



Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

Sitting of 4 June 2020

Issue 6/2020

Election of Speaker of Kiribati Parliament

The Speaker made a brief statement on 4 June informing the Assembly of the election of a new Speaker of the Parliament of Kiribati, the Honourable Tangariki Rete, noting that it was the first time a woman had been elected to the position.

The ACT Assembly has a twinning arrangement with the Kiribati Parliament through the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's twinning program.

Government Business

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

Bills introduced

[Electricity Feed-in \(Renewable Energy Premium\) Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Electricity Feed-in (Renewable Energy Premium) Act 2008* to include provisions to allow electricity distributors to pass on reasonable costs of administering the ACT Small and Medium-scale Feed-in Tariff Scheme to eligible entities. The amendments also strengthen the legislative requirements for data collection and record keeping.

[Financial Management Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Financial Management Act 1996* to enable the increase of appropriation allowed under the Act during the 2020-2021 supply period from 50 to 100 percent of the 2019-2020 Territory budget. This is required due to the delay in presentation of the 2020-2021 Budget as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Planning and Development Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Planning and Development Act 2007*, the *Planning and Development Regulation 2008* and the *Land Titles Act 1925* to facilitate the establishment of a University of New South Wales campus in the Territory.

[Public Health Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Public Health Act 1997* by proposing changes to the compensation arrangements under the Act. The amendments provide that compensation will not be payable to an otherwise eligible person if the loss or damage is suffered as a result of anything done in the exercise of a function under Part 7 of the Act in relation to a COVID-19 declaration, while the declaration was in force. Part 7 of the Act relates to public health emergencies.

Bill debated

[Planning and Environment Legislation Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will make minor and technical amendments to a number of Territory laws to improve the operation of legislation relating to environment, planning and energy law, administered by the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, the Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate and one piece of legislation administered by the Transport Canberra and City Services Directorate.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on 4 June with all parties in the Assembly supporting the proposed legislation. The bill was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

Ministerial statement

On 4 June the Minister for Health updated the Assembly on the **ACT Government's response to the COVID-19 emergency**.

A full record of the debates and statement can be accessed at [Hansard](#).

Crossbench Executive Member's Business

Motion debated

Noise created by **commercial waste collection** in mixed-use areas was the subject of a motion moved by Mr Rattenbury MLA on 4 June. The motion included noting that the *ACT Commercial Waste Industry Code of Conduct* was last updated in 1998 and also noting that residents of mixed-use areas should not be unfairly impacted by noise from waste collection that could be undertaken at more appropriate times. The motion also called on the Government to review and update the Code and report back to the Assembly on the proposed options for the Code before the beginning of the 2020 caretaker period.

During debate amendments were moved by the Opposition that included noting that the ACT Government has rigid and cumbersome requirements for the design of rubbish collection areas which are difficult to comply with, lead to sub-optimal design outcomes and cause considerable delays in the approval process. The Opposition's amendments were negated.

The original motion was agreed to by the Assembly.

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

Restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic was the subject of a motion moved by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr Coe MLA, on 4 June. The motion included noting that Canberrans' responsible behaviour had contributed to the ACT's relative success dealing with COVID-19 and also included calling on the ACT Government to support ACT households, community groups and businesses by easing restrictions such that they are at least comparable with NSW. During debate an amendment was moved by the Government outlining the steps taken, or being taken, by the Government to deal with the pandemic including ongoing economic measures and noting that the ACT Government and Chief Health Officer will continue to provide regular updates to the community through all available and appropriate means. The ACT Greens indicated its support for the Government's amendment during debate. The amendment was agreed to by the Assembly.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

A motion relating to **mental health services** in the Territory was moved by Mrs Dunne MLA on 4 June. The motion including noting the importance of government providing a public mental health system that is efficient, timely, effective and safe for patients and staff and also included noting a number of statistics in relation to treatment currently provided to mental health patients in the ACT. The motion sought to refer specific matters in relation to the issue to the ACT Human Rights Commission for inquiry and report. During debate an amendment was moved by the Government that included noting the establishment of an Office for Mental Health to oversee mental health services and also outlined initiatives taken by the Government to support mental health services in the Territory. The amendment also highlighted a number of reviews undertaken or underway in the mental health portfolio. The Government's amendment was agreed to following a vote of the Assembly.

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

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

Papers Presented

The following papers of interest were presented on 4 June 2020:

- ACT Public Health Services—Cultural Review Implementation—Inaugural Annual Review
- Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024—Plan, Overview and Statement
- Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the 2020 ACT Legislative Assembly Election—A special report by the ACT Electoral Commission
- Report on COVID-19 Measures for the period 8-30 April 2020 (Report No 1)—Presented pursuant to section 3 of the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020*

Committee Activities

Committee reports presented

COVID-19 Pandemic Response—Select Committee

[Interim Report 2](#)

Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee

[Report 10—Report on Inquiry into Maternity Services in the ACT](#)

Scrutiny Committee

[Scrutiny Report 43](#)

This report contained the committee's comments on two, 40 pieces of subordinate legislation and two government responses.

Committee statements

Education, Employment and Youth Affairs—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee provided an update on the committee's inquiry into **youth mental health** in the Territory and informed the Assembly that the committee had resolved to re-open the submission process until 19 June 2020. The chair also advised that the committee intended to present its report by the last sitting day in August 2020.

Justice and Community Safety—Standing Committee

The chair of the committee made a statement in relation to a revised meeting schedule for the committee. The revised schedule was a result of the amended sitting pattern for the Assembly.

The full text of the statements can be found in the [Minutes of Proceedings](#).

Response to committee report

COVID-19 Pandemic Response—Select Committee

Interim Report 1—Government response

Members of the Legislative Assembly for the ACT

Electorate of Brindabella

Ms Joy Burch (Australian Labor Party)

Mr Mick Gentleman (Australian Labor Party)

Ms Nicole Lawder (Canberra Liberals)

Mr Mark Parton (Canberra Liberals)

Mr Andrew Wall (Canberra Liberals)

Electorate of Ginninderra

Ms Yvette Berry (Australian Labor Party)
Ms Tara Cheyne (Australian Labor Party)
Mrs Vicki Dunne (Canberra Liberals)
Mrs Elizabeth Kikkert (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Gordon Ramsay (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Kurrajong

Mr Andrew Barr (Australian Labor Party)
Miss Candice Burch (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Elizabeth Lee (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Shane Rattenbury (ACT Greens)
Ms Rachel Stephen-Smith (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Murrumbidgee

Ms Bec Cody (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Jeremy Hanson CSC (Canberra Liberals)
Mrs Giulia Jones (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Caroline Le Couteur (ACT Greens)
Mr Chris Steel (Australian Labor Party)

Electorate of Yerrabi

Mr Alistair Coe (Canberra Liberals)
Mr Deepak Gupta (Australian Labor Party)
Mr James Milligan (Canberra Liberals)
Ms Suzanne Orr (Australian Labor Party)
Mr Michael Pettersson (Australian Labor Party)

Next Sitting

Thursday, 18 June 2020.

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