



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2024–2025–2026

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 64

FRIDAY, 12 JUNE 2026

- 1 The Assembly met at 10 am, pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Hanson) 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 wanggiralidjinyin.

This is Ngunnawal country.

Today we are all meeting on Ngunnawal country.

We always pay respect to Elders, female and male.

The Speaker asked Members to stand in silence and pray or reflect on their responsibilities to the people of the Australian Capital Territory.

2 PETITIONS—PETITIONS NOTED

The Clerk announced that the following Members had lodged petitions for presentation:

Mr Braddock, from 152 and 138 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to include certain conflicts of World War One in the school curriculum (e-Pet 013-26 and Pet 062-26).

Ms Carrick, from 219 and 361 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to reconsider the access of traffic to the CIT Plaza in Woden (e-Pet 024-26 and Pet 061-26).

Pursuant to standing order 99A, these petitions stand referred to the Standing Committee on Environment and Planning.

Mr Cain, from 488 and 11 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to acknowledge the current condition of the GIO Stadium and develop a clear plan for its future (e-Pet 035-26 and Pet 060-26).

Mr Braddock, from 287 and 212 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to provide a solution to the safety and maintenance issues at the Kaleen Community Hall (e-Pet 037-26 and Pet 063-26).

Mr Cain, from 8 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to restore the long-term funding for senior fitness programs at the Bruce CIT (Pet 059-26).

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

Paper: Mr Braddock, by leave, presented the following paper:

Kaleen Community Hall car park condition—Copy of photos (x2).

Debate continued.

Paper: Mr Cain, by leave, presented the following paper:

Petition which does not conform with the standing orders—GIO Stadium—Refurbishment—Mr Cain (4,711 signatures).

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

3 WELLBEING FRAMEWORK—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Barr (Chief Minister) made a ministerial statement concerning the ACT Wellbeing Framework and presented the following paper:

Wellbeing Framework—Ministerial statement, 12 June 2026.

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

4 BUDGET INVESTMENTS—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Orr (Minister for Climate Change, Environment, Energy and Water) made a ministerial statement concerning the ACT Government's 2026-2027 budget investments within her portfolios and presented the following paper:

Budget Investments—Ministerial statement, 12 June 2026.

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

5 BUDGET INVESTMENTS—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Pettersson (Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations) made a ministerial statement concerning the ACT Government's 2026-2027 budget investments within his portfolios and presented the following paper:

Budget Investments—Ministerial statement, 12 June 2026.

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

Question—put and passed.

6 RETIREMENT OF CLERK

The Speaker moved—That this Assembly places on record its appreciation of the long and meritorious service to the Legislative Assembly by the Clerk of the Assembly, Mr Tom Duncan, upon his impending retirement and extend to him, his wife, Kirsten, and daughters Matilda and Cassandra, every wish for health and happiness in the future.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

7 BUDGET INVESTMENTS—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) made a ministerial statement concerning the ACT Government's 2026-2027 budget investments across her portfolios and presented the following paper:

Budget Investments—Ministerial statement, 12 June 2026.

Dr Paterson moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

8 DISCHARGE OF ORDER OF THE DAY—ASSEMBLY BUSINESS

The order of the day having been called on—

Mr Parton (Leader of the Opposition) moved—That, pursuant to standing order 152, order of the day No 1, Assembly business, relating to the membership of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services, be discharged from the *Notice Paper*.

Question—put and passed.

9 STANDING COMMITTEES—ESTABLISHMENT—AMENDMENT TO RESOLUTION

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business), pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

- (1) amends the resolution of the Assembly of 3 December 2024, as amended on 4 February 2025, 26 June 2025, 4 December 2025 and 26 March 2026, that established general purpose standing committees, as follows:
 - (a) omit subparagraph 14(d);
 - (b) after paragraph (17), insert:

“(17A) Ms Leanne Castley MLA will chair the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services;”;
 - (c) in the last column of the eighth row of the table, which describes the membership of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services, omit:

“3 Member committee
1 Liberal Member

1 Labor Member

1 Greens Member”

and substitute:

“4 Member committee

Ms Leanne Castley MLA

1 Liberal Member

1 Labor Member

1 Greens Member”; and

- (d) the Liberal Member to serve on the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services must be notified in writing to the Speaker within two hours following conclusion of the debate on this matter;

(2) notes that:

- (a) the arrangement at (1) is intended to preserve continuity in the work of the committee and maintain a proportionate distribution of standing committee chairs having regard to the current composition of the Assembly; and

(b) with regard to select committees:

- (i) the current number is creating considerable pressure on committee resourcing and membership; and

- (ii) all current select committees are due to report before or by 15 September 2026; and

(3) agrees:

- (a) to review standing committees, membership and chairing arrangements in the context of what select committees still exist and/or are proposed in the September sitting period, with the process of review to be determined; and

- (b) that the provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.

Debate ensued.

Mr Cocks moved the following amendment: Omit all text after “as follows:”, substitute:

- “(a) in the last column of the eighth row of the table, which describes the membership of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services, omit:

‘3 Member committee

1 Liberal Member

1 Labor Member

1 Greens Member’

and substitute:

‘4 Member committee

Ms Leanne Castley MLA

1 Liberal Member

1 Labor Member

1 Greens Member'; and

- (b) the Liberal Member to serve on the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services must be notified in writing to the Speaker within two hours following conclusion of the debate on this matter;
- (2) agrees that the provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.”.

Debate continued.

Mr Cocks and Mr Emerson, who had already spoken, by leave, again addressed the Assembly.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) amends the resolution of the Assembly of 3 December 2024, as amended on 4 February 2025, 26 June 2025, 4 December 2025 and 26 March 2026, that established general purpose standing committees, as follows:

- (a) in the last column of the eighth row of the table, which describes the membership of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services, omit:

‘3 Member committee

1 Liberal Member

1 Labor Member

1 Greens Member’

and substitute:

‘4 Member committee

Ms Leanne Castley MLA

1 Liberal Member

1 Labor Member

1 Greens Member’; and

- (b) the Liberal Member to serve on the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services must be notified in writing to the Speaker within two hours following conclusion of the debate on this matter;
- (2) agrees that the provisions of this resolution, so far as they are inconsistent with the standing orders, have effect notwithstanding anything contained in the standing orders.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

10 BUDGET INITIATIVES—DOCUMENTS—ORDER TO TABLE

Mr Cocks, pursuant to notice, moved—That:

- (1) in accordance with standing order 213A, the Assembly orders the Treasurer to provide the Assembly with a document or documents, drawn from or produced using information held in the ACT Government’s Budget Management System, setting out a complete list of all Budget measures that currently have funding attached to them;
- (2) the document or documents must be provided in an accessible electronic format, including a machine-readable spreadsheet, and must include for each Budget measure:
 - (a) the title of the measure;
 - (b) the relevant directorate or agency;
 - (c) whether the measure relates to expenses, capital, revenue, savings, offsets or another category;
 - (d) the Budget, Budget Review, appropriation bill, or other Budget process in which the measure was first introduced;
 - (e) whether the measure is ongoing or non-ongoing;
 - (f) if the measure is non-ongoing, the financial year in which funding for the measure is scheduled to end; and
 - (g) the amount of funding currently allocated to the measure in the current Budget and each year of the forward estimates period; and
- (3) for the purposes of this order:
 - (a) “Budget measure” includes any measure, initiative, commitment, revenue measure, capital measure, expense measure, program measure, election commitment or other funded decision recorded in the Budget Management System;
 - (b) “currently have funding attached” means measures for which funding is allocated, reserved, approved, appropriated, transferred, reprofiled or otherwise recorded in the Budget Management System for the current financial year or any year of the forward estimates;
 - (c) “funding” includes controlled recurrent payments, territorial payments, capital injections, capital works funding, expenses on behalf of the Territory, own-source revenue impacts, administered items, savings, offsets and any other financial allocation recorded against a measure; and
 - (d) the list is to be provided at the most disaggregated measure level available in the Budget Management System and must not be provided only as aggregated directorate, portfolio or output-class totals.

Mr Steel (Treasurer) moved the following amendment: Omit all text in paragraphs (1), (2) and (3), substitute:

- “(1) in accordance with standing order 213A, the Assembly orders the Treasurer to provide the Assembly with a document or documents, listing Budget initiatives with time limited funding currently allocated;

- (2) the document or documents must be provided in an accessible electronic format, including a machine-readable spreadsheet, and must include for each Budget initiative:
 - (a) the title of the Budget initiative;
 - (b) the relevant directorate or agency;
 - (c) whether the initiative relates to expenses, capital or revenue;
 - (d) the Budget process in which the initiative was first introduced; and
 - (e) the amount of funding currently allocated to the initiative in the current Budget and each year of the forward estimates period;
- (3) for the purpose of this order:
 - (a) 'Budget initiative' includes any measure, initiative, commitment, revenue measure, capital measure, expense measure, program measure, election commitment or other funded decision recorded in the Budget Management System;
 - (b) 'Budget process' means Budget, Budget Review, appropriation bill, or other Budget process which the measure was first introduced; and
 - (c) the list is to be provided at the most disaggregated measure initiative level available in the Budget Management System and must not be provided only as aggregated directorate, portfolio or output-class totals; and
- (4) notwithstanding the provisions of standing order 213A, the document or documents are to be provided within 30 calendar days.”.

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That:

- (1) in accordance with standing order 213A, the Assembly orders the Treasurer to provide the Assembly with a document or documents, listing Budget initiatives with time limited funding currently allocated;
- (2) the document or documents must be provided in an accessible electronic format, including a machine-readable spreadsheet, and must include for each Budget initiative:
 - (a) the title of the Budget initiative;
 - (b) the relevant directorate or agency;
 - (c) whether the initiative relates to expenses, capital or revenue;
 - (d) the Budget process in which the initiative was first introduced; and
 - (e) the amount of funding currently allocated to the initiative in the current Budget and each year of the forward estimates period;
- (3) for the purpose of this order:
 - (a) 'Budget initiative' includes any measure, initiative, commitment, revenue measure, capital measure, expense measure, program measure, election commitment or other funded decision recorded in the Budget Management System;

- (b) ‘Budget process’ means Budget, Budget Review, appropriation bill, or other Budget process which the measure was first introduced; and
- (c) the list is to be provided at the most disaggregated measure initiative level available in the Budget Management System and must not be provided only as aggregated directorate, portfolio or output-class totals; and
- (4) notwithstanding the provisions of standing order 213A, the document or documents are to be provided within 30 calendar days.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

11 LEGAL AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCE—EMERGENCIES AMENDMENT BILL 2026—AMENDMENT TO REPORTING DATE

Ms Barry, by leave, moved—That notwithstanding standing order 174(d), if the Standing Committee on Legal Affairs resolves to conduct an inquiry into the Emergencies Amendment Bill 2026 the reporting date be extended to 21 October 2026.

Question—put and passed.

12 INTEGRITY COMMISSION AND STATUTORY OFFICE HOLDERS—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCE—ELECTORAL (GAMBLING INDUSTRY) AMENDMENT BILL 2026—AMENDMENT TO REPORTING DATE

Ms Lee, by leave, moved—That, notwithstanding standing order 174(d), if the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders resolves to conduct an inquiry into the Electoral (Gambling Industry) Amendment Bill 2026 the reporting date be extended to 28 October 2026.

Question—put and passed.

13 MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr Barr (Chief Minister) informed the Assembly of the absence of Minister Berry and advised the Assembly that questions without notice normally directed to the Minister for Homes, Homelessness and New Suburbs could be directed to Minister Pettersson and those normally directed to the Minister for Education and Early Childhood could be directed to Minister Stephen-Smith. Further, questions without notice normally directed to the Minister for Sport and Recreation could be directed to Minister Cheyne.

14 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

15 TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES—STANDING COMMITTEE—MEMBERSHIP

The Speaker, pursuant to the resolution of the Assembly of today, informed the Assembly that he had been notified, in writing, of the nomination of Mr Cain to be a member of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services.

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business) moved—That the Member so nominated be appointed as a member of the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services.

Question—put and passed.

16 LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBER

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business) moved—That leave of absence be granted to Ms Berry (Deputy Chief Minister) for this sitting due to caregiving reasons.

Question—put and passed.

17 ROAD TRANSPORT (ALCOHOL AND DRUGS) AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Mr Braddock, pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Road Transport (Alcohol and Drugs) Act 1977*.

Paper: Mr Braddock presented an explanatory statement to the Bill.

Title read by Clerk.

Mr Braddock moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Ms Cheyne—Minister for City and Government Services) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

18 STANDING COMMITTEES—REFERENCE—ROAD TRANSPORT (ALCOHOL AND DRUGS) AMENDMENT BILL 2026—AMENDMENT TO REPORTING DATE

Mr Braddock, by leave, moved—That, notwithstanding standing order 174(d), should a committee choose to inquire into the Road Transport (Alcohol and Drugs) Amendment Bill 2026, that committee shall present its report by 16 October 2026.

Question—put and passed.

19 YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN—DEVELOPMENT

Mr Parton (Leader of the Opposition), pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

- (a) retail workers and managers in Tuggeranong have raised serious concerns about crime, retail theft, abuse, intimidation and antisocial behaviour;
- (b) the primary concern raised by local retailers at a local crime forum was the safety and wellbeing of staff, and not merely the financial cost of theft;
- (c) workers reported incidents including verbal abuse, threats, physical intimidation, property damage, theft and harassment;
- (d) retailers advised that much of this behaviour involves repeat offenders and has become more brazen in recent years;
- (e) retail workers should not be expected to tolerate abuse, threats or intimidation as part of their job;
- (f) police resources are finite and police cannot attend every incident of retail theft or antisocial behaviour; and
- (g) an effective response must protect workers and the community while intervening early in the lives of offenders;

(2) further notes that:

- (a) crime in retail precincts is not only a policing issue;

- (b) repeat offending can involve complex factors including disengagement from school, poor supervision, substance use, mental health issues, family breakdown, peer influence and lack of meaningful structure;
 - (c) a purely reactive approach leaves workers exposed, retailers frustrated, police repeatedly called to the same locations and offenders drifting further into the justice system; and
 - (d) the goal should not be to put more young offenders in handcuffs, but to stop harmful behaviour early, protect victims and ensure young people are actively case-managed; and
- (3) calls on the Government to:
- (a) develop and table, by the second sitting week of September 2026, a youth offending pathways and intervention strategy informed by:
 - (i) consulting with retail workers, retailers, shopping centre management, ACT Policing, Canberra PCYC, youth justice, schools, child and family services, health services and relevant community organisations;
 - (ii) identifying practical points of early intervention, including schools, police contact, retail precincts, youth services, family services and community organisations; and
 - (iii) ensuring repeat young offenders are subject to timely multi-agency case conferencing, involving police, youth justice, education, child and family services, health services, parents or carers and youth outreach providers where appropriate; and
 - (b) report back to the Assembly on implementation, referral pathways, program uptake and early outcomes by the first sitting week of 2027.

Mr Pettersson (Minister for Children, Youth and Families) moved the following amendment: Omit all text in paragraph (3)(a), substitute:

- “(a) develop and table, by the second sitting week of October 2026, a Youth Justice Strategic Plan informed by:
- (i) consulting with retail workers, retailers, shopping centre management, ACT Policing, Canberra PCYC, youth justice, schools, child and family services, health services and relevant community organisations;
 - (ii) identifying practical points of early intervention, including schools, police contact, retail precincts, youth services, family services and community organisations; and
 - (iii) ensuring repeat young offenders are subject to timely multi-agency case conferencing, involving police, youth justice, education, child and family services, health services, parents or carers and youth outreach providers where appropriate; and”.

Ms Vassarotti moved the following amendment to Mr Pettersson's amendment: Omit paragraph (3)(a)(i), substitute:

- “(i) consulting with young people, retail workers, retailers, shopping centre management, ACT Policing, Canberra PCYC, youth justice, schools, child and family services, health services and relevant community organisations including Aboriginal community-controlled organisations”.

Debate continued.

Amendment to amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Ms Vassarotti, by leave, moved the following amendments to the motion, as amended, together:

1. Omit paragraph (1)(g), substitute:

“(g) young people are disproportionately affected by antisocial behaviour in retail, with individuals under 30 comprising around 40 percent of all workers;”.
2. After all text in paragraph (1)(g), insert:

“(h) an effective response to anti-social behaviour must protect workers and the community while promoting restorative justice services to those who may be at risk of engagement with the criminal justice system;”.
3. Omit paragraph (2)(b), substitute:

“(b) repeat offending or anti-social behaviour can involve complex factors including poverty, domestic violence, disengagement from school, poor supervision, substance use, mental health issues, negative peer influence and lack of meaningful structure;
4. Omit paragraph (2)(d), substitute:

“(d) the goal should not be to put more young offenders in handcuffs, but to stop harmful behaviour early, protect victims and support young people to engage constructively with restorative justice services early-on;”.

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) retail workers and managers in Tuggeranong have raised serious concerns about crime, retail theft, abuse, intimidation and antisocial behaviour;
 - (b) the primary concern raised by local retailers at a local crime forum was the safety and wellbeing of staff, and not merely the financial cost of theft;
 - (c) workers reported incidents including verbal abuse, threats, physical intimidation, property damage, theft and harassment;

- (d) retailers advised that much of this behaviour involves repeat offenders and has become more brazen in recent years;
 - (e) retail workers should not be expected to tolerate abuse, threats or intimidation as part of their job;
 - (f) police resources are finite and police cannot attend every incident of retail theft or antisocial behaviour;
 - (g) young people are disproportionately affected by antisocial behaviour in retail, with individuals under 30 comprising around 40 percent of all workers; and
 - (h) an effective response to anti-social behaviour must protect workers and the community while promoting restorative justice services to those who may be at risk of engagement with the criminal justice system;
- (2) further notes that:
- (a) crime in retail precincts is not only a policing issue;
 - (b) repeat offending or anti-social behaviour can involve complex factors including poverty, domestic violence, disengagement from school, poor supervision, substance use, mental health issues, negative peer influence and lack of meaningful structure;
 - (c) a purely reactive approach leaves workers exposed, retailers frustrated, police repeatedly called to the same locations and offenders drifting further into the justice system; and
 - (d) the goal should not be to put more young offenders in handcuffs, but to stop harmful behaviour early, protect victims and support young people to engage constructively with restorative justice services early-on; and
- (3) calls on the Government to:
- (a) develop and table, by the second sitting week of October 2026, a Youth Justice Strategic Plan informed by:
 - (i) consulting with young people, retail workers, retailers, shopping centre management, ACT Policing, Canberra PCYC, youth justice, schools, child and family services, health services and relevant community organisations including Aboriginal community-controlled organisations;
 - (ii) identifying practical points of early intervention, including schools, police contact, retail precincts, youth services, family services and community organisations; and
 - (iii) ensuring repeat young offenders are subject to timely multi-agency case conferencing, involving police, youth justice, education, child and family services, health services, parents or carers and youth outreach providers where appropriate; and
 - (b) report back to the Assembly on implementation, referral pathways, program uptake and early outcomes by the first sitting week of 2027.”—

be agreed to—put and passed.

20 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS—CONSIDERATION OF EXECUTIVE BUSINESS

Ms Cheyne moved—That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent Notice No 1, Executive business relating to the presentation of the Urban Forest and Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, being called on forthwith.

Question—put and passed, with the concurrence of an absolute majority.

21 URBAN FOREST AND PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Ms Cheyne (Minister for City and Government Services), pursuant to notice, presented A bill for an Act to amend legislation about the urban forest and planning, and for other purposes.

Paper: Ms Cheyne 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 Cheyne moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

Debate adjourned (Mr Cocks) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

22 TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCE—URBAN FOREST AND PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Mr Cocks, by leave, moved—That the Urban Forest and Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 be referred to the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services.

Question—put and passed.

23 TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES—STANDING COMMITTEE—REFERENCE—URBAN FOREST AND PLANNING LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026—AMENDMENT TO REPORTING DATE

Ms Clay, by leave, moved—That notwithstanding standing order 174(d), if the Standing Committee on Environment and Planning resolves to conduct an inquiry into the Urban Forest and Planning Amendment Bill 2026, the reporting date be extended to 28 October 2026.

Mr Braddock moved the following amendment: Omit “Environment and Planning”, substitute “Transport and City Services”.

Debate continued.

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That notwithstanding standing order 174(d), if the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services resolves to conduct an inquiry into the Urban Forest and Planning Amendment Bill 2026, the reporting date be extended to 28 October 2026.”—

Question—put and passed.

24 APPROPRIATION BILL 2026-2027

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.

Debate adjourned (Mr Cocks) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

25 APPROPRIATION (OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY) BILL 2026-2027

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 adjourned (Mr Cocks) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

26 LIBRARIES A.C.T.—SERVICES—PROPOSED OPENING HOURS CHANGES—CONSIDERATION

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

(1) notes that:

- (a) the Minister for City and Government Services announced last Friday significant changes to public library opening hours across Canberra;
- (b) the changes include the removal of Sunday and night time opening hours across the library network and the reduction of evening opening hours on weekdays;
- (c) libraries at Kippax, Civic and Erindale will lose all weekend access under the new arrangements;
- (d) public libraries provide important access to literacy, study spaces, internet services, community connection, children’s activities and safe public spaces for many Canberrans;
- (e) weekend and after-hours access is particularly important for working families, students, seniors and residents who cannot access library services during standard business hours;
- (f) many Canberrans already face increasing cost of living pressures and rely on libraries as one of the few remaining free and accessible public community services; and
- (g) reductions in access to public libraries risk disproportionately impacting outer suburban communities and vulnerable Canberrans;

(2) further notes that:

- (a) the Government has framed these changes as a “redistributing” of opening hours despite the overall reduction in total accessible hours across parts of the network;
- (b) no clear public evidence has yet been provided demonstrating that the changes reflect community demand rather than operational cost-cutting;

- (c) ACT libraries are among the Territory's most valued public services and should be strengthened, not scaled back; and
 - (d) the changes were announced without a clear commitment that overall staffing levels, service delivery and community programming will be maintained or expanded; and
- (3) calls on the Government to:
- (a) immediately reverse the decision to abolish Sunday library opening hours across Canberra;
 - (b) guarantee that every library branch retains some form of weekend access for local communities;
 - (c) restore evening opening hours to ensure working families, students and commuters can continue to access library services outside standard business hours; and
 - (d) rule out any reduction in frontline library staffing, community programs, literacy services or public access as part of these changes.

Mr Braddock moved the following amendment: Omit paragraph (3), substitute:

“(3) further notes that:

- (a) a library service is not measured by the visitation date but also the services it provides to vulnerable Canberrans;
 - (b) visitation data is not the sole metric to be used for Government decisions on library opening hours and is also influenced by:
 - (i) what programs and activities are scheduled and when;
 - (ii) the regularity and consistency of opening hours;
 - (c) making decisions based purely off visitation data will likely lead to a diminishing service for the Canberra community;
 - (d) investment is required to improve the range of service offering and accessibility of the library service; and
 - (e) the Independent Working Group's work in developing the announced changes has addressed the issues identified including:
 - (i) the previous rostering model was operationally inflexible and a source of inequity between staff; and
 - (ii) the data substantiated the need to review library opening hours and days of operation to better reflect catchment demand and staffing capacity;
- (4) calls on all Members of the Assembly to:
- (a) express their appreciation to Libraries ACT staff and in particular the Independent Working Group for their work in improving the Libraries ACT service; and

- (b) acknowledge that calls to keep certain branches open for longer into the evening or weekend will require additional supplementation to resources; and
- (5) calls on the Government to:
 - (a) rule out any reduction in frontline library staffing, community programs and literacy services as part of these changes;
 - (b) prioritise the implementation of any-time collection of reserved items;
 - (c) not reduce evening hours until implementation of any-time collection of reserved items;
 - (d) ensure every Libraries ACT branch remains open providing accessible third spaces for Canberrans and that borrowing, collections, digital services, room bookings and regular library programs continue;
 - (e) pause the implementation of any proposed hours changes until the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2026-2027;
 - (f) provide the following additional information to the Assembly by the first sitting day of September 2026 on the proposed changes:
 - (i) investigate conducting more programs and activities in evenings and/or weekends for the benefit of Canberrans who cannot attend a library during business hours;
 - (ii) evaluate the accessibility of third spaces over the weekend across all Canberra regions to ensure Canberrans have fair and equitable access to third spaces should any branch not be open on a Saturday or Sunday;
 - (iii) ensure branches remain available to support the community during heat, smoke or other emergency conditions, including activation as heat refuges when called on by the Chief Health Officer;
 - (iv) specify the criteria or conditions on which Libraries ACT branches would be opened as a heat refuge; and
 - (v) publicly publish the findings of Libraries ACT's strategic review into operating hours; and
 - (g) provide a business case for options to extend opening hours and locations above and beyond what was announced along with accompanying amendments to the Appropriation Bill 2026-2027 to allow for Assembly consideration and decision.”.

Debate continued.

Ms Carrick moved the following amendment to Mr Braddock's proposed amendment:
After paragraph (5)(f)(ii), insert:

- “(iii) identify which libraries will provide after-hours access;
- (iv) provide an assessment on the impact on services and amenities from relocating Access Canberra into the Woden library;

- (v) provide an update on planning for the Molonglo library and report back to the Assembly by the last sitting in September 2026;”.

Debate continued.

Adjournment negatived: It being 6.30 pm—The question was proposed—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health) requiring the question to be put forthwith without debate—

Question—put and negatived.

Debate continued.

Amendment to amendment agreed to.

Amendment, as amended, agreed to.

Question That the motion, as amended, viz:

“That this Assembly:

- (1) notes that:
 - (a) the Minister for City and Government Services announced last Friday significant changes to public library opening hours across Canberra;
 - (b) the changes include the removal of Sunday and night time opening hours across the library network and the reduction of evening opening hours on weekdays;
 - (c) libraries at Kippax, Civic and Erindale will lose all weekend access under the new arrangements;
 - (d) public libraries provide important access to literacy, study spaces, internet services, community connection, children’s activities and safe public spaces for many Canberrans;
 - (e) weekend and after-hours access is particularly important for working families, students, seniors and residents who cannot access library services during standard business hours;
 - (f) many Canberrans already face increasing cost of living pressures and rely on libraries as one of the few remaining free and accessible public community services; and
 - (g) reductions in access to public libraries risk disproportionately impacting outer suburban communities and vulnerable Canberrans;
- (2) further notes that:
 - (a) the Government has framed these changes as a ‘redistributing’ of opening hours despite the overall reduction in total accessible hours across parts of the network;

- (b) no clear public evidence has yet been provided demonstrating that the changes reflect community demand rather than operational cost-cutting;
 - (c) ACT libraries are among the Territory's most valued public services and should be strengthened, not scaled back; and
 - (d) the changes were announced without a clear commitment that overall staffing levels, service delivery and community programming will be maintained or expanded;
- (3) further notes that:
 - (a) a library service is not measured by the visitation data but also the services it provides to vulnerable Canberrans;
 - (b) visitation data is not the sole metric to be used for Government decisions on library opening hours and is also influenced by:
 - (i) what programs and activities are scheduled and when; and
 - (ii) the regularity and consistency of opening hours;
 - (c) making decisions based purely off visitation data will likely lead to a diminishing service for the Canberra community;
 - (d) investment is required to improve the range of service offering and accessibility of the library service; and
 - (e) the Independent Working Group's work in developing the announced changes has addressed the issues identified including:
 - (i) the previous rostering model was operationally inflexible and a source of inequity between staff; and
 - (ii) the data substantiated the need to review library opening hours and days of operation to better reflect catchment demand and staffing capacity;
- (4) calls on all Members of the Assembly to:
 - (a) express their appreciation to Libraries ACT staff and in particular the Independent Working Group for their work in improving the Libraries ACT service; and
 - (b) acknowledge that calls to keep certain branches open for longer into the evening or weekend will require additional supplementation to resources; and
- (5) calls on the Government to:
 - (a) rule out any reduction in frontline library staffing, community programs and literacy services as part of these changes;
 - (b) prioritise the implementation of any-time collection of reserved items;
 - (c) not reduce evening hours until implementation of any-time collection of reserved items;

- (d) ensure every Libraries ACT branch remains open providing accessible third spaces for Canberrans and that borrowing, collections, digital services, room bookings and regular library programs continue;
- (e) pause the implementation of any proposed hours changes until the passage of the Appropriation Bill 2026-2027;
- (f) provide the following additional information to the Assembly by the first sitting day of September 2026 on the proposed changes:
 - (i) investigate conducting more programs and activities in evenings and/or weekends for the benefit of Canberrans who cannot attend a library during business hours;
 - (ii) evaluate the accessibility of third spaces over the weekend across all Canberra regions to ensure Canberrans have fair and equitable access to third spaces should any branch not be open on a Saturday or Sunday;
 - (iii) identify which libraries will provide after-hours access;
 - (iv) an assessment on the impact on services and amenities from relocating Access Canberra into the Woden library;
 - (v) ensure branches remain available to support the community during heat, smoke or other emergency conditions, including activation as heat refuges when called on by the Chief Health Officer;
 - (vi) specify the criteria or conditions on which Libraries ACT branches would be opened as a heat refuge; and
 - (vii) publicly publish the findings of Libraries ACT's strategic review into operating hours;
- (g) provide an update on planning for the Molonglo library and report back to the Assembly by the last sitting in September 2026; and
- (h) provide business case for options to extend opening hours and locations above and beyond what was announced along with accompanying amendments to the Appropriation Bill 2026-2027 to allow for Assembly consideration and decision."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

27 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Four Members' statements were made.

Paper: Mr Milligan, by leave, presented the following paper:

Listening report into the Canberra Liberals Sportsground Roundtable—Report 1, prepared by James Milligan MLA, dated June 2026

28 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 6.52 pm, adjourned until Tuesday, 15 September 2026 at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting, except Ms Berry* and Mrs Morris*.

*on leave.

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly