LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2024–2025–2026

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 76

THURSDAY, 29 OCTOBER 2026

1 The Assembly met at 10 am, pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Hanson) 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 wanggiralidjinyin.

This is Ngunnawal country.
Today we are all meeting on Ngunnawal country.
We always pay respect to Elders, female and male.

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

2 PETITIONS—PETITIONS NOTED

The Clerk announced that the following Member had lodged petitions for presentation:

Mr Milligan, from 77 and 485 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to work with all stakeholders to upgrade and expand car parking and facilities at all sports grounds across Canberra (e-Pet 078-26 and Pet 101-26).

Pursuant to standing order 99A, these petitions stand referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services.

The Speaker proposed—That the petitions so lodged be noted.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

3 VIETNAM TRADE MISSION—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Barr (Chief Minister) made a ministerial statement concerning a recent trade mission to Vietnam and presented the following paper:

Vietnam Trade Mission—Ministerial statement, 29 October 2026.

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

4 CAPITAL PROJECT UPDATE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Education) made a ministerial statement concerning the progress of the Government's health and education infrastructure projects and presented the following paper:

Capital Project Update—Ministerial statement, 29 October 2026.

Ms Stephen-Smith moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

5 REDUCING RECIDIVISM ANNUAL PROGRESS REPORT 2026—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General) made a ministerial statement concerning the 2026 reducing recidivism annual progress report and presented the following papers:

RR25by25 Report 2026—Justice and Community Safety Directorate, dated October 2026.

Reducing Recidivism Annual Progress Report 2026—Ministerial statement, 29 October 2026.

Ms Cheyne moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

6 A.C.T. AMBULANCE SERVICE—UPDATE ON PROGRESS—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) made a ministerial statement concerning the progress of work to support paramedics and presented the following paper:

ACT Ambulance Service—Update on Progress—Ministerial statement, 29 October 2026.

Dr Paterson moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

7 BUDGET INITIATIVES FUNDING—DOCUMENTS—ORDER TO TABLE

Mr Cocks, pursuant to notice, moved—That:

(1) in accordance with standing order 213A, the Assembly orders the Treasurer to provide the Assembly with a document or documents, drawn from or produced using information held in the ACT Government's Budget Management System, setting out a complete list of all Budget initiatives that currently have or have had funding attached to them since the establishment of the system in the 2017-2018 financial year;

(2) the document or documents must:

(a) be provided by the first sitting day of 2027;

(b) be provided in an accessible electronic format, including a machine-readable spreadsheet, and must include for each Budget initiative:

(i) the title of the initiative;

(ii) the relevant directorate or agency;

(iii) whether the initiative relates to expenses, capital, revenue, savings, offsets or another category;

(iv) the budget, budget review, appropriation bill or other budget process in which the initiative was first introduced;

(v) whether the initiative is ongoing or non-ongoing;

(vi) if the initiative is non-ongoing, the financial year in which funding for the initiative is scheduled to end or ended; and

(vii) the amount of funding allocated to the initiative in each Budget and each year of the forward estimates period; and

(c) wherever relevant, show changes in appropriations that have occurred between each ACT Budget and the previous year's ACT Budget;

(3) for the purposes of this order:

(a) "budget initiative" includes any measure, initiative, commitment, revenue initiative, expense initiative, program initiative, election commitment or other funded decision recorded in the Budget Management System;

(b) "currently have or have had funding attached to them since the establishment of the system in the 2017-2018 financial year" means initiatives for which funding is or was allocated, reserved, approved, appropriated, transferred, reprofiled or otherwise recorded in the Budget Management System since the 2017-2018 financial year, current financial year or any year of the forward estimates;

(c) "funding" includes controlled recurrent payments, territorial payments, capital injections, capital works funding, expenses on behalf of the Territory, own-source revenue impacts, administered items, savings, offsets and any other financial allocation recorded against an initiative; and

(d) "changes" means the introduction of new budget initiatives, the cessation of previous budget initiatives and changes to the level of funding for each budget initiative relative to the previous Budget; and

(4) the list is to be provided at the most disaggregated initiative level available in the Budget Management System and must not be provided only as aggregated directorate, portfolio or output-class totals.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

8 ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—REVIEW OF STANDING ORDERS AND CONTINUING RESOLUTIONS OF THE ASSEMBLY—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Mr Hanson (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that, in accordance with standing order 16, the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on the operation of the standing orders and continuing resolutions of the Assembly.

9 POSTPONEMENT OF ORDER OF THE DAY

Ordered—That order of the day No 1, Executive business, relating to consideration of the Competition Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, be postponed until a later hour this day.

10 HOUSING AND CONSUMER AFFAIRS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

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.

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

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 QUESTIONS ON NOTICE NOS 1502, 1532, 1554, 1555 AND 1557—ANSWERS—EXPLANATIONS

Ms Clay, pursuant to standing order 118A, asked Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General), Mr Barr (Chief Minister), Ms Cheyne (Minister for City and Government Services) and Mr Steel (Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development) for an explanation concerning the answers to questions on notice Nos 1502, 1532, 1554, 1555 and 1557.

Ms Cheyne, Mr Barr and Mr Steel gave explanations.

13 STANDING ORDER 42—ADDRESSING THE SPEAKER—STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

The Speaker made a statement concerning standing order 42 to remind Members to address the Speaker when speaking in the Chamber.

14 POINT OF ORDER—UNPARLIAMENTARY LANGUAGE—SPEAKER'S RULING

The Speaker, having considered a point of order raised by a Member as to whether a comment made during a debate on a motion yesterday was unparliamentary, ruled that he did not uphold the point of order.

15 PRESENTATION OF PAPER

The Speaker presented the following paper:

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 15—Annual Report 2025-2026—Office of the Legislative Assembly—Corrigendum, dated 27 October 2026.

16 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business), pursuant to standing order 211, presented the following papers:

ACT Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Agreement 2019-2028—National Agreement on Closing the Gap—Procurement Policy, undated, together with a statement.

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 13—Annual Report 2025-2026—Director of Public Prosecutions—Corrigendum, undated.

Remuneration Tribunal Act, pursuant to section 10—Determinations, together with accompanying statements for:

Part-time Public Office Holders—Determination 14 of 2026 (Amended), dated 21 October 2026.

Part-time Statutory Office Holder—Integrity Commissioner—Determination 10 of 2026 (Amended), dated 21 October 2026.

Richardson Shops development—Assembly resolution of 24 June 2025—Government response—Update, dated October 2026.

Social Policy—Standing Committee—Report 6—Inquiry into E-Petition 077-25, access to 11-12 ATAR language courses in 2026—Government response, dated October 2026.

Sporting Infrastructure in Tuggeranong—Improvement—Assembly resolution of 16 September 2026—Government response, dated October 2026.

Theatre Lane car park vicinity—Accessibility—Assembly resolution of 30 October 2025—Government response, dated October 2026.

17 ELECTORAL (ELIGIBILITY) AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Mr Braddock, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Electoral Act 1992*, and for other purposes.

Paper: Mr Braddock presented an explanatory statement to the Bill.

Title read by Clerk.

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

Debate adjourned (Ms Stephen-Smith—Deputy Chief Minister) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

18 LONG SERVICE LEAVE (PORTABLE SCHEMES) AMENDMENT BILL 2026

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 Cocks presented a revised explanatory statement to the Bill.

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

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 8	NOES, 15	
Chiaka Barry	Andrew Barr	Marisa Paterson
Peter Cain	Yvette Berry	Michael Pettersson
Leanne Castley	Andrew Braddock	Chris Steel
Ed Cocks	Fiona Carrick	Rachel Stephen-Smith
Jeremy Hanson	Jo Clay	Caitlin Tough
Elizabeth Lee	Thomas Emerson	Rebecca Vassarotti
James Milligan	Laura Nuttall	Taimus Werner-Gibbings
Deborah Morris	Suzanne Orr	

And so it was negatived.

19 PUBLIC HOUSING TARGETS—PLANNING AND REPORTING

Ms Carrick, having amended her motion by leave, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) access to safe, secure and affordable housing is fundamental to individual wellbeing and community participation;

(b) ACT Shelter's analysis of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's data shows that housing affordability is now the leading driver of homelessness demand, that the ACT has the highest rate of persistent homelessness in Australia and that many people seeking assistance have complex support needs;

(c) Housing ACT has identified chronic homelessness and chronic rough sleeping as ongoing challenges requiring targeted intervention;

(d) at 30 June 2026, there were 588 vacant public housing dwellings, including 285 requiring maintenance, upgrades or insurance works;

(e) the proportion of public housing relative to the ACT population has declined over time and the proportion of vacant houses has increased over time; and

(f) increasing public housing supply and reducing vacancy times are critical to improving outcomes for vulnerable Canberrans;

(2) further notes that:

(a) the Government committed to increasing the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 dwellings by 2030 in the 2024 election;

(b) an increase of 1,469 houses is required from the June 2024 stock of 11,731 dwellings, with recent annual additions to the stock being:

(i) 142 additions to June 2025, 11,873 dwellings; and

(ii) 145 additions to June 2026, 12,018 dwellings;

(c) 263 additions are required per annum over four and a half years to 2030;

(d) the May 2026 *ACT Housing Strategy Year 7 Report Card* states that work has commenced on a comprehensive plan to guide investment required to grow the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 homes by 2030; and

(e) there are no publicly available annual delivery targets or milestones that enable the Assembly and the community to determine whether the Government is on track to meet its commitment; and

(3) calls on the Government to:

(a) publish, by 30 April 2027, in a single document referred to as "the Plan", comprehensive information on delivered and planned housing as well as an indicative approach to guide investment required to grow the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 homes by 2030, including forecasting for:

(i) annual dwelling delivery targets (net) to 2030;

(ii) number of homes to be constructed, purchased and renewed each year;

(iii) the program the additional dwellings will be delivered under; and

(iv) risks to delivery, including reliance on Commonwealth funding;

(b) publish, by 31 May 2027, a plan to return all vacant public housing properties to service as quickly as possible, including "hard to let";

(c) as part of the 2027-2028 ACT Housing Budget Statement, include:

(i) the indicative annual dwelling targets, including constructed, purchased and renewed each year to 2030; and

(ii) information on the average vacancy period for each category of vacant houses;

(d) map, by 31 May 2027, existing housing and homelessness services for people experiencing chronic homelessness and identify housing and homelessness service gaps across the ACT; and

(e) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting day of June, annually until 2030, progress towards the 13,200 dwelling target, vacancy reductions and gaps in homelessness services.

Debate ensued.

Ms Orr (Minister for Housing and Homelessness), by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. In paragraph (1)(d), omit "requiring", substitute: "undergoing".

2. After all text in paragraph (2)(e), insert new paragraph:

"(2A) further notes that:

(a) as part of its commitment to grow the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 homes by 2030 the ACT Government has delivered:

(i) 230 homes in 2024-2025; and

(ii) 177 homes in 2025-2026;

(b) at 1 July 2026, 364 more properties in various stages of design and construction, as part of the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program, Housing Australia Future Fund Round 2, and the Social Housing Accelerator Program; and

(c) in addition to the homes outlined in (2A)(a) and (b), the ACT Government has committed over $360 million as part of the 2026-2027 Budget to establish a new Public Housing Pipeline program, funding the construction and purchasing of an additional 450 new public homes, and:

(i) investment in this program results in a forecast stock position at the end 2028-2029 of approximately 12,800, leaving a circa 400-dwelling gap to reach the target of 13,200 homes by 2030;

(ii) to achieve the 2030 target and mitigate inherent uncertainty the Government is using a hybrid delivery model for the Public Housing Pipeline program – combining new builds on greenfield land, redevelopment of existing sites, and market acquisitions – to accelerate delivery and response to market conditions; and

(iii) this approach provides the Government flexibility to maximise opportunities for investment n the delivery of the remaining homes.".

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Question—that the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) access to safe, secure and affordable housing is fundamental to individual wellbeing and community participation;

(b) ACT Shelter's analysis of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare's data shows that housing affordability is now the leading driver of homelessness demand, that the ACT has the highest rate of persistent homelessness in Australia and that many people seeking assistance have complex support needs;

(c) Housing ACT has identified chronic homelessness and chronic rough sleeping as ongoing challenges requiring targeted intervention;

(d) at 30 June 2026, there were 588 vacant public housing dwellings, including 285 undergoing maintenance, upgrades or insurance works;

(e) the proportion of public housing relative to the ACT population has declined over time and the proportion of vacant houses has increased over time; and

(f) increasing public housing supply and reducing vacancy times are critical to improving outcomes for vulnerable Canberrans;

(2) further notes that:

(a) the Government committed to increasing the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 dwellings by 2030 in the 2024 election;

(b) an increase of 1,469 houses is required from the June 2024 stock of 11,731 dwellings, with recent annual additions to the stock being:

(i) 142 additions to June 2025, 11,873 dwellings; and

(ii) 145 additions to June 2026, 12,018 dwellings;

(c) 263 additions are required per annum over four and a half years to 2030;

(d) the May 2026 *ACT Housing Strategy Year 7 Report Card* states that work has commenced on a comprehensive plan to guide investment required to grow the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 homes by 2030; and

(e) there are no publicly available annual delivery targets or milestones that enable the Assembly and the community to determine whether the Government is on track to meet its commitment;

(3) further notes that:

(a) as part of its commitment to grow the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 homes by 2030 the ACT Government has delivered:

(i) 230 homes in 2024-2025; and

(ii) 177 homes in 2025-2026;

(b) at 1 July 2026, 364 more properties in various stages of design and construction, as part of the Growing and Renewing Public Housing Program, Housing Australia Future Fund Round 2, and the Social Housing Accelerator Program; and

(c) in addition to the homes outlined in (3)(a) and (b), the ACT Government has committed over $360 million as part of the 2026-2027 Budget to establish a new Public Housing Pipeline program, funding the construction and purchasing of an additional 450 new public homes, and:

(i) investment in this program results in a forecast stock position at the end 2028-2029 of approximately 12,800, leaving a circa 400-dwelling gap to reach the target of 13,200 homes by 2030;

(ii) to achieve the 2030 target and mitigate inherent uncertainty the Government is using a hybrid delivery model for the Public Housing Pipeline program – combining new builds on greenfield land, redevelopment of existing sites, and market acquisitions – to accelerate delivery and response to market conditions; and

(iii) this approach provides the Government flexibility to maximise opportunities for investment in the delivery of the remaining homes; and

(4) calls on the Government to:

(a) publish, by 30 April 2027, in a single document referred to as 'the Plan', comprehensive information on delivered and planned housing as well as an indicative approach to guide investment required to grow the Housing ACT portfolio to 13,200 homes by 2030, including forecasting for:

(i) annual dwelling delivery targets (net) to 2030;

(ii) number of homes to be constructed, purchased and renewed each year;

(iii) the program the additional dwellings will be delivered under; and

(iv) risks to delivery, including reliance on Commonwealth funding.

(b) publish, by 31 May 2027, a plan to return all vacant public housing properties to service as quickly as possible, including 'hard to let';

(c) as part of the 2027-2028 ACT Housing Budget Statement, include:

(i) the indicative annual dwelling targets, including constructed, purchased and renewed each year to 2030; and

(ii) information on the average vacancy period for each category of vacant houses;

(d) map, by 31 May 2027, existing housing and homelessness services for people experiencing chronic homelessness and identify housing and homelessness service gaps across the ACT; and

(e) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting day of June, annually until 2030, progress towards the 13,200 dwelling target, vacancy reductions and gaps in homelessness services."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

20 PAPERS PRESENTED ON 29 OCTOBER 2026—PAPERS NOTED

The Speaker, pursuant to standing order 211A, proposed—That the papers presented under standing order 211 during the presentation of papers in the routine of business today be noted.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

21 COMPETITION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

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.

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

Leave granted to dispense with the detail stage.

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

22 ECONOMICS, INDUSTRY AND RECREATION—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—GAMBLING AMENDMENT BILLS—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Mr Werner-Gibbings (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on the Gambling and Racing Control (Gambling Exclusion) Amendment Bill 2026 and the Gaming Machine (Harm Prevention and Reduction) Amendment Bill 2026 together.

23 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Two Members' statements were made.

24 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Stephen-Smith (Deputy Chief Minister) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Suspension of standing orders—Extension of adjournment debate: Ms Tough (Minister for Human Rights) moved—That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent the adjournment debate for today continuing for an extra 30 minutes.

Question—put and passed, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.10 pm adjourned until Tuesday, 1 December 2026 at 10 am.

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

Hamish Finlay
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly