Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

Non-sitting and sitting weeks—24 September to 26 October 2018
Issue 11/2018

Government Business

Includes business items presented to the Assembly by the Executive including bills, motions, and papers

Bills introduced

Emergencies Amendment Bill 2018 (presented 25 October)

Summary: This bill will amend the Emergencies Act 2004 to enhance clarity and operation of the Act, particularly in relation to the functions of the Security and Emergency Management Senior Officials Group, emergency sub-plans and the application of the Act during an emergency situation.

Public Sector Workers Compensation Fund Bill 2018 (presented 25 October)

Summary: This bill will establish infrastructure and supporting arrangements for appropriations and moneys held for the management of the ACT’s Public Sector workers’ compensation liabilities. This bill will also establish a Public Sector Workers Compensation fund and appoint a commissioner to manage and administer the fund.

Royal Commission Criminal Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 (presented 25 October)

Summary: This bill will amend the Crimes Act 1900, the Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005, the Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1991, and the Evidence (Miscellaneous Provisions) Regulation 2009 to enhance the protection of children of child sexual abuse and improve the justice system’s response to child sexual abuse.

Bills debated

Crimes Legislation Amendment Bill 2018

Summary: This bill will amend a number of criminal laws to improve the operation and efficiency of the criminal justice system. These amendments include, clarification that warrants under the Crimes (Child Sex Offenders) Act 2005 are issued by a magistrate, rather than the Magistrates Court, extending the ability to issue warrants to an associate judge of the Supreme Court and increasing the monetary value of a penalty unit for offences.

Proceedings: Debate on this bill resumed on 23 October with tri-partisan support. The bill was agreed to in principle and passed by the Assembly.
Government Procurement (Secure Local Jobs) Amendment Bill 2018

Summary: This bill will amend the Government Procurement Act 2001 to facilitate the adoption of the Secure Local Jobs Code. The bill establishes new tender evaluation and contract oversight requirements for territory entities as well as internal governance and supporting infrastructure, including a statutory role of registrar to oversee the new arrangements.

Proceedings: Debate on this bill resumed on 25 October with the ACT Greens indicating support for the bill and the Opposition indicating they would oppose the bill. Following a vote of the Assembly the bill was agreed to in principle. The Opposition moved amendments to the bill which would delay the commencement of the Act by six months. The Opposition’s amendments were not agreed to by the Assembly. The Government also moved amendments to the bill and these amendments were agreed to by the Assembly.

The bill, as amended, was then passed by the Assembly.

A full record of the debates can be accessed at Hansard.

Ministerial statements

Delivering an inclusive, progressive and connected Canberra was the subject of a statement made by the Chief Minister on 23 October. The Chief Minister highlighted the progress that has been made in the past two years towards Canberra becoming more inclusive, progressive and connected, including becoming the first jurisdiction in Australia to reach full roll-out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme and being on track to be powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity by 2020.

The Minister for Health and Wellbeing made a statement giving an update on ACT transition and workplace culture. During the statement the Minister tabled the Terms of Reference for the Independent Review into the Workplace Culture within ACT Public Health Services. The Minister stated the continuous improvements that would be implemented to rebuild the organisation’s culture and behaviours.

The Minister for Children, Youth and Families gave an update to the A Step Up for Our Kids, Out of Home Care Strategy. During the statement the Minister also tabled the second progress report for October 2018.

Launch of the 3 year Action Plan of the ACT Carers Strategy was the subject of a statement made by the Minister for Community Services and Facilities. During the statement the Minister tabled the ACT Carers Strategy 2018-2028, first three-year Action Plan. The Minister noted that the Action Plan contains 25 actions that fall under five themes; service and support for carers, recognition and awareness, inclusion, support for young carers and workforce and skills recognition.

The following ministerial statements were made on 25 October—

Building Quality Improvement made by the Minister for Building Quality Improvement.

Moss Review Recommendations—Closure made by the Minister for Corrections and Justice Health.

Canberra’s Tree Canopy Coverage—to protect and increase made by the Minister for City Services.

The full text of the statements made by Ministers and Members can be accessed from the Assembly Hansard site.
Private Members’ Business

Includes items presented to the Assembly by all non-Executive Members, including bills and motions

Bills introduced

Domestic Animals (Dangerous Dogs) Legislation Amendment Bill 2018 (presented 24 October)

Summary: This bill will amend the Domestic Animals Act 2000 and the Domestic Animals Regulation 2001. The bill will create clear accountability measures such as requiring Domestic Animal Services to inform the victim, dog owner and responsible Minister of the outcome of an investigation of a dog attack within 14 days of its completion and requiring the registrar to collect data and document an investigation.

Bills debated

Land Tax (Community Housing Exemption) Amendment Bill 2018

Summary: This bill was programmed to be debated on 24 October. On 23 October the bill was ruled out of order by the Speaker.

Government Agencies (Land Acquisition Reporting) Bill 2018

Summary: The purpose of this bill is to improve integrity in land acquisitions. The bill introduces reporting requirements for all acquisitions undertaken by ACT Government entities, reinforcing due diligence and procurement principles such as value for money.

Proceedings: Debate on this bill resumed on 24 October with the bill being agreed to in principle. The Government moved that debate be adjourned and the debate will resume at a future sitting.

Motions debated

A motion was moved on 24 October by Ms Lee in relation to teacher and student safety and included noting that a Worksafe investigation concluded that the ACT Education Directorate has failed in its duty of care to teachers in Canberra government schools. The motion called on the Minister for Education and Early Childhood Development to report to the Assembly by the last sitting week in November 2018 on its plan to implement the enforceable undertaking it gave to the Work Safety Commissioner. The Government moved amendments to the motion which called on the Government to report on progress implementation of the strategies in the enforceable undertaking in the Education Directorate Annual Report as required by the undertaking. The ACT Greens indicated their support for the amendments. The Opposition noted they would not be supporting the amendments to the motion.

Following a vote of the Assembly, the amended motion was then passed.

Protecting students and staff from discrimination was the subject of a motion moved by Ms Orr on 24 October. The motion noted that according to a recent national poll, 74 per cent of Australians oppose laws allowing religious schools to select students and teachers on the grounds of their sexual orientation, gender identity or relationship status. The motion called on the Assembly to ensure ACT law protects Canberrans from discrimination in its schools. The motion was supported by all parties in the Assembly after debate.

The motion was then passed by the Assembly.
Other motions debated on 24 October related to:

- Women’s sport—Ms Cody MLA
- Domestic and Family Violence—Mrs Kikkert MLA

The full debate on the above motions can be accessed from the Assembly Hansard site.

Assembly Business

*Includes any business relating to the establishment or membership of a committee or the proposed referral of a matter to a committee. It also includes business which proposes to amend, disallow, disapprove or declare void any instruments which are made under specific Acts agreed to by the Assembly. Assembly business also includes any notice or order of the day which deals with the administration of the Assembly or how the Assembly conducts its proceedings*

Motions debated

Annual and financial reports for the financial year 2017-2018 and calendar year 2017 were referred to the relevant standing committees of the Assembly on 25 October for inquiry and report by March 2019.

The motion was agreed to by the Assembly.

The full terms of the above motions can be found in the Minutes of Proceedings.

Matters of public importance

The following matters of public importance were discussed in the Assembly this week—

- The importance of valuing and supporting ACT teachers—Ms Cody MLA
- The importance of upholding the rights of ACT children—Ms Cody MLA

Papers Presented

The following are papers of interest that were presented during the sitting week:

- Auditor-General’s Report No 3/2018—Tender for the sale of Block 30 (formerly Block 20) Section 34 Dickson—Recommendation 1 and Government response—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Minister for Planning and Land Management, dated 16 October 2018 *(presented 23 October by the Speaker)*
- Administrative Arrangements—Administrative Arrangements 2018 (No 2)—Notifiable Instrument NI2018-523, dated 18 September 2018 *(presented 23 October by the Chief Minister)*
- Social housing— Provision of incentives, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 1 August 2018 *(presented 23 October by the Minister for Housing and Suburban Development)*
- City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act—City Renewal Authority—Land acquisitions quarterly report—1 July to 30 September 2018 *(presented 25 October by the Chief Minister)*
- Molonglo Valley Strategic Assessment—Independent Audit—Government response *(presented 25 October by the Minister for Climate Change and Sustainability)*
- Evaluation of the ACT Government’s safer cycling reforms—Prepared by the Centre for Automotive Safety Research, The University of Adelaide *(presented 25 October by the Minister for Justice, Consumer Affairs and Road Safety)*
Petitions and petition responses

The following e-petitions were lodged on 23 October—

- Amendment to Phillip Precinct Code—lodged by Ms Le Couteur MLA.
- Proposed school bus services—lodged by Miss C. Burch MLA and referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Transport and City Services.

The following petition was lodged on 23 October—

- Amendment to Phillip Precinct Code—lodged by Ms Le Couteur MLA.

The following petition was lodged on 25 October—

- Support for the Government Procurement (Secure Local Jobs) Amendment Bill 2018—lodged by Ms Cody MLA.

A copy of the terms of these petitions can be accessed from the Assembly Hansard site.

The following ministerial responses to petitions were lodged on 23 October—

- Improvements to the Tuggeranong Town Centre.
- Public recycling bins at Charnwood Group Centre.

The following ministerial response to a petition was lodged on 25 October—

- Eating disorder healthcare services.

A copy of the responses can be found from the Assembly Hansard site.

Committee Activities

Committee report presented

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee

Report 8—Review of the standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Legislative Assembly (2 Volumes) (presented 25 October)

Economic Development and Tourism—Standing Committee

Report 4—Inquiry into Government Procurement (Secure Local Jobs) Amendment Bill 2018 (presented 23 October)

Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee

Report 6—Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No. 345 Mawson Group Centre: Zone Changes and Amendments to the Mawson Precinct Map and Code (presented 25 October 2018)

Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Report 22 (presented 23 October)

This report contained the committee’s comments on four bills, eight pieces of subordinate legislation and seven government responses.
Committee Referral

Justice and Community Safety (Legislative Scrutiny Role)—Standing Committee

A motion was moved by Ms Lee MLA on 23 October, that the draft Integrity Commission Bill 2018, as soon as it is made available, be referred to the committee for consideration and report by 27 November 2018. The motion was passed by the Assembly.

Committee statement

Environment and Transport and City Services—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 23 October relating to petition 6-18 which was referred to the committee on 20 March 2018 and called on the Assembly to reinstate the light rail stop planned for Mitchell. The committee noted in the Minister’s response to the petition that funding has been allocated in 2018-19 for preliminary planning and detailed design of the light rail stop at Mitchell. The committee will not be inquiring further into the matters raised in the petition.

Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement on 25 October noting that due to the high level of public interest in the Inquiry into Engagement with Development Application Processes in the ACT, the committee has resolved to move the reporting date from the last sitting day in November 2018 to before the end of 2019.

Government response


Education Activities

Information on our various program offerings are available on the Assembly’s website.

Members of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT

Electorate of Brindabella

Ms Joy Burch (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Mick Gentleman (Australian Labor Party)
Ms Nicole Lawder (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Mark Parton (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Andrew Wall (Canberra Liberals)

Electorate of Ginninderra

Ms Yvette Berry (Australian Labor Party)
Ms Tara Cheyne (Australian Labor Party)
Mrs Vicki Dunne (Canberra Liberals)
Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Gordon Ramsay (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Kurrajong

Mr Andrew Barr (Australian Labor Party)
Miss Candice Burch (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Elizabeth Lee (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Shane Rattenbury (ACT Greens)
Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Murrumbidgee

Ms Bec Cody (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC (Canberra Liberals)
Mrs Giulia Jones (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Caroline Le Couteur (ACT Greens)
Mr Chris Steel (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Yerrabi

Mr Alistair Coe (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Meegan Fitzharris (Australian Labor Party)
Mr James Milligan (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Suzanne Orr (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Michael Pettersson (Australian Labor Party)

Next Sitting

Tuesday, 30 October 2018.

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