



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2020–2021

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 22

WEDNESDAY, 4 AUGUST 2021

- 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 PETITION—PETITION NOTED

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

Mrs Jones, from 201 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to amend the Red Hill Integrated Plan to remove the development on the Federal Golf Course and reject amendments to the Territory Plan that would enable a housing development (Pet 29-21).

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

3 EDUCATION SYSTEM REVIEW—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Berry (Minister for Education and Youth Affairs) made a ministerial statement to update the Assembly on the Government's progress on implementing the recommendations of the Ninth Assembly Standing Committee inquiries into standardised testing, and bullying and violence, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of 23 June 2021, and presented the following paper:

Education system review—Government response to the resolution of the Assembly of 23 June 2021—Ministerial statement, 4 August 2021.

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

4 A.C.T. EMERGENCY SERVICES AGENCY CROSS-BORDER ARRANGEMENTS IN RESPONSE TO NATURAL HAZARDS—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Gentleman (Minister for Police and Emergency Services) made a ministerial statement concerning ACT Emergency Services Agency (ESA) co-ordination and training activities with NSW and Commonwealth agencies in response to natural hazards, and presented the following paper:

ESA cross-border arrangements in response to natural hazards—Ministerial statement, 4 August 2021.

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

Question—put and passed.

5 CIT WODEN AND WODEN INTERCHANGE—UPDATE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Steel (Minister for Skills) made a ministerial statement to update the Assembly on the CIT Woden Campus and Woden Interchange project and presented the following paper:

CIT Woden and Woden Interchange—Update—Ministerial statement, 4 August 2021.

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

6 RECOGNISING A SIGNIFICANT CONTRIBUTION TO THE CANBERRA REGION AND AUSTRALIAN ARTS SECTOR—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Cheyne (Minister for the Arts) made a ministerial statement recognising a significant contribution to the Canberra Region and Australian arts sector and presented the following paper:

Recognising a significant contribution to the Canberra region and Australian arts sector—Ministerial statement, 4 August 2021.

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

Question—put and passed.

7 COAG LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Mr Barr (Chief Minister), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend legislation to deal with the cessation of the Council of Australian Governments, and for related purposes.

Paper: Mr Barr 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 Barr moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Ms Lee—Leader of the Opposition) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

8 COVID-19 EMERGENCY RESPONSE (CHECK-IN INFORMATION) AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020*.

Paper: Ms Stephen-Smith 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 Stephen-Smith moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Ms Lee—Leader of the Opposition) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

9 CRIMES LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2021

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 Rattenbury (Attorney-General) presented a revised explanatory statement to the Bill.

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.

10 A.C.T. INFRASTRUCTURE PLAN—UPDATE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

The order of the day having been read for the resumption of the debate on the motion of Mr Barr (Treasurer)—That the Assembly take note of the paper (viz):

ACT Infrastructure Plan—Update—Ministerial statement, 2 June 2021—

Debate resumed.

Question—put and passed.

11 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

12 PRESENTATION OF PAPER

The Speaker presented the following paper:

Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Chief Minister, dated 2 August 2021, in response to the resolution of the Assembly of 2 June 2021.

13 HOSPITALITY SUPPORT PACKAGE

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

- (1) notes:
 - (a) Canberra’s hospitality and night-time economy has suffered greatly due to severe lockdowns across the country, particularly in NSW, with some restaurants, bars and cafes closing and many others reporting a huge downturn in trade and revenue;
 - (b) the impact on hospitality workers who have lost jobs while others face job losses, reduced hours and continued uncertainty and anxiety; and
 - (c) the ACT’s job market is the weakest in the nation with unemployment surging in June to 4.9 percent from 3.6 percent in May, which ACT Treasury says represents 5900 people who have lost their jobs; and
- (2) calls on the ACT Government to introduce a hospitality support package for hospitality venues, in line with tourism industry support, including:
 - (a) an emergency cash grant for hospitality businesses which have suffered a 30 percent (or greater) downturn to help them cover operating costs;
 - (b) extending the full rebate on the water and sewerage fixed charge component of their Icon Water bills for the first two quarters of 2021-22 to hospitality venues;
 - (c) extending the waiver for outdoor dining permit fees until the end of 2022;
 - (d) extending the scheme to allow pubs, bars and restaurants to sell takeaway alcohol until the end of 2021;
 - (e) waiving food business registration fees until the end of 2022; and
 - (f) working with hospitality businesses on other support measures as the pandemic and restrictions continue.

Ms Cheyne (Minister for Business and Better Regulation) moved the following amendment: Omit all words after “notes” (first occurring), substitute:

- “(a) tourism exposed sections of Canberra’s hospitality and night-time economy has been impacted by severe lockdowns across the country, particularly in NSW;

- (b) the impact on some hospitality workers in tourism exposed venues, such as the National Convention Centre, face reduced hours and continued uncertainty and anxiety;
 - (c) the ACT's labour market has remained resilient overall with many industry sectors still experiencing skills shortages;
 - (d) retail trade increased by 0.9 percent in May 2021, with the main contributors to the increase being food retailing, cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services, and clothing, footwear and personal accessory, including to a record \$79.5 million spend in cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services;
 - (e) the ACT Government continually monitors key economic indicators and will consider additional or extended supports as the situation evolves; and
 - (f) the Chief Minister has written to the Commonwealth Treasurer and Tourism Minister requesting expansion of the COVID-19 Disaster Payment to include hospitality and tourism workers across Australia that have been adversely affected by lockdowns in other geographical locations;
- (2) further notes that the ACT Government has provided a range of supports for hospitality venues, including:
- (a) allowing on-licence venues to sell takeaway alcohol;
 - (b) waiving food business registration fees; and
 - (c) waiving fees for outdoor dining permits fees; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to continue to work with industry stakeholders and the Commonwealth Government to increase support for hospitality and tourism businesses and workers across the country.”.

Debate continued.

Question—That the amendment be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 15		NOES, 8
Mr Barr	Ms Orr	Mr Cain
Mr Braddock	Dr Paterson	Ms Castley
Ms Burch	Mr Pettersson	Mr Hanson
Ms Cheyne	Mr Rattenbury	Mrs Jones
Ms Clay	Mr Steel	Mrs Kikkert
Ms Davidson	Ms Stephen-Smith	Ms Lee
Mr Davis	Ms Vassarotti	Mr Milligan
Mr Gentleman		Mr Parton

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) tourism exposed sections of Canberra’s hospitality and night-time economy has been impacted by severe lockdowns across the country, particularly in NSW;
 - (b) the impact on some hospitality workers in tourism exposed venues, such as the National Convention Centre, face reduced hours and continued uncertainty and anxiety;
 - (c) the ACT’s labour market has remained resilient overall with many industry sectors still experiencing skills shortages;
 - (d) retail trade increased by 0.9 percent in May 2021, with the main contributors to the increase being food retailing, cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services, and clothing, footwear and personal accessory, including to a record \$79.5 million spend in cafes, restaurants and takeaway food services;
 - (e) the ACT Government continually monitors key economic indicators and will consider additional or extended supports as the situation evolves; and
 - (f) the Chief Minister has written to the Commonwealth Treasurer and Tourism Minister requesting expansion of the COVID-19 Disaster Payment to include hospitality and tourism workers across Australia that have been adversely affected by lockdowns in other geographical locations;
- (2) further notes that the ACT Government has provided a range of supports for hospitality venues, including:
 - (a) allowing on-licence venues to sell takeaway alcohol;
 - (b) waiving food business registration fees; and
 - (c) waiving fees for outdoor dining permits fees; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to continue to work with industry stakeholders and the Commonwealth Government to increase support for hospitality and tourism businesses and workers across the country.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

14 LANGUAGE CHALLENGES FACING CANBERRA’S MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY

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

- (1) notes:
 - (a) the central and indispensable contribution of the multicultural community to Canberra’s civic, social, cultural, education and economic vibrancy;
 - (b) the many multicultural community organisations, their employees, leaders and volunteers, that put their time, expertise and energy into making Canberra such a wonderful place to live;

- (c) the National Settlement Outcomes Standards published by the Settlement Council of Australia articulate that best practice settlement, including that “newly arrived individuals and communities are:
 - (i) assisted to develop their knowledge and understanding of Australia’s social and political systems, and reinforce knowledge of their rights and responsibilities;
 - (ii) supported to share their own stories and opinions, to ensure that their voices help to shape Australia’s civic and political landscape; and
 - (iii) supported to preserve their own cultural identity and values (for example, through establishing cultural community associations and facilitating celebrations)”;
 - (d) language is an integral part of cultural retention, and the invaluable work of Canberra’s community language schools to provide language, and cultural connection and training; and
 - (e) the work that the ACT Government has undertaken to improve the accessibility of programs and services for the multicultural community, such as holding community workshops and simplifying grant guidelines;
- (2) further notes that despite these contributions:
- (a) multicultural community organisations have reported having difficulty successfully obtaining government grants to allow them full cultural and civic participation;
 - (b) multicultural communities face a range of barriers in equitably accessing government processes, for example, submissions and consultation; and
 - (c) many local community language schools do not have secure tenure over their classroom space, and their funding allocation has not been updated in more than a decade; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) table the independent review of Canberra community language schools, including its recommendations, and the ACT Government response, by 31 October 2021, and for the ACT Government response to consider ways to:
 - (i) ensure the status and stability of Canberra’s community language schools by investigating long-term affordable access to suitable venues in which to hold their classes;
 - (ii) enhance the quality, efficacy and financial sustainability of Canberra’s community language schools by reviewing per head funding, looking to other states’ funding models as a benchmark; and
 - (iii) investigate providing training through Canberra Institute of Technology at minimal or zero cost to community group volunteers to enhance their skills, invest in the community sector, and provide transferrable skills and qualifications;

- (b) commit to ensuring that the ACT, via both government and community services, meets National Settlement Outcomes Standards published by the Settlement Council of Australia;
- (c) commit to increasing the accessibility of grants to multicultural community groups, for example through:
 - (i) increasing the ability for peak bodies to auspice small grants programs with minimal barriers to entry; and
 - (ii) running sector specific information and training sessions for grant applications;
- (d) commit to increasing civic participation, for example, through targeted support to write submissions, for budget and other inquiry processes; and
- (e) report back to the Assembly by June 2022 on progress, including how participation in (i) submissions and (ii) grant applications and recipients, have changed.

Mrs Jones, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. Insert new paragraph (2)(d):

“(d) newer Australians who have not learned fluent English do not always have the opportunity to do so due to family dynamic and circumstances. This has also been impacted by some English language programs being suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic; and”.

2. After paragraph (3)(d), insert new paragraph (3)(da):

“(da) to analyse the current provision, and uptake by non-English speakers, of English classes and conversation groups and investigate the current provision of auxiliary childcare alongside English language classes available in the ACT; and”.

3. In paragraph (3)(e), omit “June 2022”, substitute “August 2022”.

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes:
 - (a) the central and indispensable contribution of the multicultural community to Canberra’s civic, social, cultural, education and economic vibrancy;
 - (b) the many multicultural community organisations, their employees, leader and volunteers, that put their time, expertise and energy into making Canberra such a wonderful place to live;
 - (c) the National Settlement Outcomes Standards published by the Settlement Council of Australia articulate that best practice settlement, including that ‘newly arrived individuals and communities are:

- (i) assisted to develop their knowledge and understanding of Australia's social and political systems, and reinforce knowledge of their rights and responsibilities;
 - (ii) supported to share their own stories and opinions, to ensure that their voices help to shape Australia's civic and political landscape; and
 - (iii) supported to preserve their own cultural identity and values (for example, through establishing cultural community associations and facilitating celebrations)';
 - (d) language is an integral part of cultural retention, and the invaluable work of Canberra's community language schools to provide language, and cultural connection and training; and
 - (e) the work that the ACT Government has undertaken to improve the accessibility of programs and services for the multicultural community, such as holding community workshops and simplifying grant guidelines;
- (2) further notes that despite these contributions:
- (a) multicultural community organisations have reported having difficulty successfully obtaining government grants to allow them full cultural and civic participation;
 - (b) multicultural communities face a range of barriers in equitably accessing government processes, for example, submissions and consultation;
 - (c) many local community language schools do not have secure tenure over their classroom space, and their funding allocation has not been updated in more than a decade; and
 - (d) newer Australians who have not learned fluent English do not always have the opportunity to do so due to family dynamic and circumstances. This has also been impacted by some English language programs being suspended during the COVID-19 pandemic; and
- (3) calls on the ACT Government to:
- (a) table the independent review of Canberra community language schools, including its recommendations, and the ACT Government response, by 31 October 2021, and for the ACT Government response to consider ways to:
 - (i) ensure the status and stability of Canberra's community language schools by investigating long-term affordable access to suitable venues in which to hold their classes;
 - (ii) enhance the quality, efficacy and financial sustainability of Canberra's community language schools by reviewing per head funding, looking to other states' funding models as a benchmark; and

- (iii) investigate providing training through Canberra Institute of Technology at minimal or zero cost to community group volunteers to enhance their skills, invest in the community sector, and provide transferrable skills and qualifications;
- (b) commit to ensuring that the ACT, via both government and community services, meets National Settlement Outcomes Standards published by the Settlement Council of Australia;
- (c) commit to increasing the accessibility of grants to multicultural community groups, for example through:
 - (i) increasing the ability for peak bodies to auspice small grants programs with minimal barriers to entry; and
 - (ii) running sector specific information and training sessions for grant applications;
- (d) commit to increasing civic participation, for example, through targeted support to write submissions, for budget and other inquiry processes;
- (e) to analyse the current provision, and uptake by non-English speakers, of English classes and conversation groups and investigate the current provision of auxiliary childcare alongside English language classes available in the ACT; and
- (f) report back to the Assembly by August 2022 on progress, including how participation in (i) submissions and (ii) grant applications and recipients, have changed.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

15 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 4.50 pm, adjourned until tomorrow at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting, except Ms Lawder*.

*on leave

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly