



Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

Sitting week—6 to 8 October 2021

Issue 9/2021

No confidence motion

On 6 October, a motion of no confidence in the **Minister for Corrections** was moved by the Opposition. During debate the Opposition outlined reasons for moving the motion with the Government and ACT Greens stating the reasons why they would not support the motion.

The motion was negated following a vote of the Assembly.

The full text of the debate can be access from the [Assembly Hansard](#) site.

Government Business

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

Bills introduced

[Appropriation Bill 2021-2022 \(presented 6 October\)](#)

Summary: This bill will appropriate money for the purposes of the Territory for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2021.

[Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2021-2022 \(presented 6 October\)](#)

Summary: This bill will appropriate money for expenditure in relation to the Office of the Legislative Assembly and officers of the Assembly, including the Auditor-General, the Electoral Commissioner and the Integrity Commissioner for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2021.

[City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Amendment Bill 2021 \(presented 6 October\)](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act 2017* to alter the definition of ‘land’ in the Act to remove limitations on the operations of the Suburban Land Agency where the leasehold system is used. The bill will also remove references to ‘leases’ to ensure that, if needed in the future, the Agency has the legal authority to buy and sell land in New South Wales.

[Planning and Unit Titles Legislation Amendment Bill 2021 \(presented 8 October\)](#)

Summary: This bill will make minor policy, procedural and technical amendments to a number of Territory laws administered by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate and the Justice and Community Safety Directorate.

Bills debated

[Appropriation Bill 2021-2022](#)

Summary: This bill will appropriate money for the purposes of the Territory for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2021.

Proceedings: Debate resumed at the in principle stage of this bill on 8 October with the leaders of the Opposition and ACT Greens making budget reply speeches, debate was then adjourned. The Assembly's standing committees will now inquire into and report on the bill with public hearings being held from 15 to 29 October. The schedule of committee hearings can be found [here](#).

[Appropriation \(Office of the Legislative Assembly\) Bill 2021-2022](#)

Summary: This bill will appropriate money for expenditure in relation to the Office of the Legislative Assembly and officers of the Assembly, including the Auditor-General, the Electoral Commissioner and the Integrity Commissioner for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2021.

Proceedings: The Assembly's standing committees will now inquire into and report on the bill with public hearings being held from 15 to 29 October. The schedule of committee hearings can be found [here](#).

[Operational Efficiencies \(COVID-19\) Legislation Amendment Bill 2021](#)

Summary: This bill will amend several Territory statutes to permanently adopt a number of legislative measures taken during the COVID-19 emergency and will also extend the expiry of measures put in place to assist the business activities of incorporated associations.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on this bill on 7 October with the bill being agreed to in principle after receiving the support of all parties in the Assembly. During the detail stage a number of amendments were moved by the Government with the Opposition opposing a number of the clauses, however, following a vote of the Assembly the opposed clauses were agreed to.

The amended bill was passed.

Motions debated

Territory rights was the subject of a motion moved on 8 October. The motion was co-sponsored by the Minister for Human Rights and the Attorney-General and included noting that, with the exception of New South Wales, all Australian state parliaments have passed legislation to establish a voluntary assisted dying scheme. The motion also noted that all parties in the Assembly had urged the Commonwealth Government and Parliament to lift the current restrictions on ACT residents' right to consider this issue. The motion included calling on the Assembly to reaffirm its commitment to ensuring that the Assembly should have the same ability to debate the important issue of a voluntary assisted dying scheme as other legislatures across Australia and calling on the Assembly to refer the motion to all senators and members of the Commonwealth Parliament.

The motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

A motion co-sponsored by the Government, ACT Greens and Opposition noting that 15 October is **Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day** was moved in the Assembly on 8 October. The motion included acknowledging the loss and grief resulting from pregnancy and infant loss and was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Ministerial statements

The Minister for Health made a ministerial statement on 6 October providing an update on the **ACT Government response to COVID-19**. During the statement the minister presented the following paper:

- Consideration of human rights implications of imposed Public Health Emergency Directions—Update, October 2021.

Automated vehicles was the subject of a ministerial statement made by the Minister for Transport and City Services on 7 October 2021. During the statement the minister outlined the safety benefits of automated vehicles and indicated that he looked forward to his ministerial counterparts at the commonwealth, state and territory level developing consistent, regulatory and safety protocols so that automated vehicle technology can be trialled and introduced safety to ACT roads when they become available.

The Minister for Mental Health made a ministerial statement on 7 October in relation to **World Mental Health Day**. The minister stated that this year's World Mental Health Day was Sunday, 10 October and during the statement the minister outlined the Government's approach to supporting and improving mental health and informed the Assembly that all states and territories are currently working together, with the Commonwealth government, to develop a multilateral National Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement.

COVID safe working arrangements for the ACT Public Sector was the subject of a ministerial statement made by the Minister for Industrial Relations and Workplace Safety on 8 October with the minister stating that the Government has comprehensive work, health, and safety measures in place to ensure the health and safety of Territory public servants during COVID-19 pandemic. During the statement the minister thanked all public servants for the effective response to the pandemic and for their ongoing work to keep Canberra going during these challenging times.

Other ministerial statements made during the sitting week related to:

Consultation during lockdown related to planning and development—Minister for Planning and Land Management (*7 October*)

International Day of Older Persons—Minister for Seniors, Veterans, Families and Community Services (*8 October*)

Progress of Government commitments to reduce harm from gaming while supporting sustainable clubs—Minister for Gaming (*8 October*)

Threatened Species: A Road to Recovery—Minister for the Environment (*7 October*)

The full text of the statements made by Ministers 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

Motion debated

On 7 October a motion was moved by the Opposition proposing that a select committee be established to consider and report on any matter relating to the **Light Rail Stage 2 project**. During debate the Opposition outlined reasons for bringing the proposal forward to the Assembly, including the fact that the Light Rail Stage 2 project was the biggest infrastructure project in the history of the ACT and that Canberrans should be aware of what the expenditure will deliver. An amendment was moved by the Government that noted the significant disruption to intra-city travel and business operations while construction proceeds and also noted the contents of the Auditor-General's report entitled *Canberra Light Rail Stage 2A: Economic Analysis*. The Government's amendment proposed that the Assembly request the Standing Committee on Public Accounts to consider and report on the Light Rail Stage 2 Project with a particular view to reporting on issues raised by the Auditor-General's report. The amendment was agreed to following a vote of the Assembly.

The amended motion was passed.

The full terms of the above motion can be found in the [Minutes of Proceedings](#).

Private Members' Business

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

Motions debated

Gender pay gaps was the subject of a motion moved by Ms Orr MLA on 6 October. The motion noted that gender inequality, including inequality of pay, has been impacting women in Australia, and around the world, for centuries. It also included noting that the ACT Public Service (ACTPS) has an overall gender pay gap of one percent or less, with 65 percent of the ACTPS employees being women. The motion called on the Government to undertake more detailed reporting on the gender pay gap in the ACTPS. During debate both the Opposition and the ACT Greens indicated support for the motion. An amendment moved by the Opposition, which called on the Government to also provide a breakdown of the pay gap experienced by non-binary and gender-diverse people from diverse groups, was agreed to.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

A motion moved by Ms Lee MLA on 6 October related to the **cost of living pressures in the Territory**.

The motion noted the ACT Council of Social Service's 2021 Cost of Living Report which highlighted steep increases to cost of living as a driving factor for high rates of poverty in the ACT and also included noting that the last review of the ACT Concessions Program was in 2017.

The motion called on the Government to recognise that many Canberra families have, for many years, been subjected to increased cost of living pressures that have been exacerbated by the economic impacts of COVID-19 and to undertake a full review of the purpose, adequacy, fairness and impacts of the ACT Targeted Assistance Strategy to ensure concessions are targeted to need, by June 2022. During debate an amendment was moved by the Government that included noting that Canberrans enjoy, overall, a high standard of living, with access to free high-quality healthcare, free quality public education and well-planned and delivered infrastructure. The amendment also included noting that the ACT unemployment rate remained one of the lowest rates in the country and that the Government is directly addressing inequality and hardship through the pandemic by implementing a number of measures. The amendment called on the Government to use every tool at its disposal to foster a strong and fair economic recovery from the pandemic-induced economic downturn, while continuing to address day-to-day cost stresses and to review and update the ACT's Targeted Assistance Strategy in the first half of 2022. The Government's amendment was agreed to following a vote of the Assembly.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

Social and economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic was the subject of a motion moved by Mr Braddock MLA on 7 October. The motion included noting that the social and economic impacts of the ACT's COVID outbreak are having disproportionate impacts across the community, deepening inequality which has particularly affected groups already experiencing disadvantage. The motion also noted that the ACT Government has an essential role in providing long-term, strategic leadership, as well as supports and services, to help Canberra's social recovery from COVID and called on the Government to develop an ACT Social Recovery plan to address the social and economic impacts of COVID. The motion called on the leaders of all parties represented in the Assembly to write to the Federal leaders of their respective political parties calling for an increase to, and an indexation of, all social security payments to that these are above the Henderson Poverty Line.

The motion was passed by the Assembly without amendment following a vote on a number of parts of the motion.

Bill debated

Crimes (Stealthing) Amendment Bill 2021

Summary: This bill will amend the *Crimes Act 1900* to define stealthing as a factor that would negate consent.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on this bill on 7 October with all parties in the Assembly support it in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Further items debated during the sitting week related to:

Funding for youth mental health services—Mr Pettersson MLA (*8 October*)

Healthcare services in the Territory—Mrs Jones MLA (*7 October*)

Molonglo Valley facilities—Mrs Jones MLA (*8 October*)

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

Petitions and petition response

The following petitions were lodged—

- Campbell—Proposed implementation of a parking and traffic management plan (two petitions)—lodged by Ms Lee (*6 October*)

These petitions were referred to the Standing Committee on Planning, Transport and City Services

- Lyons shops—Proposed upgrade of facilities—Petition lodged by Mrs Jones (*8 October 2021*)

The following ministerial response to a petition was lodged—

- West Belconnen—Keeping the community green waste and landscape supplies open at Parkwood Road (*Minister for Transport and City Services*) (*6 October*)

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 during the sitting week:

- Approval of Variation No 370 to the Territory Plan—East Yowani Estate—Lyneham section 67 part block 7—Zone change and amendments to the Lyneham Precinct Map and Code
- Annual Reports 2020-2021—
 - ACT Auditor-General
 - ACT Judicial Council
 - ACT Ombudsman
 - Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission
 - Operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*
- Auditor-General's Report—Report 8/2021—Canberra Light Rail Stage 2A: Economic Analysis
- Corflute recycling trial report
- Government responses to Assembly resolutions—
 - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-led review—Over-representation in the Territory's justice system (*resolution of 9 February 2021*)
 - Endoscopy services—Wait times (*resolution of 22 April 2021*)
- Report of the Independent Reviewer for the period 1 January to 30 June 2021, pursuant to the Government Agencies (Campaign Advertising) Act

Committee Activities

Committee reports

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee

[Report 5—Draft Variation to the Territory Plan No 364: Gungahlin Town Centre: Amendments to the Gungahlin Precinct Map and Code](#)

Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Report 9

This report contained the committee's comments on two bills, 22 pieces of subordinate legislation, two government responses, two private member responses and one national regulation.

Committee statements

Administration and Procedure—Standing Committee

On 6 October, the chair of the committee informed the Assembly that the committee had, earlier in the year, commissioned a **review of the committee support function**. The chair advised that the report had been submitted to the committee by the reviewer on 17 August and had been authorised for publication. The committee has asked the Clerk to consider the review's suggestions and report back to the committee about implementation of those suggestions. The report entitled [Review of the Committee Support Function](#) was presented by the chair.

Planning, Transport and City Services—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee, on 6 October, made a statement informing the Assembly that the committee would not inquire into referred petitions relating to **Chisholm Village** and **Yerrabi Pond** and outlined the reasons for this.

A further statement was made by the chair of the committee informing the Assembly that the committee had resolved to conduct an inquiry into a referred petition relating to **revised speed limits in parts of civic**.

Public Accounts—Standing Committee

On 6 October, the chair of the committee made a number of statements in relation to the committee's consideration of certain **Auditor-General's reports**.

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, 9 November 2021.

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