



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2016–2017

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 9

WEDNESDAY, 22 MARCH 2017

1 The Assembly met at 10 a.m., pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Ms Burch) took the Chair and asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

2 VACANT LAND—TAXATION

Ms Le Couteur, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) in Victoria, land tax, unlike in the ACT, is an opt out system that covers all properties with exemptions for properties that are owner occupied, used for primary production or charitable purposes;
 - (b) the ACT like other Australian jurisdictions is experiencing an affordable housing crisis and:
 - (i) section 4 of the 2016 Labor-Greens Parliamentary Agreement seeks to address this issue in the ACT, including through development of a new Affordable Housing Strategy;
 - (ii) people in lowest income households are being pushed out of the rental market, and into strained social housing services, poverty and homelessness; and
 - (iii) that solving affordable housing issues requires a multi-layered approach with a large range of responses and initiatives; and
 - (c) that the Victorian Government has announced that it will introduce an additional vacancy tax on properties vacant for six months or more in selected suburbs;



- (2) further notes:
- (a) it is difficult to ascertain accurate figures on the current number of vacant properties in the ACT but there is no doubt there are some;
 - (b) the ACT Government charges land tax on rented properties but not on vacant properties, which is unfair for renters and for property investors who rent out their properties and pay tax;
 - (c) there are large numbers of properties left vacant interstate—estimated to be up to 80 000 in Victoria and 90 000 in NSW; and
 - (d) if land tax was applied as it is in Victoria or vacancy tax measures were introduced in the ACT, property owners would have an additional incentive to rent out their properties, therefore increasing the supply of rental dwellings; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) review the current taxation treatment on vacant properties, with a view to extending current land tax requirements to cover all properties unless they are owner occupied, agricultural or charity owned as in Victoria;
 - (b) research and provide details on the number of properties in the ACT that are left vacant for a period of six months or more and consider a vacancy tax such as has been proposed in Victoria; and
 - (c) report back on these issues to the Assembly by the last sitting day in September 2017.

Ms Berry (Minister for Housing and Suburban Development) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after “That this Assembly”, substitute:

- “(1) notes:
- (a) the Victorian Government charges land tax differently to the ACT, where it covers all properties, with exemptions for properties that are owner occupied, used for primary production or charitable purposes;
 - (b) that the Victorian Government has announced changes that include a vacancy tax on properties that are vacant for six months or more in selected suburbs;
 - (c) that the Sydney and Melbourne property markets have seen aggressive investment by property speculators, which makes these markets different to the ACT;
 - (d) the complexity of accurately measuring the number of vacant properties in a jurisdiction;
 - (e) that improving housing affordability is a key priority identified in both the Parliamentary Agreement for the 9th Legislative Assembly and recent election commitments;
 - (f) that improving housing affordability for our community requires a multi-layered approach with a large range of responses and initiatives; and

- (g) the importance of ensuring the Canberra community and, specifically, key stakeholders and subject matter experts are appropriately engaged around responding to complex policy issues such as increasing access to affordable housing options, a process initiated by the Minister for Housing in 2016;
- (2) notes:
- (a) the work to date on addressing housing affordability through the Affordable Housing Action Plan over a number of years, including mandating a 20% target for affordable land release; providing development opportunities for new public and community housing; and releasing 17 000 dwelling sites through the accelerated land release program since 2007; and
 - (b) that the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development will hold a housing and homelessness summit later this year that will bring together a broad range of industry, community, consumer and expert stakeholders to consider actions for inclusion in a housing strategy; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) undertake research to measure the number of long-term vacant properties in the ACT, considering the complexities in obtaining accurate data;
 - (b) consider the effectiveness of a vacancy tax, land tax arrangements or similar measures in the context of the research and ongoing consultation with key stakeholders and subject matter experts as part of the work contributing to the development of the Housing Strategy, and in the context of future budget decisions; and
 - (c) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting day in September 2017.”.

Mr Coe (Leader of the Opposition) moved the following amendment to Ms Berry’s proposed amendment: Insert new paragraph (3)(c):

- “(c) assess whether the current ACT land tax regime provides a disincentive to renting vacant properties; and”.

Debate continued.

Amendment to amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) the Victorian Government charges land tax differently to the ACT, where it covers all properties, with exemptions for properties that are owner occupied, used for primary production or charitable purposes;

- (b) that the Victorian Government has announced changes that include a vacancy tax on properties that are vacant for six months or more in selected suburbs;
 - (c) that the Sydney and Melbourne property markets have seen aggressive investment by property speculators, which makes these markets different to the ACT;
 - (d) the complexity of accurately measuring the number of vacant properties in a jurisdiction;
 - (e) that improving housing affordability is a key priority identified in both the Parliamentary Agreement for the 9th Legislative Assembly and recent election commitments;
 - (f) that improving housing affordability for our community requires a multi-layered approach with a large range of responses and initiatives;
 - (g) the importance of ensuring the Canberra community and, specifically, key stakeholders and subject matter experts are appropriately engaged around responding to complex policy issues such as increasing access to affordable housing options, a process initiated by the Minister for Housing in 2016;
 - (h) the work to date on addressing housing affordability through the Affordable Housing Action Plan over a number of years, including mandating a 20% target for affordable land release; providing development opportunities for new public and community housing; and releasing 17 000 dwelling sites through the accelerated land release program since 2007; and
 - (i) that the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development will hold a housing and homelessness summit later this year that will bring together a broad range of industry, community, consumer and expert stakeholders to consider actions for inclusion in a housing strategy; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) undertake research to measure the number of long-term vacant properties in the ACT, considering the complexities in obtaining accurate data;
 - (b) consider the effectiveness of a vacancy tax, land tax arrangements or similar measures in the context of the research and ongoing consultation with key stakeholders and subject matter experts as part of the work contributing to the development of the Housing Strategy, and in the context of future budget decisions;
 - (c) assess whether the current ACT land tax regime provides a disincentive to renting vacant properties; and
 - (d) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting day in September 2017.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

3 SELF HELP ORGANISATIONS UNITED TOGETHER

Ms Lee, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) that SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) is an ACT-based umbrella organisation that has been providing support to over 40 self-help and peer support groups for people with disabilities, health and chronic conditions for over 35 years in the ACT;
 - (b) SHOUT is funded by the ACT Government until August 2017, but their future beyond that is unclear;
 - (c) many of SHOUT’s members are small community organisations entirely managed by volunteers and without SHOUT’s backend support, they would have no administrative help, no place to conduct meetings and no support and this would have negative impacts on thousands of Canberrans who are most in need of assistance; and
 - (d) that SHOUT has had no success to date in securing ongoing funding from the ACT Government, notwithstanding their successful and longstanding track record of delivery and have announced they have no choice but to close their doors in August 2017; and
- (2) calls on the:
 - (a) Government to commit financial assistance to SHOUT until 30 June 2019, subject to further negotiations at the completion of that period;
 - (b) Government to recognise that abandoning SHOUT will have massive flow on effects to dozens of other groups and they too will face a similar future to SHOUT, through no fault of their own; and
 - (c) Ministers for health and disability to work with community organisations like SHOUT to enable them to continue their work with ACT self-help groups.

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Disability, Children and Youth), by leave, moved the following amendments together:

- (1) In paragraph (1), omit “notes”, substitute “notes that”.
- (2) Omit all text after (1)(b), substitute:
 - “(b) under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the ACT has been transitioning disability services funding across to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA);
 - (c) specific funding has been provided to help organisations transition to the new funding environment, including SHOUT, which received a \$20 000 grant in 2014 to help it get ready for the NDIS;
 - (d) ahead of the rollout of the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grants, the ACT Government secured transitional funding of \$124 790 for SHOUT from the Commonwealth for 2016-17;

- (e) the ACT Government recently negotiated a further two-month extension to the transitional funding, until August 2017, which was intended to provide certainty and stability following a delay in the ILC funding rounds; and
 - (f) many of SHOUT’s members are small community organisations entirely managed by volunteers, who rely on backend and administrative support from SHOUT to assist thousands of Canberrans; and
- (2) calls on the:
- (a) NDIA to provide certainty for community organisations and individuals being supported by ILC-type services, by promptly finalising the outcomes of the recently closed ILC grants rounds;
 - (b) ACT Government to reaffirm its appreciation of the important support that small and volunteer-based organisations have received from SHOUT over many years; and
 - (c) Ministers for Health and Disability to continue working with SHOUT and other community organisations to ensure that its members are supported and that the transition to any new funding arrangement is as smooth as possible.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendments be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 13		NOES, 10	
Mr Barr	Ms Orr	Mr Coe	Ms Lee
Ms Burch	Mr Pettersson	Mr Doszpot	Mr Parton
Ms Cheyne	Mr Ramsay	Mrs Dunne	Mr Wall
Ms Cody	Mr Rattenbury	Mr Hanson	
Ms Fitzharris	Mr Steel	Mrs Jones	
Mr Gentleman	Ms Stephen-Smith	Mrs Kikkert	
Ms Le Couteur		Ms Lawder	

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) SHOUT (Self Help Organisations United Together) is an ACT-based umbrella organisation that has been providing support to over 40 self-help and peer support groups for people with disabilities, health and chronic conditions for over 35 years in the ACT;
 - (b) under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), the ACT has been transitioning disability services funding across to the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA);

- (c) specific funding has been provided to help organisations transition to the new funding environment, including SHOUT, which received a \$20 000 grant in 2014 to help it get ready for the NDIS;
 - (d) ahead of the rollout of the Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC) grants, the ACT Government secured transitional funding of \$124 790 for SHOUT from the Commonwealth for 2016-17;
 - (e) the ACT Government recently negotiated a further two-month extension to the transitional funding, until August 2017, which was intended to provide certainty and stability following a delay in the ILC funding rounds; and
 - (f) many of SHOUT's members are small community organisations entirely managed by volunteers, who rely on backend and administrative support from SHOUT to assist thousands of Canberrans; and
- (2) calls on the:
- (a) NDIA to provide certainty for community organisations and individuals being supported by ILC-type services, by promptly finalising the outcomes of the recently closed ILC grants rounds;
 - (b) ACT Government to reaffirm its appreciation of the important support that small and volunteer-based organisations have received from SHOUT over many years; and
 - (c) Ministers for Health and Disability to continue working with SHOUT and other community organisations to ensure that its members are supported and that the transition to any new funding arrangement is as smooth as possible." —

be agreed to—put and passed.

4 PENALTY RATES

Mr Pettersson, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that the recent decision of the Fair Work Commission to cut penalty rates for employees working on the weekends will negatively impact workers in this sector;
- (2) also notes that:
 - (a) the retail and hospitality sectors employ 2.1 million people across Australia, and employs 28 200 in the ACT;
 - (b) this decision will see a reduction in pay of people in this sector of up to \$6000 a year;
 - (c) this will disproportionately affect women, who make up around 55 percent of employees in the hospitality and retail sectors nationally;
 - (d) this will disproportionately affect young people (15-29) who make up around 49 percent of employees in the hospitality and retail sectors nationally;

- (e) will unfairly target those Australian workers that are already among the lowest earners in the country and rely on penalty rates; and
 - (f) this decision represents the thin end of the wedge for other groups of workers who receive penalty rates, including nurses, paramedics and fire fighters;
- (3) further notes that the ACT Government:
- (a) passed legislation last year to confirm Easter Sunday as a public holiday when falling on a weekend, so as to ensure workers receive the appropriate penalty rates; and
 - (b) made a submission to the Fair Work Commission's Four Yearly Review of Modern Awards—Penalty Rates, urging them to leave penalty rates at their current levels; and
- (4) calls on the Federal Government to intervene on behalf of the workers affected by the Fair Work Commission decision to ensure these workers do not suffer financial harm.

Debate ensued.

Debate interrupted in accordance with standing order 74 and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a later hour this day.

5 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

6 HEALTH DATA ISSUES—PROPOSED ORDER TO TABLE DOCUMENTS

Mrs Dunne moved—That, in accordance with standing order 213A(1), the Minister for Health table, by close of business today:

- (1) the letter from the Director-General of the Health Directorate to the Auditor-General about health data issues of 8 September 2016; and
- (2) any briefing to the former Minister for Health or the Minister for Health about this letter and the associated data issues.

Debate ensued.

Debate adjourned (Mr Barr—Chief Minister) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for a later hour this day.

7 PENALTY RATES

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Pettersson (see [entry 4](#))—

Debate resumed.

Question—put and passed.

8 CHILDHOOD VACCINATIONS

Mrs Kikkert, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:

- (a) immunisation is the most significant public health intervention in the last 200 years, providing a safe and efficient way to prevent the spread of many diseases that cause hospitalisation, serious ongoing health concerns and death;
 - (b) since the introduction of vaccination for children in Australia in 1932, deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases have fallen by 99 percent;
 - (c) immunisation is critical for the health not only of individual children but of the wider community through the mechanism of “herd immunity”;
 - (d) recent surges in cases of infectious diseases such as measles and whooping cough, both in Australia and overseas, have been linked to insufficient rates of vaccination; and
 - (e) the majority of Australian parents expect childcare centres to be safe places for their children and for the community at large; and
- (2) calls on the:
- (a) ACT Government to embrace uniform “No Jab, No Play” principles, preventing unvaccinated children (without medical exemptions) from enrolling in the Territory’s childcare centres; and
 - (b) Minister for Health to clearly express the ACT Government’s unqualified support for childhood vaccination as an essential public health measure and publicly endorse uniform “No Jab, No Play” principles.

Ms Fitzharris (Minister for Health) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after (1), substitute:

- “(1) notes that:
- (a) there has been long-standing bi-partisan support for Australia’s immunisation program which provides a safe and efficient way to prevent the spread of many diseases that cause hospitalisation, serious ongoing health conditions and sometimes death;
 - (b) since the introduction of vaccination for children in Australia in 1932, deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases have fallen by 99 percent, despite a threefold increase in the Australian population over that period;
 - (c) the ACT’s current childhood immunisation coverage rates for 1, 2 and 5 year olds are 95, 92 and 94 percent respectively, which is higher than the national average;
 - (d) the former Federal Minister for Health, Sussan Ley, wrote to the ACT Minister for Health on 22 December 2016 commending the ACT’s efforts to improve immunisation, noting that the ACT had achieved all four vaccine performance benchmarks, and releasing a reward payment of \$120 718; and
 - (e) there is significant effort by the ACT Government’s Health Protection Service to educate parents about the benefits of immunisation; and
- (2) calls on the Government to:

- (a) support in-principle the implementation of a ‘No Jab No Play’ policy to prevent unvaccinated children (without medical exemptions) from enrolling in the Territory’s childcare centres;
- (b) continue to strongly argue for a nationally-consistent approach to immunisation in concert with all jurisdictions and that this be underpinned by a properly funded and universally accessible national immunisation program; and
- (c) ensure that any changes to national and state or territory policy on immunisation policy and practice address the needs of a small minority of children who for reasons of disadvantage are not immunised.”.

Debate continued.

Mr Rattenbury moved the following amendment to Ms Fitzharris’ proposed amendment: Omit paragraph (2), substitute:

“(2) calls on the Government to:

- (a) work collaboratively with the Commonwealth Government to develop and implement a proactive public education and communication strategy, especially in areas influenced by anti-vaccination groups and where coverage is low, to promote the benefits and encourage uptake of immunisations;
- (b) continue to argue for a nationally-consistent approach to immunisation in concert with all jurisdictions and that this must be underpinned by a properly funded and universally accessible national immunisation program;
- (c) ensure that any changes to national and state or territory policy and practice on immunisation does not result in entrenched disadvantage for children or families; and
- (d) reaffirm its commitment to the right to education for every child as provided for in the *ACT Human Rights Act 2004*.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That Mr Rattenbury’s amendment to Ms Fitzharris’ proposed amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 2	NOES, 21	
Ms Le Couteur	Mr Barr	Mrs Kikkert
Mr Rattenbury	Ms Berry	Ms Lawder
	Ms Burch	Ms Lee
	Ms Cheyne	Mr Milligan
	Ms Cody	Ms Orr
	Mr Coe	Mr Parton
	Mr Doszpot	Mr Pettersson
	Mrs Dunne	Mr Steel
	Ms Fitzharris	Ms Stephen-Smith
	Mr Gentleman	Mr Wall
	Mr Hanson	

And so it was negatived.

Question—That Ms Fitzharris' amendment be agreed to—put and passed.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) there has been long-standing bi-partisan support for Australia's immunisation program which provides a safe and efficient way to prevent the spread of many diseases that cause hospitalisation, serious ongoing health conditions and sometimes death;
 - (b) since the introduction of vaccination for children in Australia in 1932, deaths from vaccine-preventable diseases have fallen by 99 percent, despite a threefold increase in the Australian population over that period;
 - (c) the ACT's current childhood immunisation coverage rates for 1, 2 and 5 year olds are 95, 92 and 94 percent respectively, which is higher than the national average;
 - (d) the former Federal Minister for Health, Sussan Ley, wrote to the ACT Minister for Health on 22 December 2016 commending the ACT's efforts to improve immunisation, noting that the ACT had achieved all four vaccine performance benchmarks, and releasing a reward payment of \$120 718; and
 - (e) there is significant effort by the ACT Government's Health Protection Service to educate parents about the benefits of immunisation; and
- (2) calls on the Government to:
 - (a) support in-principle the implementation of a 'No Jab No Play' policy to prevent unvaccinated children (without medical exemptions) from enrolling in the Territory's childcare centres;
 - (b) continue to strongly argue for a nationally-consistent approach to immunisation in concert with all jurisdictions and that this be underpinned by a properly funded and universally accessible national immunisation program; and
 - (c) ensure that any changes to national and state or territory policy on immunisation policy and practice address the needs of a small minority of children who for reasons of disadvantage are not immunised.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

9 A.C.T. HERITAGE COUNCIL ASSESSMENTS

Ms Lawder, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) the ACT Heritage Council make assessments on heritage listings;

- (b) the Heritage Council has a backlog of assessments;
 - (c) at the end of the 2014-15 year 143 nominations were waiting to be assessed;
 - (d) at the end of the 2015-16 year 136 nominations were waiting to be assessed—a decrease of only seven; and
 - (e) as of the end of February, there were still 131 nominations—a decrease of only five; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) prioritise clearing the backlog of the nomination register;
 - (b) prioritise the nominations that have been on the register for extended periods of time;
 - (c) make contact with the nominators for the assessments that have been waiting longer than 12 months and update them with how the application is progressing; and
 - (d) report back to the Assembly by the end of August with an update.

Mr Gentleman (Minister for the Environment and Heritage) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after “That this Assembly, substitute:

- “(1) notes that:
- (a) the ACT, as with all jurisdictions, has a list of places and objects nominated to the Heritage Register that require further assessment against heritage significance criteria in order for the independent ACT Heritage Council to make decisions on registration;
 - (b) the Heritage Council is passionate about Canberra’s heritage and has a strategy for addressing the list of places and objects nominated to the Heritage Register requiring assessment;
 - (c) the Heritage Council has substantially reduced the nominations list. Since reaching a peak of 320 in 2008, the list of nominations is currently 131;
 - (d) any member of the community can nominate a place or object to the Heritage Register, so the long list of nominations reflects the community interest in heritage matters; and
 - (e) in some cases, nominations may be straightforward and can be easily assessed. In others, such as with precincts, a single nomination may take much longer to assess, due to the complexities involved; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) continue providing administrative support to the independent Heritage Council to assist in the timely decision making of nominations;
 - (b) request that the Heritage Council, where appropriate, prioritise nominations that have been waiting for assessment for an extended period of time;

- (c) make contact with the nominators for the assessments that have been on the list longer than 12 months and update them on how the application is progressing; and
- (d) report back to the Assembly by the end of August with an update.”

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) the ACT, as with all jurisdictions, has a list of places and objects nominated to the Heritage Register that require further assessment against heritage significance criteria in order for the independent ACT Heritage Council to make decisions on registration;
 - (b) the Heritage Council is passionate about Canberra’s heritage and has a strategy for addressing the list of places and objects nominated to the Heritage Register requiring assessment;
 - (c) the Heritage Council has substantially reduced the nominations list. Since reaching a peak of 320 in 2008, the list of nominations is currently 131;
 - (d) any member of the community can nominate a place or object to the Heritage Register, so the long list of nominations reflects the community interest in heritage matters; and
 - (e) in some cases, nominations may be straightforward and can be easily assessed. In others, such as with precincts, a single nomination may take much longer to assess, due to the complexities involved; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to:
 - (a) continue providing administrative support to the independent Heritage Council to assist in the timely decision making of nominations;
 - (b) request that the Heritage Council, where appropriate, prioritise nominations that have been waiting for assessment for an extended period of time;
 - (c) make contact with the nominators for the assessments that have been on the list longer than 12 months and update them on how the application is progressing; and
 - (d) report back to the Assembly by the end of August with an update.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

10 SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL EQUALITY OF WOMEN

Ms Cheyne, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) recognises the significant and critical contribution of women and girls to the cultural, social, political and economic fabric of the ACT;

- (2) acknowledges the need for continued commitment to further building the social, economic and political equality of women, noting that:
 - (a) the full-time average weekly earnings for a woman in the ACT are 11.5 percent less than that of a man in the ACT, and 16 percent less nationally;
 - (b) on average, Australian women retire with half of the superannuation of Australian men;
 - (c) 90 percent of adult victims of sexual assault are women;
 - (d) women are underrepresented in leadership positions across the Australian private, government and non-government sectors; and
 - (e) women are still more vulnerable than men in the areas of health, economic security, housing and safety outcomes; and
- (3) notes the sustained focus by the ACT Government to improve the status of women in the ACT over successive years, and it being a national leader by:
 - (a) actively participating in, and promoting, celebrations for International Women's Day, the United Nations Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the 16 Days of Activism Campaign;
 - (b) advocating against retrograde changes to Australian laws and policies that will unfairly impact women, such as cuts to penalty rates;
 - (c) developing and delivering the ACT Women's Plan, and the first Action Plan 2017-2019, to improve outcomes for women and girls across the whole community;
 - (d) establishing and maintaining the Office for Women as a central policy, strategic and coordination point for gender issues across the ACT Government;
 - (e) providing additional funding for women's sport to encourage stronger participation, better infrastructure and setting new benchmarks for female representation on sporting group boards;
 - (f) establishing the \$21.42 million Safer Families Program which will enable the biggest ever funding injection into programs and services that enable a holistic response to tackling domestic and family violence; and
 - (g) contributing to the achievement, along with the other parties, of being the first majority-female parliament in Australia's history.

Ms Cheyne, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

- (1) In paragraph (3)(f), omit "and".
- (2) Add:
 - "(h) actively working to recruit, support and retain women in our Emergency Services, through targeted recruitment strategies and dedicated support programs;

- (i) recognising that the ACT Emergency Services Agency has a policy to provide, as is practicable, appropriate toilet facilities at fire staging areas for female firefighters, and that this policy will be monitored to ensure available resources are being used to their fullest extent;
- (j) working to establish prison industry employment opportunities for women and continuing to enhance training for women at the Alexander Maconochie Centre, along with essential rehabilitation and support courses; and
- (k) understanding the need for women to have privacy and security in breastfeeding rooms in public sector buildings, noting that the ACT has led the way in enabling breastfeeding friendly workplaces, and committing to actively assess a wider rollout of door locks, while taking into consideration the safety and security aspects of lockable doors in such spaces.”.

Debate ensued.

Ms Berry (Minister for Women) addressing the Assembly—

Adjournment negatived: It being 6 pm—The question was proposed—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Mr Gentleman (Manager of Government Business) requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate—

Question—put and negatived.

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) recognises the significant and critical contribution of women and girls to the cultural, social, political and economic fabric of the ACT;
- (2) acknowledges the need for continued commitment to further building the social, economic and political equality of women, noting that:
 - (a) the full-time average weekly earnings for a woman in the ACT are 11.5 percent less than that of a man in the ACT, and 16 percent less nationally;
 - (b) on average, Australian women retire with half of the superannuation of Australian men;
 - (c) 90 percent of adult victims of sexual assault are women;
 - (d) women are underrepresented in leadership positions across the Australian private, government and non-government sectors; and

- (e) women are still more vulnerable than men in the areas of health, economic security, housing and safety outcomes; and
- (3) notes the sustained focus by the ACT Government to improve the status of women in the ACT over successive years, and it being a national leader by:
- (a) actively participating in, and promoting, celebrations for International Women’s Day, the United Nations Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the 16 Days of Activism Campaign;
 - (b) advocating against retrograde changes to Australian laws and policies that will unfairly impact women, such as cuts to penalty rates;
 - (c) developing and delivering the ACT Women’s Plan, and the first Action Plan 2017-2019, to improve outcomes for women and girls across the whole community;
 - (d) establishing and maintaining the Office for Women as a central policy, strategic and coordination point for gender issues across the ACT Government;
 - (e) providing additional funding for women’s sport to encourage stronger participation, better infrastructure and setting new benchmarks for female representation on sporting group boards;
 - (f) establishing the \$21.42 million Safer Families Program which will enable the biggest ever funding injection into programs and services that enable a holistic response to tackling domestic and family violence;
 - (g) contributing to the achievement, along with the other parties, of being the first majority-female parliament in Australia’s history;
 - (h) actively working to recruit, support and retain women in our Emergency Services, through targeted recruitment strategies and dedicated support programs;
 - (i) recognising that the ACT Emergency Services Agency has a policy to provide, as is practicable, appropriate toilet facilities at fire staging areas for female firefighters, and that this policy will be monitored to ensure available resources are being used to their fullest extent;
 - (j) working to establish prison industry employment opportunities for women and continuing to enhance training for women at the Alexander Maconochie Centre, along with essential rehabilitation and support courses; and
 - (k) understanding the need for women to have privacy and security in breastfeeding rooms in public sector buildings, noting that the ACT has led the way in enabling breastfeeding friendly workplaces, and committing to actively assess a wider rollout of door locks, while taking into consideration the safety and security aspects of lockable doors in such spaces.” —

be agreed to—put and passed.

11 ADJOURNMENT

Mr Gentleman (Manager of Government Business) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.31 pm, adjourned until tomorrow at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting.

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly