloundra has already expressed similar concerns in relation to her electorate. It has become apparent to me that the currently unsuccessful transport system is an issue that affects most of Queensland's citizens.

I propose that we aim to improve the system through increasing the availability of transport, the times at which it occurs and developing a system of safety all for the benefit of Queensland.

Motion agreed to.

The House adjourned at 5.03 pm