



**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE
AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY**

2020–2021–2022–2023–2024

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 111

WEDNESDAY, 7 FEBRUARY 2024

- 1** The Assembly met at 10 am, pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Ms Burch) took the Chair and made the following acknowledgement of country in the Ngunnawal language:

Dhawura nguna, dhawura Ngunnawal.

Yanggu ngalawiri, dhunimanyin Ngunnawalwari dhawurawari.

Nginggada Dindi dhawura Ngunnaawalbun yindjumaralidjinyin.

This is Ngunnawal Country.

Today we are gathering on Ngunnawal country.

We always pay respect to Elders, female and male, and Ngunnawal country.

The Speaker asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

- 2 REVIEW OF EMBEDDED NETWORKS IN THE A.C.T.—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—
MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED**

Mr Rattenbury (Minister for Water, Energy and Emissions Reduction) made a ministerial statement concerning the Government's response to the Review of Embedded Networks in the ACT and presented the following papers:

Review of Embedded Networks in the ACT—

Government response, dated February 2024.

Government response—Ministerial statement, 7 February 2024.

Mr Rattenbury moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Question—put and passed.

3 ACTIVE TRAVEL UPDATE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Steel (Minister for Transport) made a ministerial statement to provide an update to the Assembly on Government's initiatives to encourage active travel and presented the following paper:

Active travel update—Ministerial statement, 7 February 2024.

Mr Steel moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

4 UNITED KINGDOM STUDY TOUR—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Davidson (Minister for Mental Health) made a ministerial statement concerning her leading a delegation of mental health officials on a study tour to the United Kingdom in December 2023 and presented the following paper:

United Kingdom Study Tour—Ministerial statement, 7 February 2024.

Ms Davidson moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Question—put and passed.

5 EDUCATION AND COMMUNITY INCLUSION—STANDING COMMITTEE—CONSIDERATION OF STATUTORY APPOINTMENTS—STATEMENT BY CHAIR—PAPERS

Mr Pettersson (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A and Continuing Resolution 5A, made a statement concerning consideration of statutory appointments by the Standing Committee on Education and Community Inclusion.

Papers: Mr Pettersson, pursuant to Continuing Resolution 5A, presented the following papers:

Education and Community Inclusion—Standing Committee—Schedule of Statutory Appointments—10th Assembly—Periods—

1 January to 30 June 2021.

1 July to 31 December 2021.

1 July to 31 December 2022.

6 HEALTH AND COMMUNITY WELLBEING—STANDING COMMITTEE—CONSIDERATION OF STATUTORY APPOINTMENTS—STATEMENT BY CHAIR—PAPERS

Ms Clay (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A and Continuing Resolution 5A, made a statement concerning consideration of statutory appointments by the Standing Committee on Health and Community Wellbeing.

Papers: Ms Clay, pursuant to Continuing Resolution 5A, presented the following papers:

Health and Community Wellbeing—Standing Committee—Schedule of Statutory Appointments—10th Assembly—Periods—

1 July to 31 December 2022.

1 July to 31 December 2023.

7 CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Mr Rattenbury (Attorney-General), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend legislation about crime, and for other purposes.

Paper: Mr Rattenbury presented the following paper:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Title read by Clerk.

Mr Rattenbury moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Cain) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

8 CIVIL LAW (WRONGS) AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Mr Rattenbury (Attorney-General), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Civil Law (Wrongs) Act 2002*.

Paper: Mr Rattenbury presented the following paper:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Title read by Clerk.

Mr Rattenbury moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Cain) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

9 BIOSECURITY LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2024

Ms Vassarotti (Minister for the Environment, Parks and Land Management), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend legislation because of the enactment of the *Biosecurity Act 2023*, and for other purposes.

Paper: Ms Vassarotti presented the following paper:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Title read by Clerk.

Ms Vassarotti moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Ms Lawder) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

10 GOVERNMENT PROCUREMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2023

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—

Debate resumed.

Paper: Mr Steel (Special Minister of State) presented a revised explanatory statement to the Bill.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 16		NOES, 9
Andrew Barr	Suzanne Orr	Peter Cain
Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson	Leanne Castley
Andrew Braddock	Michael Pettersson	Ed Cocks
Joy Burch	Shane Rattenbury	Jeremy Hanson
Tara Cheyne	Chris Steel	Elizabeth Kikkert
Jo Clay	Rachel Stephen-Smith	Nicole Lawder
Emma Davidson	Rebecca Vassarotti	Elizabeth Lee
Mick Gentleman		James Milligan
Laura Nuttall		Mark Parton

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to—put and passed.

11 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

12 HUMAN RIGHTS INCOMPLIANT COMPANIES—DIVESTMENTS

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

(1) notes:

- (a) the Hamas attacks commencing 7 October 2023 involving the targeting and death of Israeli civilians, including women and children, the taking of hostages, and widespread rocket fire into civilian areas;
- (b) the immense loss of life and human suffering occurring in the Gaza Strip, including that of women and children due to Israeli military action;
- (c) these events occur in the context of ongoing occupation of the Palestinian territories, construction of illegal settlements, and the historic displacement and apartheid treatment of the Palestinian people by the State of Israel;
- (d) that the International Court of Justice has ruled that all steps to prevent genocide in Gaza must be taken;
- (e) the impacts of the conflict and the decades of struggle are felt deeply in the ACT community; and
- (f) as a result, many communities and individuals here in Canberra:
 - (i) are facing an extremely challenging time, concerned about the safety of family, friends, and loved ones; and
 - (ii) have been subject to racist slurs and taunts based on their ethnicity or religious beliefs;

(2) calls on all Members of this Assembly to:

- (a) voice their support for:

- (i) an immediate and permanent ceasefire;
 - (ii) a release of all hostages and political prisoners;
 - (iii) all perpetrators to be held accountable for their actions in accordance with international law;
 - (iv) reinstating and enhancing funding for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency; and
 - (v) ending the illegal occupation of the Palestinian territories and apartheid against the Palestinian population;
- (b) condemn all forms of racism, including antisemitism and islamophobia, and state these have no place here in the ACT; and
- (c) voice their support for Canberra’s Palestinian and Israeli communities during this challenging time, including people seeking refuge in the ACT;
- (3) further notes:
- (a) the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) maintains a database of companies complicit in the establishment and maintenance of illegal settlements in occupied Palestinian territories;
 - (b) as of 31 December 2023, the ACT Government held investments in the following companies listed in the UNOHCHR database:
 - (i) Airbnb Inc;
 - (ii) Alstom SA;
 - (iii) Bank Hapoalim BM;
 - (iv) Bank Leumi Le-Israel BM;
 - (v) Booking Holdings Inc;
 - (vi) Expedia Group Inc;
 - (vii) Israel Discount Bank Ltd;
 - (viii) Mizrahi Tefahot Bank Ltd; and
 - (ix) Motorola Solutions Inc; and
 - (c) that the ACT Government’s Responsible Investment Policy of March 2023, and its Environment, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) controversy assessment exclusions should preclude companies listed in paragraph (3)(b) 11 as they are complicit in the human rights violations by the State of Israel against the Palestinian people;
- (4) calls on the ACT Government to report back to the Assembly by August 2024, on divestments that have or may be undertaken, to ensure that company ESG controversy assessment exclusions fully consider companies involved in illegal settlements in Palestinian territories; and
- (5) requests that the Speaker convey to the Israeli Embassy and Palestinian General Delegation a copy of this motion on behalf of the Assembly.

Paper: Mr Braddock, by leave, presented the following paper:

United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner—OHCHR update of database of all business enterprises involved in the activities detailed in paragraph 96 of the report of the independent international fact-finding mission to investigate the implications of the Israeli settlements on the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of the Palestinian people throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, dated 30 June 2023.

Mr Barr (Treasurer), by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. Omit paragraph (1)(c), substitute:

“(c) this escalating conflict has occurred in the context of ongoing occupation of the Palestinian territories, construction of illegal settlements, and displacement of the Palestinian people”.

2. After paragraph (1)(f), insert:

“(g) as individuals and in our collective society we all have responsibility to act with humanity in our actions and reactions;

(h) the conflict in Gaza and Israel has and continues to challenge the commitment to humanity of the actors of this conflict as well as the global community; and

(i) the impacts of the conflict and the decades of struggle that have led to this point are felt deeply in the ACT community”.

3. Omit paragraphs (2) to (4), substitute:

“(2) that all Members of this Assembly accordingly voice their support for:

(a) key elements of the Prime Minister’s motion of 16 October 2023, as passed with bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, and in particular:

(i) justice and freedom for Israelis and Palestinians alike;

(ii) international efforts to establish and maintain humanitarian access into Gaza, including safe passage for civilians;

(iii) the Australian Government’s ongoing efforts to provide consular assistance to affected Australians and to facilitate the departure of those who want to leave the region;

(iv) the motion’s condemnation of all forms of hate speech and violent extremist activity, including antisemitism and Islamophobia; and

(v) affirmation in the strongest possible terms that hateful prejudice has no place in Australia;

(b) a permanent humanitarian ceasefire;

(c) release of all hostages and political prisoners;

(d) all perpetrators of human rights violations and unlawful killings to be held accountable for their actions in accordance with international law;

(e) restoration of humanitarian aid to the civilian population; and

(f) withdrawal from internationally agreed Palestinian territories;

- (3) further calls on all Members of this Assembly to:
 - (a) act with responsibility and thoughtfulness as representatives of the ACT community, to ensure to the best of our ability that all members in our community have their rights upheld, and that our actions serve to alleviate the negative impacts this conflict is having on ACT residents;
 - (b) continue to condemn antisemitism, islamophobia, and racism, and state these have no place here in the ACT; and
 - (c) voice their support for Canberra’s Jewish, Palestinian, and other affected communities and individuals during this challenging time, including people seeking refuge in the ACT;
- (4) that this Assembly further notes:
 - (a) the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) maintains a database of companies involved in one of ten defined activities (paragraph 96 A/HRC/22/63) that raise particular human rights violations concerns regarding Israeli settlements throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with 97 companies currently listed that have, directly and indirectly, enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements;
 - (b) as of 31 December 2023, the ACT Government held investments in the following companies listed in the UNOHCHR database:
 - (i) Airbnb Inc;
 - (ii) Alstom SA;
 - (iii) Bank Hapoalim BM;
 - (iv) Bank Leumi Le-Israel BM;
 - (v) Booking Holdings Inc;
 - (vi) Expedia Group Inc;
 - (vii) Israel Discount Bank Ltd;
 - (viii) Mizrahi Tefahot Bank Ltd; and
 - (ix) Motorola Solutions Inc; and
 - (c) the ACT Government’s Responsible Investment Policy of March 2023 includes an Environment, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) controversy assessment that identifies and excludes investment where a company is assessed as having a very severe ESG controversy related to their operations, governance practices, and/or products and services that allegedly violates national or international laws, regulations and/or commonly accepted global norms; and
- (5) calls on the ACT Government, following advice from the Investment Advisory Board regarding the current policy settings, to report back to the Assembly by the end of August 2024 on divestments that have or may be undertaken, to ensure that company ESG controversy exclusions fully consider companies involved in, or profiting from, any human rights violations, including the illegal occupation of the Palestinian Territories.”.

Debate continued.

Ordered—That the question be divided.

Question—That Mr Barr’s amendment No 1 be agreed to—proposed.

Mr Braddock moved the following amendment to Mr Barr’s proposed amendment No 1: Omit paragraph (1)(c), substitute:

“(c) this escalating conflict has occurred in the context of ongoing occupation of the Palestinian Territories construction of illegal settlements, apartheid, and displacement of the Palestinian people”.

Question—That Mr Braddock’s amendment to Mr Barr’s proposed amendment No 1 be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 6	NOES, 17	
Andrew Braddock	Andrew Barr	Nicole Lawder
Jo Clay	Yvette Berry	Elizabeth Lee
Emma Davidson	Peter Cain	Suzanne Orr
Laura Nuttall	Leanne Castley	Mark Parton
Shane Rattenbury	Tara Cheyne	Marisa Paterson
Rebecca Vassarotti	Ed Cocks	Michael Pettersson
	Mick Gentleman	Chris Steel
	Jeremy Hanson	Rachel Stephen-Smith
	Elizabeth Kikkert	

And so it was negatived.

Question—That Mr Barr’s amendment No 1 be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 15		NOES, 8
Andrew Barr	Suzanne Orr	Peter Cain
Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson	Leanne Castley
Andrew Braddock	Michael Pettersson	Ed Cocks
Tara Cheyne	Shane Rattenbury	Jeremy Hanson
Jo Clay	Chris Steel	Elizabeth Kikkert
Emma Davidson	Rachel Stephen-Smith	Nicole Lawder
Mick Gentleman	Rebecca Vassarotti	Elizabeth Lee
Laura Nuttall		Mark Parton

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That Mr Barr’s amendment No 2 be agreed to—proposed.

Debate continued.

Mr Barr’s amendment No 2 agreed to.

Question—That Mr Barr’s amendment No 3 be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 15		NOES, 8
Andrew Barr	Suzanne Orr	Peter Cain
Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson	Leanne Castley
Andrew Braddock	Michael Pettersson	Ed Cocks
Tara Cheyne	Shane Rattenbury	Jeremy Hanson
Jo Clay	Chris Steel	Elizabeth Kikkert
Emma Davidson	Rachel Stephen-Smith	Nicole Lawder
Mick Gentleman	Rebecca Vassarotti	Elizabeth Lee
Laura Nuttall		Mark Parton

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) the Hamas attacks commencing 7 October 2023 involving the targeting and death of Israeli civilians, including women and children, the taking of hostages, and widespread rocket fire into civilian areas;
 - (b) the immense loss of life and human suffering occurring in the Gaza Strip, including that of women and children due to Israeli military action;
 - (c) this escalating conflict has occurred in the context of ongoing occupation of the Palestinian territories, construction of illegal settlements, and displacement of the Palestinian people;
 - (d) that the International Court of Justice has ruled that all steps to prevent genocide in Gaza must be taken;
 - (e) the impacts of the conflict and the decades of struggle are felt deeply in the ACT community;
 - (f) as a result, many communities and individuals here in Canberra:
 - (i) are facing an extremely challenging time, concerned about the safety of family, friends, and loved ones; and
 - (ii) have been subject to racist slurs and taunts based on their ethnicity or religious beliefs;
 - (g) as individuals and in our collective society we all have responsibility to act with humanity in our actions and reactions;
 - (h) the conflict in Gaza and Israel has and continues to challenge the commitment to humanity of the actors of this conflict as well as the global community; and
 - (i) the impacts of the conflict and the decades of struggle that have led to this point are felt deeply in the ACT community;
- (2) that all Members of this Assembly accordingly voice their support for:
 - (a) key elements of the Prime Minister’s motion of 16 October 2023, as passed with bipartisan support in the House of Representatives, and in particular:

- (i) justice and freedom for Israelis and Palestinians alike;
 - (ii) international efforts to establish and maintain humanitarian access into Gaza, including safe passage for civilians;
 - (iii) the Australian Government's ongoing efforts to provide consular assistance to affected Australians and to facilitate the departure of those who want to leave the region;
 - (iv) the motion's condemnation of all forms of hate speech and violent extremist activity, including antisemitism and Islamophobia; and
 - (v) affirmation in the strongest possible terms that hateful prejudice has no place in Australia;
- (b) a permanent humanitarian ceasefire;
 - (c) release of all hostages and political prisoners;
 - (d) all perpetrators of human rights violations and unlawful killings to be held accountable for their actions in accordance with international law;
 - (e) restoration of humanitarian aid to the civilian population; and
 - (f) withdrawal from internationally agreed Palestinian territories;
- (3) further calls on all Members of this Assembly to:
- (a) act with responsibility and thoughtfulness as representatives of the ACT community, to ensure to the best of our ability that all members in our community have their rights upheld, and that our actions serve to alleviate the negative impacts this conflict is having on ACT residents;
 - (b) continue to condemn antisemitism, islamophobia, and racism, and state these have no place here in the ACT; and
 - (c) voice their support for Canberra's Jewish, Palestinian, and other affected communities and individuals during this challenging time, including people seeking refuge in the ACT;
- (4) that this Assembly further notes:
- (a) the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UNOHCHR) maintains a database of companies involved in one of ten defined activities (paragraph 96 A/HRC/22/63) that raise particular human rights violations concerns regarding Israeli settlements throughout the Occupied Palestinian Territory, with 97 companies currently listed that have, directly and indirectly, enabled, facilitated and profited from the construction and growth of the settlements;
 - (b) as of 31 December 2023, the ACT Government held investments in the following companies listed in the UNOHCHR database:
 - (i) Airbnb Inc;
 - (ii) Alstom SA;
 - (iii) Bank Hapoalim BM;
 - (iv) Bank Leumi Le-Israel BM;
 - (v) Booking Holdings Inc;

- (vi) Expedia Group Inc;
 - (vii) Israel Discount Bank Ltd;
 - (viii) Mizrahi Tefahot Bank Ltd; and
 - (ix) Motorola Solutions Inc; and
- (c) the ACT Government’s Responsible Investment Policy of March 2023 includes an Environment, Social and Corporate Governance (ESG) controversy assessment that identifies and excludes investment where a company is assessed as having a very severe ESG controversy related to their operations, governance practices, and/or products and services that allegedly violates national or international laws, regulations and/or commonly accepted global norms;
- (5) calls on the ACT Government, following advice from the Investment Advisory Board regarding the current policy settings, to report back to the Assembly by the end of August 2024 on divestments that have or may be undertaken, to ensure that company ESG controversy exclusions fully consider companies involved in, or profiting from, any human rights violations, including the illegal occupation of the Palestinian Territories; and
- (6) requests that the Speaker convey to the Israeli Embassy and Palestinian General Delegation a copy of this motion on behalf of the Assembly.” —

be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 15		NOES, 8
Andrew Barr	Suzanne Orr	Peter Cain
Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson	Leanne Castley
Andrew Braddock	Michael Pettersson	Ed Cocks
Tara Cheyne	Shane Rattenbury	Jeremy Hanson
Jo Clay	Chris Steel	Elizabeth Kikkert
Emma Davidson	Rachel Stephen-Smith	Nicole Lawder
Mick Gentleman	Rebecca Vassarotti	Elizabeth Lee
Laura Nuttall		Mark Parton

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

13 COST-OF-LIVING PRESSURES—ALLEVIATION

Ms Lee (Leader of the Opposition), pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) recent analysis by Numbeo, the world’s largest cost of living database, has confirmed that Canberra has the highest cost of living in Australia;
 - (b) the cost for Canberrans to visit their general practitioner is the second highest in the country;
 - (c) Canberra remains the second most expensive city in which to rent;
 - (d) Canberra has the highest vehicle registration costs in the country;

- (e) Canberra is the most expensive state or territory in the country for children's sport, including swimming lessons; and
 - (f) Canberra remains the second most expensive city in Australia to buy a house;
- (2) further notes:
- (a) that Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) data shows that while living costs for all household types are increasing, it is employee households (households earning wages) that have recorded the largest annual increase in living costs of all household types, with a 9.0 percent increase;
 - (b) community groups such as the ACT Council of Social Services are seeing, largely for the first time, a significant increase in people on incomes – i.e. wage earners, accessing their services; and
 - (c) the latest ABS figures show retail spending in the ACT fell 3.8 percent in December, well above the national rate of 2.7 percent, demonstrating that Canberrans are really feeling the pinch; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Labor-Greens Government to:
- (a) explain to the people of Canberra why cost of living in the ACT is so high under their Government; and
 - (b) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting day in March on measures to alleviate cost of living pressures for all Canberrans.

Mr Barr (Treasurer) moved the following amendment: Omit all text after "That this Assembly", substitute:

- (1) notes:
- (a) the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's national statistical agency and an official source of independent, reliable information;
 - (b) the prices of essential products have increased significantly across Australia in the last two years, combined with interest rate increases this has placed many household budgets under pressure;
 - (c) the December Quarter 2023 Consumer Price Index (CPI) released by the ABS showed that Canberra's CPI increased by 0.4 percent in the December Quarter, the equal lowest of any capital city in Australia and through the year rose by 3.7 percent, lower than the national increase of 4.2 percent over the same period;
 - (d) inflation still remains a risk on the economic outlook and the Government continues to monitor the varied impacts across the community; and
 - (e) the Federal Government has made changes to the Stage 3 tax cuts to deliver a fairer tax reform outcome that supports more workers without increasing the risk to the inflation outlook;
- (2) further notes that in the 2023-24 financial year, the ACT Government has introduced new initiatives and expanded existing initiatives to address cost-of-living pressures faced by vulnerable members of our community including through:

- (a) extending the Utilities Concession to Commonwealth Health Care Card holders, benefitting around 12,000 additional low-income and low-wealth households, taking the total number of eligible households to around 43,800 eligible for an \$800 rebate this financial year;
 - (b) partnering with the Commonwealth Government to provide energy bill relief to Canberrans. Eligible low-income households with an average electricity consumption will receive around \$327 in additional energy assistance in 2023-2024;
 - (c) establishing a Rental Relief Fund for people facing immediate difficulty in meeting rental payments, paying their rent for four weeks up to \$2,500; and
 - (d) a one off \$250 booster payment to households on the priority housing wait;
 - (e) delivering more affordable homes in the pipeline through the Affordable Housing Project Fund; and
 - (f) other concessions, such as:
 - (i) the Pensioner General Rates and Police, Fire and Emergency Services Levy (PFESL) Rebate, providing around 15,300 households a rebate of up to \$750 per year for general rates and \$98 PFESL rebate per year;
 - (ii) the Conveyance duty concessions - providing 4,800 eligible home buyers up to 100 percent discount on conveyance duty;
 - (iii) spectacle subsidy scheme providing around 10,600 Canberrans with a subsidy of up to \$200 for spectacles;
 - (iv) motor vehicle registration concessions providing 63,900 ACT drivers with up to a 100 percent discount on motor vehicle registration fees;
 - (v) free Chromebooks for every student in high school and college, and one between every three students in primary school;
 - (vi) driver licence concessions providing around 6,000 ACT drivers with up to a 100 percent discount on driver licence fees; and
 - (vii) public transport concessions providing reduced or free fares on Transport Canberra bus and light rail services for over 5.9 million trips;
- (3) finally notes, as updated to the Assembly in August 2023, that the Commonwealth Government has introduced a number of cost-of-living measures, in partnership with the Territory, or on their own, including:
- (a) cheaper child-care, with Child Care Subsidy rates up to 90 percent for eligible families;
 - (b) new Paid Parental Leave Scheme, meaning around 180,000 families will be able to receive the payment for up to 20 weeks, and increasing to up to 26 weeks by 2026;
 - (c) cheaper medicines through 60-day dispensing;
 - (d) bulk billing incentives for the most common GP consultations for children under 16 years, pensioners, and other Commonwealth concession card holders;

- (e) energy rebates with up to \$3 billion of direct bill relief for vulnerable households and small businesses;
 - (f) expanding eligibility for the Single Parenting Payment meaning that around 57,000 eligible single parents will receive an extra \$176.90 per fortnight;
 - (g) increasing the rate for JobSeeker, Austudy and Youth Allowance payments; and
 - (h) providing the largest increase to Commonwealth Rent Assistance in over 30 years; and
- (4) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) continue to monitor the impacts of cost of living on Canberra households using independent and reliable sources of information and data through the Cost-of-Living Sub-Committee of Cabinet;
 - (b) continue to deliver targeted cost-of-living support; and
 - (c) provide a cost-of-living statement in the 2024-25 Budget.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 15		NOES, 7
Andrew Barr	Laura Nuttall	Peter Cain
Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson	Ed Cocks
Andrew Braddock	Michael Pettersson	Jeremy Hanson
Joy Burch	Shane Rattenbury	Elizabeth Kikkert
Tara Cheyne	Chris Steel	Nicole Lawder
Jo Clay	Rachel Stephen-Smith	Elizabeth Lee
Emma Davidson	Rebecca Vassarotti	Mark Parton
Mick Gentleman		

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That the Assembly:

- (1) notes:
- (a) the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia’s national statistical agency and an official source of independent, reliable information;
 - (b) the prices of essential products have increased significantly across Australia in the last two years, combined with interest rate increases this has placed many household budgets under pressure;
 - (c) the December Quarter 2023 Consumer Price Index (CPI) released by the ABS showed that Canberra’s CPI increased by 0.4 percent in the December Quarter, the equal lowest of any capital city in Australia and through the year rose by 3.7 percent, lower than the national increase of 4.2 percent over the same period;

- (d) inflation still remains a risk on the economic outlook and the Government continues to monitor the varied impacts across the community; and
 - (e) the Federal Government has made changes to the Stage 3 tax cuts to deliver a fairer tax reform outcome that supports more workers without increasing the risk to the inflation outlook;
- (2) further notes that in the 2023-24 financial year, the ACT Government has introduced new initiatives and expanded existing initiatives to address cost-of-living pressures faced by vulnerable members of our community including through:
- (a) extending the Utilities Concession to Commonwealth Health Care Card holders, benefitting around 12,000 additional low-income and low-wealth households, taking the total number of eligible households to around 43,800 eligible for an \$800 rebate this financial year;
 - (b) partnering with the Commonwealth Government to provide energy bill relief to Canberrans. Eligible low-income households with an average electricity consumption will receive around \$327 in additional energy assistance in 2023-2024;
 - (c) establishing a Rental Relief Fund for people facing immediate difficulty in meeting rental payments, paying their rent for four weeks up to \$2,500;
 - (d) a one off \$250 booster payment to households on the priority housing wait;
 - (e) delivering more affordable homes in the pipeline through the Affordable Housing Project Fund; and
 - (f) other concessions, such as:
 - (i) the Pensioner General Rates and Police, Fire and Emergency Services Levy (PFESL) Rebate, providing around 15,300 households a rebate of up to \$750 per year for general rates and \$98 PFESL rebate per year;
 - (ii) the Conveyance duty concessions - providing 4,800 eligible home buyers up to 100 percent discount on conveyance duty;
 - (iii) spectacle subsidy scheme providing around 10,600 Canberrans with a subsidy of up to \$200 for spectacles;
 - (iv) motor vehicle registration concessions providing 63,900 ACT drivers with up to a 100 percent discount on motor vehicle registration fees;
 - (v) free Chromebooks for every student in high school and college, and one between every three students in primary school;
 - (vi) driver licence concessions providing around 6,000 ACT drivers with up to a 100 percent discount on driver licence fees; and
 - (vii) public transport concessions providing reduced or free fares on Transport Canberra bus and light rail services for over 5.9 million trips;
- (3) finally notes, as updated to the Assembly in August 2023, that the Commonwealth Government has introduced a number of cost-of-living measures, in partnership with the Territory, or on their own, including:

- (a) cheaper child-care, with Child Care Subsidy rates up to 90 percent for eligible families;
 - (b) new Paid Parental Leave Scheme, meaning around 180,000 families will be able to receive the payment for up to 20 weeks, and increasing to up to 26 weeks by 2026;
 - (c) cheaper medicines through 60-day dispensing;
 - (d) bulk billing incentives for the most common GP consultations for children under 16 years, pensioners, and other Commonwealth concession card holders;
 - (e) energy rebates with up to \$3 billion of direct bill relief for vulnerable households and small businesses;
 - (f) expanding eligibility for the Single Parenting Payment meaning that around 57,000 eligible single parents will receive an extra \$176.90 per fortnight;
 - (g) increasing the rate for JobSeeker, Austudy and Youth Allowance payments; and
 - (h) providing the largest increase to Commonwealth Rent Assistance in over 30 years; and
- (4) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) continue to monitor the impacts of cost of living on Canberra households using independent and reliable sources of information and data through the Cost-of-Living Sub-Committee of Cabinet;
 - (b) continue to deliver targeted cost-of-living support; and
 - (c) provide a cost-of-living statement in the 2024-25 Budget.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

14 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 5.42 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