



# Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

**Sitting week—1 to 4 June 2021**

**Issue 5/2021**

## **Government Business**

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

### ***Bill introduced***

[Loose-fill Asbestos Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#) (*presented 3 June*)

*Summary:* This bill will amend the definitions of ‘buyback scheme’ and ‘loose-fill asbestos insulation eradication buyback program’ in several Acts to allow the eradication of loose-fill asbestos insulation from Canberra homes to continue beyond closure of the Loose-fill Asbestos Insulation Eradication Scheme Buyback Program on 17 August 2021.

### ***Bills debated***

[Statute Law Amendment Bill 2021](#): This bill will amend a number of laws and regulations and forms part of the technical amendments program for ACT legislation. The bill includes amendments to the *Controlled Sports Act 2019* to include the controlled sports registrar as someone who may be informed or advised about controlled sports issues by an advisory committee. The bill also proposes amendments to the *Mental Health Act 2014* to include a registered affected person as someone who may appear and give evidence at the hearing of certain proceedings. The bill also proposes a number of other minor and technical amendments to ACT legislation.

*Proceedings:* Debate resumed on this bill on 2 June with all parties supporting the proposed legislation. The bill was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

[Courts and Other Justice Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#)

*Summary:* This bill will make a number of minor and technical amendments to Territory laws relating to the operations and procedures of ACT courts and tribunals. The bill also includes amendments to enhance access to justice for victims of financial abuse and proposes reforms to support the functions of the Public Trustee and Guardian and the ACT Judicial Council.

*Proceedings:* The bill received the support of all parties when debate resumed on 3 May and was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

## **Ministerial statements**

The Treasurer made a ministerial statement on 2 June providing an update on the **ACT's infrastructure plan**. During the statement the Treasurer highlighted the significant changes since the release of the Government's 10-year infrastructure plan in 2019, including the COVID-19 pandemic, but added that having a clear plan already in place allowed the ACT to move quickly to reconfirm major projects and to fast track the rollout of a large number of smaller shovel-ready or screwdriver-ready projects. The Treasurer advised that the Government will be undertaking consultation and will develop and release an update to the ACT infrastructure plan by the end of 2021.

**Lead remediation at the Old Bus Depot Markets** was the subject of a ministerial statement made by the Minister for the Arts on 2 June. During the statement the Minister provided an update to the Assembly on the events that have occurred over the last 18 months and outlined details of the cleaning and remediation work being undertaken. The Minister also confirmed that stallholders and market operators will be reimbursed for property that had to be disposed of during the work as it was not safe for use.

The Minister for the Environment made a statement concerning **growing a food bowl for Canberra** on 3 June. During the statement the Minister informed the Assembly that she would be developing and releasing a draft policy for public consultation that lays out a clear vision of the settings needed to grow a food bowl for Canberra and transform its food system. The Minister also indicated that there is an incredible opportunity to inspire and facilitate a sustainable food and agriculture system for the ACT and surrounding region.

On 3 June, the Minister for Mental Health provided an update on a resolution passed by the Assembly on 4 June concerning **mental health services** in the Territory. During the update the Minister outlined a number of achievements made by the Government since the passing of the resolution and also detailed investments made to further support Canberrans as they emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic. The Minister stated there was still much to do in relation to supporting those with poor mental health and indicated that the Government is committed to working with stakeholders to make sure that the ACT can use any and all learnings from work undertaken to make sure mental health support services for Canberrans continue to improve.

Other ministerial statements made during the sitting week related to:

**District level planning**—Minister for Planning and Land Management (3 June)

**New school builds to cater for growth in our community**—Minister for Education and Youth Affairs (3 June)

**Transport investment in the Molonglo Valley**—Minister for Transport and City Services (3 June)

**Update on the Government's response to the COVID-19 emergency**—Minister for Health (2 June)

The full text of the statement made by Minister 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*

### *Motions debated*

A **proposed fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty** was the subject of a motion moved by Ms Clay MLA on 2 June 2021. Along with acknowledging that the scientific consensus is clear that human activities are primarily responsible for accelerating global climate change the motion included noting that the Paris Climate Agreement is silent on coal, oil and gas. The motion also noted that a new, global movement is emerging, calling for a new fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty. The motion called on the ACT Government to join with other cities, organisations, and individuals to endorse the call for an international treaty and to send a letter urging the Australian Government, and other States and Territories, to similarly endorse the global initiative for a fossil fuel non-proliferation treaty. The Government indicated support for the motion during debate. While highlighting that the proposed treaty had not been endorsed by any major state or national legislature around the world, the Opposition did not oppose the passing of the motion by the Assembly.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

A motion moved by Ms Lee MLA on 2 June called on the Government to provide funding certainty for **Canberra Community Law (CCL)** within the next seven days. The motion also included noting that the CCL has been providing free legal services to Canberrans on low incomes for over 30 years and continues to experience increased demand and greater complexity due to the COVID-19 pandemic. During debate an amendment was moved by the Government that noted that Community Legal Centres (CLCs) are a key support in Canberra's legal assistance sector alongside Legal Aid ACT and the ACT's CLCs include the Aboriginal Legal Services NSW/ACT, Canberra Community Law, Women's Legal Centre, the Consumer Law Centre and the Environmental Defenders Office. The amendment also included calling on the Federal Government to recommit support for the ACT's legal assistance sector. An amendment moved by the Opposition to the proposed Government amendment was negated following a vote of the Assembly. The amendment called on the ACT Government to provide funding certainty for the ACT's CLCs within seven days. The Government's amendment was then agreed to.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

A motion calling on the Government to explore whether there is benefit for Canberra to apply to become a **National Park City** through dialogue with the National Park City Foundation and community consultation was moved by Dr Paterson MLA on 3 June. The motion included noting that Canberra was recently named the world's most sustainable city and, to date, London is the only city to be declared a National Park City. The motion also included noting that Canberra possesses the requisite qualities to become a National Park City. Although not opposing the passage of the motion, during debate the Opposition outlined a number of areas where they did not agree with some of the points raised in the motion.

The motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Further items debated during the sitting week related to:

**Development of the Gungahlin Town Centre**—Moved by Mr Braddock MLA on 11 May

**Education outcomes for child and young people in out-of-home care**—Mrs Kikkert MLA

The full debate on the above motions can be accessed from the Assembly [Hansard](#) site.

## Petitions and petition response

The following petitions were lodged—

- Place naming conventions and public statutes—Increasing the prominence of women—lodged by Ms Orr (2 June)  
This petition was referred to the Standing Committee on Economy and Gender and Economic Equality.
- Traffic management plan for the southern streets of Gordon—lodged by Mr Davis (2 June)  
This petition was referred to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services
- Proposed footpath development in Fisher—lodged by Dr Paterson (2 June)

The following ministerial response to a petition was lodged—

- Alcohol, tobacco and other drug treatment services sector (*Minister for Health*)

A copy of the petitions and petition response can be found on the Assembly [Hansard](#) site.

## Papers Presented

The following are papers of interest that were presented by the Manager of Government Business during the sitting week:

- Auditor-General's Report 1/2021—Land Management Agreements—Government response
- ACT Children and Young People Death Review Committee—Annual Report 2020

## Committee Activities

### *Committee report*

#### **Scrutiny Committee**

##### [Scrutiny Report 5](#)

This report contained the committee's comments on two bills, two pieces of subordinate legislation and two government responses.

## Members of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT

### *Electorate of Brindabella*

Ms Joy Burch (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Johnathan Davis (ACT Greens)

Mr Mick Gentleman (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Nicole Lawder (Canberra Liberals)

Mr Mark Parton (Canberra Liberals)

***Electorate of Ginninderra***

Ms Yvette Berry (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Peter Cain (Canberra Liberals)

Ms Tara Cheyne (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Jo Clay (ACT Greens)

Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert (Canberra Liberals)

***Electorate of Kurrajong***

Mr Andrew Barr (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Elizabeth Lee (Canberra Liberals)

Mr Shane Rattenbury (ACT Greens)

Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Rebecca Vassarotti (ACT Greens)

***Electorate of Murrumbidgee***

Emma Davidson (ACT Greens)

Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC (Canberra Liberals)

Mrs Giulia Jones (Canberra Liberals)

Dr Marisa Paterson (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Chris Steel (Australian Labor Party)

***Electorate of Yerrabi***

Mr Andrew Braddock (ACT Greens)

Ms Leanne Castley (Canberra Liberals)

Mr James Milligan (Canberra Liberals)

Ms Suzanne Orr (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Michael Pettersson (Australian Labor Party)

**Next Sitting**

**Tuesday, 22 June 2021.**

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