



Matters of public importance—your Assembly @ work

Sitting of 30 July 2020

Issue 10/2020

Acknowledgement of Traditional Custodians in the Ngunnawal language

For the first time in the Legislative Assembly, the Speaker, on 30 July, presented the acknowledgement of country in the Ngunnawal language, the traditional language of the custodians. At the conclusion of the acknowledgement the Speaker made a statement in relation to this significant event. The Chief Minister, Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the ACT Greens also made statements in support of the new practice that will now be repeated at the beginning of each sitting of the Assembly.

At the conclusion of the statements the Assembly suspended for a short period to acknowledge the importance of the occasion.

Condolence Motion

A condolence motion was moved by the Chief Minister expressing the Assembly's shock and dismay at the sudden and tragic loss of ACT Senior Australian of the Year and 2015 Canberra Citizen of the Year, Sue Salthouse. The Leader of the Opposition, Leader of the ACT Greens, Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Minister for Disability, Ms Lawder MLA and Minister for Health addressed the Assembly in support of the motion.

At the conclusion all Members present stood in silence in support of the motion.

Government Business

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

Bill introduced

[Mental Health Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Mental Health Act 2015* by improving the rights of mental health consumers subject to the Act through the inclusion of additional safeguards to apprehension and provides additional clarity about contraventions orders. The bill will also extend the affected persons register and providing a mechanism for the ACT Civil and Administrative Tribunal to consider the views of the affected person and the Victims of Crime Commissioner when orders are being contemplated. Amendments to the Act will also provide the Chief Psychiatrist with a power to issue guidelines that can provide greater detail on complex questions of operationalising the Act.

Bills debated

[Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Amendment Bill 2020](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Elected Body Act 2008* to enable broadcasting of the public hearings of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB). The bill also imposes timeframes on both the ATSIEB and the Government in relation to the presentation of reports and Government responses to those reports. Amendments to the Act will also include imposing a 'caretaker period' in the lead-up to an ATSIEB election. The bill also recognises the ability for the ATSIEB to provide advice to ministers about the views of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

Proceedings: The bill received support of all parties in the Assembly when debate resumed on 30 July and the bill was agreed to in principle. During the detail stage a number of technical amendments moved by the Government were agreed to.

The amended bill was passed by the Assembly.

[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.

Proceedings: Debate resumed on this bill on 30 July with all parties supporting the proposed legislation. The bill was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

[Public Health Amendment Bill 2020 \(No 2\)](#)

Summary: This bill will amend the *Public Health Act 1997* by inserting provisions to allow the relevant Minister to determine a quarantine fee that may be incurred by a person required to quarantine at a place other than the person's home because of COVID-19.

Proceedings: When debate resumed on the proposed legislation on 30 July it received the support of both the Opposition and the ACT Greens, with the parties outlining reasons for doing so. The bill was agreed to in principle.

The bill was passed by the Assembly without amendment.

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

Private Members' Business

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

Motions debated

A motion in relation to the transfer of **long service leave entitlements** for certain non-public sector industries was moved by Ms Cody MLA on 30 July 2020. The motion included noting those industries currently included in the Portable Long Service Leave Scheme and noting that there are other trades,

such as hairdressing, where workers change employers without changing industries. The motion called on the Government to work with Hair Stylists Australia, the ACT hairdressing industry, employers, employees, employee bodies and Registered Training Organisations to determine how to include hairdressing in the *Long Service Leave (Portable Scheme) Act 2009*. During debate the Opposition outlined its reasons for not supporting the motion with the ACT Greens stating that it would be supporting the motion's passage through the Assembly.

The motion was agreed to following a vote of the Assembly.

A motion was moved by Mr Coe MLA on 30 July noting there had been no progress regarding **housing and rental affordability** in the Territory and that annual rent of \$30 000 was out of reach for many of Canberra's 'working poor'. The motion also included calling on the Government to bring down the cost of renting in Canberra by stopping increases in rates and taxes, bringing clarity and confidence to the planning system, delivering certainty to land supply and ensuring that the rate of construction of townhouses and free standing homes keeps pace with demand. During debate an amendment was moved by the Government that highlighted the measures taken by the Government to support and protect people renting in the ACT. The amendment also noted measures taken by the Government to protect residential tenants during the COVID-19 pandemic and measures taken to support people to purchase their own home. The amendment included calling on the Government to continue to implement its affordable housing agenda and called on the Legislative Assembly to commit to protect Tuggeranong natural grasslands west of the Murrumbidgee from urban housing development. The ACT Greens outlined its reasons for supporting the Government's amendment. The amendment was agreed to following a vote of the Assembly

The amended motion was passed by the Assembly.

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

Papers Presented

The following papers of interest were presented on 30 July 2020:

- ACT Volunteering Statement—Action Plan 2018-2021
- ACT Carers Strategy 2018-2028—Progress report 2020
- Report on COVID-19 Measures for the period 1-30 June 2020 (Report No 3)—Presented pursuant to section 3 of the *COVID-19 Emergency Response Act 2020*
- Statement of leases granted for direct sales for the period 1 April to 30 June 2020
- Status of the public health emergency due to COVID-19—Report of the Chief Health Officer—24 July 2020

A copy of the above papers can be found on the [Assembly](#) website.

Petition Response

The following ministerial response to a petition was lodged—

- Proposed carpark adjacent to Cooleman Court (*Minister for Planning and Land Management*)

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

Committee Activities

Committee reports presented

Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee

[Report 11—Report on Child and Youth Protection Services \(Part 2\)](#)

Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee

[Report 13—Draft Variation No 363—Curtin group centre and adjacent residential areas: zone changes and amendments to the Curtin precinct map and code](#)

Scrutiny Committee

[Scrutiny Report 47](#)

This report contained the committee's comments on 76 pieces of subordinate legislation and comments on fees instruments.

Committee statements

Economic Development and Tourism—Standing Committee

The chair made a statement in relation to the committee's consideration of statutory appointments for the period 1 January to 30 June 2020. During the statement the chair indicated that the committee had considered six statutory appointments to the Cultural Facilities Corporation Board. At the conclusion of the statement the chair presented a schedule of statutory appointments considered by the committee for the specified period.

Environment and Transport and City Services—Standing Committee

The chair made a statement in relation to the committee's consideration of 13 statutory appointments and reappointments for the period 1 January to 30 June 2020. At the conclusion of the statement the chair presented a schedule of statutory appointments considered by the committee for the specified period.

Health, Ageing and Community Services—Standing Committee

The chair made a statement in relation to the committee's consideration of statutory appointments for the period 1 January to 30 June 2020. During the statement the chair indicated the committee had considered no statutory appointments during the reporting period.

Planning and Urban Renewal—Standing Committee

The chair made a statement in relation to the committee's consideration of statutory appointments for the period 1 January to 30 June 2020. During the statement the chair stated that the committee had considered 10 statutory appointments. At the conclusion of the statement the chair presented a schedule of statutory appointments considered by the committee for the specified period.

The full text of the statement can be found on the Assembly [Hansard](#) site.

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, 13 August 2020.

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