LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2024–2025

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 23

TUESDAY, 24 JUNE 2025

1 The Assembly met at 10 am, pursuant to adjournment. The Speaker (Mr Parton) 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 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Clerk presented the following papers, which had been circulated to Members on 26 May 2025, pursuant to standing order 213A and the resolution of the Assembly of 9 April 2025, together with the transmittal letter on behalf of the Head of Service, ACT Government to the Clerk, dated 26 May 2025:

ACT Policing—Strategic asset management planning—Documents—Order to table—Copy of—

Index of returned documents.

Interpretation of scope.

Privilege claimed on certain returned documents—Letter to the Clerk from the Chief Minister, dated 26 May 2025.

Request for Infrastructure Project Services, dated June 2023.

Statement of Requirements—Strategic Asset Management Plan (SAMP) for ACT Policing on behalf of Justice and Community Safety Capital Works and Infrastructure, dated July 2019.

Strategic Asset Management Plan—ACT Policing, dated June 2024.

2019-20 Budget: Concept Brief—ACT Policing Futures Program—ACT Policing Master Accommodation Plan—Justice and Community Safety Directorate, undated.

ACT Policing 20 Year Master Accommodation Plan, prepared by Jones Lang LaSalle for ACT Policing, dated March 2022 – Update.

3 LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBER

Ms Cheyne moved—That leave of absence be granted to Mr Pettersson for this sitting week due to illness.

Question—put and passed.

4 LEAVE OF ABSENCE TO MEMBER

Mr Cocks moved—That leave of absence be granted to Mr Milligan for this sitting week due to personal reasons.

Question—put and passed.

5 PETITIONS AND MINISTERIAL RESPONSES—PETITIONS AND RESPONSES NOTED

Petitions

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

Ms Morris, from 1172 residents, requesting that that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to maintain the Point Hut dog exercise area as an off-leash dog area after the Lanyon dog park opens (e-Pet 027-25).

Pursuant to standing order 99A, this petition stands referred to the Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services.

Mr Parton, from 364 residents, requesting that the Assembly lower the threshold for action on dangerous trees and simplify the process to approve urgent minor works on dangerous trees (e-Pet 011-25).

Dr Paterson, from 59 residents, requesting that call on the ACT Government to review parking arrangements along Woodberry Avenue in Coombs and implement appropriate inset parking (e-Pet 030-25).

Mr Cain, from 195 residents, requesting that call on the ACT Government to reform vehicle registration laws to allow the registration of left-hand drive vehicles of any age in the ACT (e-Pet 048-24).

Ministerial responses

The Clerk announced that the following responses to petitions had been lodged:

Dr Paterson (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services), undated—Response to e-petition No 046-24 and petition No 016-25, lodged by Mr Cain concerning police presence in Hawker, Page and Scullin.

Mr Steel (Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development), dated 3 June 2025—Response to petition No 008-25, lodged by Mr Parton concerning regulatory burden reduction in building and construction industry.

Mr Steel (Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development), dated 3 June 2025—Response to e-petition No 049-24 and petition No 010-25, lodged by Ms Clay concerning objection to the closure of Big Splash in Macquarie.

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health), dated 20 June 2025—Response to e-petition No 005-25 and petition No 017-25, lodged by Ms Carrick concerning objection to the closure of Burrangiri Aged Care Respite Centre.

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

Debate ensued.

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

Petition which does not conform with the standing orders—Vehicle registration reform—Inclusion of left-hand drive vehicles registration—Mr Cain (23 signatures).

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

6 CHINA TRADE MISSION—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Mr Barr (Chief Minister) made a ministerial statement concerning a recent trade mission to China and presented the following paper:

China trade mission—Ministerial statement, 24 June 2025.

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

Question—put and passed.

7 NATIONAL QUALITY FRAMEWORK—EXCELLENT RATING—EVELYN SCOTT PRESCHOOL—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Berry (Minister for Education and Early Childhood) made a ministerial statement concerning the achievement of Evelyn Scott Preschool Unit under the National Quality Framework's rating and presented the following paper:

National Quality Framework—Excellent rating—Evelyn Scott Preschool—Ministerial statement, 24 June 2025.

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

Question—put and passed.

8 AGE-FRIENDLY CITY PLAN 2020-2024—FIFTH ANNUAL REPORT—DEMENTIA-FRIENDLY INFRASTRUCTURE—ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF 21 APRIL 2021—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Ms Orr (Minister for Seniors and Veterans) made a ministerial statement concerning Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024 and presented the following papers:

Age-Friendly City Plan 2020-2024—

Status of Actions (Final Progress Report)—Reporting period: January 2024 to December 2024, undated.

Fifth Annual Report—Dementia-friendly infrastructure—Assembly resolution of 21 April 2021—Government response—Ministerial statement, 24 June 2025.

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

Question—put and passed.

9 DOMESTIC, FAMILY AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE—2025—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for the Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) made a ministerial statement concerning the 2025 Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence Ministerial Statement and presented the following paper:

2025 Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence—Ministerial statement, 24 June 2025.

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

Question—put and passed.

10 SUSPENSION OF STANDING ORDERS—APPROPRIATION BILL 2025-2026 AND APPROPRIATION (OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY) 2025-2026

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business) moved—That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would prevent:

(1) any business before the Assembly at 5 pm on Tuesday 24 June 2025 being interrupted to allow the Treasurer to be called on forthwith to present the Appropriation Bill 2025-2026 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025-2026;

(2) where business before the Assembly has concluded before 5 pm on 24 June 2025, the Assembly shall suspend proceedings and reconvene at 5 pm to allow the Treasurer to be called on forthwith to present the Appropriation Bill 2025-2026 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025-2026;

(3) at 5 pm on Thursday 26 June 2025, the order of the day for the resumption of debate on the question that the Appropriation Bill 2025-2026 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025-2026 be agreed to in principle, being called on notwithstanding any business before the Assembly;

(4) debate on any motion before the Assembly at the time of interruption being adjourned until the adjournment questions in relation to the Appropriation Bill 2025-2026 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025-2026 are determined; and

(5) where business before the Assembly has concluded before 5 pm on 26 June 2025, the Assembly shall suspend proceedings and reconvene at 5 pm to allow resumption of debate on the question that the Appropriation Bill 2025-2026 and the Appropriation (Office of the Legislative Assembly) Bill 2025-2026 be agreed to in principle.

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

11 EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION AND CARE INCIDENT RECORDS—ORDER TO TABLE

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

(1) notes that:

(a) the ACT reported the highest rate of serious incidents in early childhood education and care services in 2023-2024, with 235 serious incidents per 100 approved services – far above the national average of 148 serious incidents per 100 approved services;

(b) greater transparency regarding the nature of these incidents could clarify whether this high rate is a consequence of a higher frequency of serious incidents or of better reporting practices;

(c) parents in the ACT pay the highest fees in Australia, with the median weekly costs having risen to $760 in 2024, compared to the national average of $668;

(d) weekly childcare centre fees in the ACT have risen by $150 over the last 10 years, after taking inflation into account, and could rise further if more peppercorn leases held by not-for-profit providers are withdrawn by the ACT Government;

(e) Canberran families pay the highest portion of their disposable income on childcare of all states and territories; and

(f) community members and educators have raised concerns that the for-profit nature of a large proportion of the early childhood education and care (ECEC) sector may be jeopardising quality of care, particularly following recent reporting of alarming incidents of mismanagement on the part of several major providers;

(2) in accordance with standing order 213A, calls on the ACT Government to table:

(a) all documents held by Children's Education and Care Assurance and the ACT Ombudsman from the past five years containing:

(i) emergency action notices, prohibition notices, suspension notices, compliance notices, show cause notices or other notices or directions served on or regarding ECEC providers under the *Education and Care Services National Law (ACT) Act 2011*;

(ii) written notices following an incident of decisions to cancel, suspend or continue approval of a service provider;

(iii) notifications to parents of children enrolled at an education and care service about the suspension or cancellation of provider approval;

(iv) documents relating to enforceable undertakings regarding early childhood education and care; and

(v) documents relating to suspected, alleged or actual criminal conduct, or risk of significant harm incidents; and

(b) all documents provided to brief ministerial offices over the past five years that:

(i) involve an ACT ECEC facility or staff, and relate to the death, serious injury, or physical or sexual abuse of a child;

(ii) relate to prosecutions of ECEC providers and educators, including in relation to:

(A) any recommendations for prosecution for conduct towards a child suspected to be criminal, or other criminal activity related to ECEC provision in the ACT;

(B) any recommendations for prosecution of criminal conduct against any ACT ECEC providers and/or staff in such a facility; and

(C) any prosecution of any ACT ECEC providers or their employees or contractors;

(iii) relate to allegations of fraud, money laundering or scams regarding ECEC provision in the ACT; and

(iv) relate to actual or alleged wage underpayment in any ACT ECEC centre; and

(3) notwithstanding standing order 213A:

(a) allows for targeted redaction of individuals' names, birthdates and contact details; and

(b) requests that these documents be produced within three months.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

12 A.C.T. GOVERNMENT PROJECTS—BUSINESS CASES—ORDER TO TABLE

Ms Castley (Leader of the Opposition), pursuant to notice, moved—That, with reference to standing order 213A, the Assembly directs the Chief Minister to:

(1) table a list of business cases prepared or commissioned by the ACT Government since 11 December 2014;

(2) table any project completion reports provided to the Commonwealth since 11 December 2014;

(3) table any business cases, economic evaluations, or cost-benefit analyses for the following projects on the prescribed dates below, notwithstanding the provisions of 213A(f):

(a) Monday 14 July: the Canberra Hospital Expansion, the Northside Hospital, and Canberra Institute of Technology Woden;

(b) Tuesday 15 July: Canberra Stadium, the Convention Centre redevelopment, and the redevelopment of Telstra Tower;

(c) Wednesday 16 July: the Canberra Aquatic Centre, the Canberra Theatre redevelopment, and the Tuggeranong Ice Sports Facility;

(d) Thursday 17 July: Light Rail Stage 1 and raising London Circuit; and

(e) Friday 18 July: the Big Canberra Battery and the electrification of the Government's gas assets; and

(4) provide a statement to the Clerk for Members when making any claims of privilege, stating the specific harm to the public interest resulting from the publication of the document for which privilege is being claimed.

Mr Barr (Chief Minister), by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. Omit paragraph (3), substitute:

"(3) table any business cases, economic evaluations or cost-benefit analyses for the following projects:

(a) the Canberra Hospital Expansion, the Northside Hospital and Canberra Institute of Technology Woden;

(b) Canberra Stadium, the Convention Centre redevelopment and the redevelopment of Telstra Tower;

(c) the Canberra Aquatic Centre, the Canberra Theatre redevelopment and the Tuggeranong Ice Sports Facility;

(d) Light Rail Stage 1 and Raising London Circuit; and

(e) the Big Canberra Battery and the electrification of the Government's gas assets; and".

2. Add: "notwithstanding standing order 213A, requests these documents be provided by 18 July 2025.".

Debate continued.

Amendments agreed to.

Ms Clay, who had already spoken, by leave, moved the following amendment: Insert after paragraph (3)(e):

"(f) the Materials Recovery Facility, Food and Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) processing facilities, and all school and college infrastructure projects valued at or over 25 million dollars.".

Amendment to motion, as amended, agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

(1) with reference to standing order 213A, directs the Chief Minister to:

(a) table a list of business cases prepared or commissioned by the ACT Government since 11 December 2014;

(b) table any project completion reports provided to the Commonwealth since 11 December 2014;

(c) table any business cases, economic evaluations or cost-benefit analyses for the following projects:

(i) the Canberra Hospital Expansion, the Northside Hospital and Canberra Institute of Technology Woden;

(ii) Canberra Stadium, the Convention Centre redevelopment and the redevelopment of Telstra Tower;

(iii) the Canberra Aquatic Centre, the Canberra Theatre redevelopment and the Tuggeranong Ice Sports Facility;

(iv) Light Rail Stage 1 and Raising London Circuit;

(v) the Big Canberra Battery and the electrification of the Government's gas assets; and

(vi) the Materials Recovery Facility, Food and Organics and Garden Organics (FOGO) processing facilities, and all school and college infrastructure projects valued at or over 25 million dollars; and

(d) provide a statement to the Clerk for Members when making any claims of privilege, stating the specific harm to the public interest resulting from the publication of the document for which privilege is being claimed; and

(2) notwithstanding standing order 213A, requests these documents be provided by 18 July 2025."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

13 ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS—BUSINESS CASES—ORDER TO TABLE

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

(1) in accordance with standing order 213A, orders the Chief Minister to produce all business cases, economic evaluations, benefit-cost ratios or analyses, information documenting the final cost of the projects, budget breakdowns into federal and ACT Government funding components, and the post-completion asset performance metrics for the following projects:

(a) William Hovell Drive duplication;

(b) Monaro Highway Upgrade;

(c) Molonglo River Bridge;

(d) Athllon Drive duplication;

(e) Sulwood Drive;

(f) Gundaroo Drive duplication; and

(g) Drake Brockman Drive; and

(2) agrees that any Member may take note of any documents tabled under this motion on the next day of sitting after they are tabled.

Ms Cheyne (Minister for City and Government Services) moved the following amendment: Add:

"(3) notwithstanding provisions of standing order 213A, requests that documents be provided at least 2 business days prior to the first hearing of the Select Committee on Estimates 2025-2026 into the City and Government Services portfolio.".

Amendment agreed to.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

(1) in accordance with standing order 213A, orders the Chief Minister to produce all business cases, economic evaluations, benefit-cost ratios or analyses, information documenting the final cost of the projects, budget breakdowns into federal and ACT Government funding components, and the post-completion asset performance metrics for the following projects:

(a) William Hovell Drive duplication;

(b) Monaro Highway Upgrade;

(c) Molonglo River Bridge;

(d) Athllon Drive duplication;

(e) Sulwood Drive;

(f) Gundaroo Drive duplication; and

(g) Drake Brockman Drive;

(2) agrees that any Member may take note of any documents tabled under this motion on the next day of sitting after they are tabled; and

(3) notwithstanding provisions of standing order 213A, requests that documents be provided at least 2 business days prior to the first hearing of the Select Committee on Estimates 2025-2026 into the City and Government Services portfolio."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

14 MINISTERIAL ARRANGEMENTS

Mr Barr (Chief Minister) informed the Assembly of the absence of Minister Pettersson and advised the Assembly that questions without notice normally directed to the Minister for Business, Arts and Creative Industries could be directed to Mr Barr; those normally directed to the Minister for Children, Youth and Families could be directed to Minister Cheyne; those normally directed to the Minister for Multicultural Affairs could be directed to Minister Stephen-Smith; and those normally directed to the Minister for Skills, Training and Industrial Relations could be directed to Minister Steel.

15 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

16 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Speaker presented the following papers:

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to section 17—Auditor-General's Report No 3/2025—ACT Government long-term plans and strategies, dated 6 June 2025.

Bills, referred to Committees, pursuant to standing order 174—Correspondence—

Bills—Not inquired into—

Environment Legislation Amendment Bill 2025—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services, dated 23 May 2025.

Residential Tenancies (Posting Termination) Amendment Bill 2025—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Legal Affairs, dated 21 May 2025.

Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) Amendment Bill 2025—Copy of letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services, dated 23 May 2025.

Budget 2025-2026—Financial Management Act—

Pursuant to subsections 20—Recommended appropriation—Office of the Legislative Assembly—Copy of letter to the Treasurer from the Speaker, dated 16 June 2025.

Pursuant to subsections 20AB—Recommended appropriation—

ACT Audit Office—Copy of letter to the Treasurer from the Speaker, dated 19 June 2025.

ACT Electoral Commission—Copy of letter to the Treasurer from the Speaker, dated 19 June 2025.

ACT Integrity Commission—Copy of letter to the Treasurer from the Speaker, dated 19 June 2025.

ACT Ombudsman/Inspector of the Integrity Commission—Copy of letter to the Treasurer from the Speaker, dated 19 June 2025.

Integrity Commission Act—

Pursuant to section 189—Investigation Report—Operation Athena—An investigation into an alleged conflict of Interest, dated 13 June 2025.

Pursuant to section 278—Special report—Investigation into a procurement by the ACT Integrity Commission—

Report, dated June 2025.

Report—Updated, dated June 2025.

Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders—Standing Committee—Report 1—*Inquiry into Annual and Financial Reports 2023-24*—Speaker's response to recommendation 7, dated 23 June 2025.

17 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business), pursuant to standing order 211, presented the following papers:

ACT Missing Middle Housing Design Guide, undated.

Australian Capital Territory Housing Supply and Land Release Program 2025-26 to 2029-30, undated.

Financial Management Act, pursuant to subsection 30F(3)—Capital Works Program—Progress report—2024-25—Year-to-date performance as at 31 March 2025.

Planning Act, pursuant to section 77—Planning (Fraser) Major Plan Amendment 2025—Notifiable instrument NI2025-286, dated 3 June 2025.

Planning and economic feasibility—Integrating the Missing Middle in RZ1 and RZ2, prepared by Purdon for the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate, dated October 2024.

Planning and the missing middle housing reforms—Assembly resolution of 5 February 2025—Government response, dated 20 June 2025.

Subordinate legislation (including explanatory statements unless otherwise stated)

Legislation Act, pursuant to section 64—

Board of Senior Secondary Studies Act—Board of Senior Secondary Studies Appointment 2025 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-46 (LR, 8 May 2025).

City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency Act—City Renewal Authority and Suburban Land Agency (Agency Board Member) Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-67 (LR, 22 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) Act—

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board - Deputy Chair) Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-47 (LR, 12 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board - Deputy Chair) Appointment 2025 (No 2)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-48 (LR, 12 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board) Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-49 (LR, 12 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board) Appointment 2025 (No 2)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-50 (LR, 12 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board) Appointment 2025 (No 3)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-51 (LR, 12 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board) Appointment 2025 (No 4)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-52 (LR, 12 May 2025).

Crimes (Sentence Administration) (Sentence Administration Board) Appointment 2025 (No 5)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-69 (LR, 26 May 2025).

Land Tax Act—Land Tax (Affordable Community Housing) Determination 2025—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-55 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Legal Profession Act—Legal Profession (Bar Council Fees) Determination 2025—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-63 (LR, 19 May 2025).

Long Service Leave (Portable Schemes) Act and Financial Management Act—

Long Service Leave (Portable Schemes) Governing Board Deputy Chair Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-64 (LR, 19 May 2025).

Long Service Leave (Portable Schemes) Governing Board Employee Representative Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-66 (LR, 19 May 2025).

Long Service Leave (Portable Schemes) Governing Board Employer Representative Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-65 (LR, 19 May 2025).

Magistrates Court Act—Magistrates Court (Biosecurity Infringement Notices) Regulation 2025—Subordinate Law SL2025-5 (LR, 14 May 2025).

Major Events Act—Major Events (CommBank Matildas v Argentina Match) Notice 2025—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-56 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Motor Accident Injuries Act—Motor Accident Injuries (Premiums and Administration) Amendment Regulation 2025 (No 1)—Subordinate Law SL2025-4 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Nature Conservation Act—Nature Conservation (Canberra Grassland Earless Dragon) Action Plan 2025—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-57 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Rail Safety National Law (ACT) Act—Rail Safety National Law (Drug and Alcohol Analysts) Appointment 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-45 (LR, 8 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Act—

Road Transport (General) Application of Road Transport Legislation (Light Car Club Saturday Night Blues) Declaration 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-53 (LR, 9 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Driver Licence and Related Fees Determination 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-59 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Fees for Publications Determination 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-62 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Numberplate Fees Determination 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-60 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Pay Parking Area Fees Determination 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-54 (LR, 13 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Refund and Dishonoured Payments Fees Determination 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-61 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Road Transport (General) Vehicle Registration and Related Fees Determination 2025 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-58 (LR, 15 May 2025).

Taxation Administration Act—Taxation Administration (Amounts Payable-Home Buyer Concession Scheme) Determination 2025—Disallowable Instrument DI2025-68 (LR, 26 May 2025).

18 RICHARDSON SHOPS DEVELOPMENT

Miss Nuttall, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) Richardson Shops has been left derelict since May 2019 and the last tenant vacated in 2022;

(b) two petitions have previously been tabled in the Assembly collectively garnering 1,205 signatures—by Ms Lawder in November 2022, and in May 2024 by Ms Burch with Principal Petitioner and now Member Ms Tough MLA;

(c) despite two petitions, the shops have remained vacant contrary to significant community interest and current government policy settings; and

(d) under Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*, failing to use land for a continuous period of at least one year for the purpose for which the lease over the land is granted constitutes an offence;

(2) further notes that:

(a) a survey undertaken by the office of Miss Nuttall MLA with 203 respondents from the area found that 95 percent of respondents favoured the shops being redeveloped; and

(b) the following percentage of respondents favoured the following uses for the site:

(i) 82 percent: commercial property;

(ii) 38 percent: community group centres;

(iii) 37 percent: community services; and

(iv) 35 percent: shop-top housing;

(3) calls on the ACT Government to:

(a) negotiate with the owner to ensure appropriate use of the Richardson Shops site aligned with community desires by 31 December 2025;

(b) investigate why the shops were left empty for three years and how similar situations could be avoided;

(c) review the process for offering crown leases and consider whether it be mandatory to include a withdrawal clause to safeguard against properties left vacant for a year or more;

(d) investigate policy changes to effectively disincentivise leaving commercial properties vacant contrary to community interest, such as:

(i) stronger enforcement of existing compliance mechanisms (such as Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*);

(ii) an additional levy on vacant retail properties;

(iii) provision to add withdrawal clauses to crown leases should they be left vacant for more than one year;

(iv) provision of subsidised community space; and

(v) other changes to the Planning Act to disincentivise shop squatting;

(e) by the last sitting week of 2025 and quarterly thereafter until a tenant has been found, provide a report to the Assembly on the following elements:

(i) identify which policy changes have been implemented and provide timelines for policy changes which are intended to take place;

(ii) verify whether Richardson Shops has—or will shortly have—a tenant that meets community need; and

(iii) if a tenant has not been found, action to enforce compliance with Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*; and

(4) calls on the owners of the Richardson Shops site to:

(a) proactively and constructively engage with the local Richardson community on the community need for the Richardson Shops site;

(b) work collaboratively with the ACT Government to find a solution that prioritises the Richardson community's vision for the site; and

(c) comply with Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023* and arrange for the site to be used in line with the lease purpose clause and community expectations as soon as possible but by no later than 31 December 2025.

Debate ensued.

Ms Tough, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. After paragraph (1)(d), insert new paragraphs:

"(e) the site is zoned CZ4 – Local Centre Zone in the Territory Plan 2023, permissible land use under the current Commercial Zones Policy within the CZ4 zone includes: an animal care facility, bulky good retailing, business agency, café, community activity centre, craft workshop, drink establishment, early childhood education and care, health facility, indoor entertainment facility, multi-unit housing, office, produce market, restaurant, shop, take-away food shop, veterinary clinic and veterinary hospital;

(f) there are three undeveloped and unleased ACT Government sites adjacent to the Richardson Shops site; and

(g) in 2020 the ACT Government opened a new playground next to the Richardson Shops;".

2. Omit all text after paragraph (3)(b), substitute:

"(c) review the process for issuing and renewing crown leases, including purpose and withdrawal clause requirements, to safeguard against properties left vacant for a year or more;

(d) investigate tougher measures for property owners who leave their shop spaces vacant or unused, such as:

(i) stronger enforcement of existing compliance mechanisms (such as Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*);

(ii) an additional levy on vacant retail properties;

(iii) provision to add withdrawal clauses to Crown Leases should they be left vacant for more than one year;

(iv) provision of subsidised community space; and

(v) other changes to the Planning Act to disincentivise shop squatting;

(e) review planning controls around the Richardson local centre including opportunities to encourage mixed-use development such as shop-top housing;

(f) release the undeveloped, unleased sites to the north of the Richardson Shops site to support the broader redevelopment of the local centre;

(g) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting week of 2025, and every six months thereafter until a tenant has been found, on the above measures and:

(i) verify whether Richardson Shops has – or will shortly have – a tenant that meets community need; and

(ii) if a tenant has not been found, take action to enforce compliance with Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*;

(4) calls on the owners of the Richardson Shops site to:

(a) proactively and constructively engage with the local Richardson community on the community need for the Richardson Shops site;

(b) work collaboratively with the ACT Government to find a solution that prioritises the Richardson community's vision for the site; and

(c) comply with Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023* and arrange for the site to be used in line with the lease purpose clause and community expectations as soon as possible but by no later than 31 December 2025.".

Debate continued.

Ms Morris, by leave, moved the following amendments to Ms Tough's proposed amendments together:

1. Omit paragraph (3)(d)(ii).
2. After paragraph (3)(g), insert:

"(h) review the cumulative effect of the large range of government charges and compliance on the viability of suburban businesses; and

(i) acknowledge the effect of the Lease Variation Charge on any attempt to maximise the commercial viability of suburban shops by diversifying their use;".

Debate continued.

Question—That amendments to amendments be agreed to—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 9		NOES, 11	
Chiaka Barry	Elizabeth Lee	Andrew Barr	Marisa Paterson
Peter Cain	Deborah Morris	Yvette Berry	Shane Rattenbury
Fiona Carrick	Mark Parton	Tara Cheyne	Rachel Stephen-Smith
Leanne Castley		Jo Clay	Caitlin Tough
Thomas Emerson		Laura Nuttall	Taimus Werner-Gibbings
Jeremy Hanson		Suzanne Orr	

And so it was negatived.

Amendments agreed to.

Debate continued.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) Richardson Shops has been left derelict since May 2019 and the last tenant vacated in 2022;

(b) two petitions have previously been tabled in the Assembly collectively garnering 1,205 signatures—by Ms Lawder in November 2022, and in May 2024 by Ms Burch with Principal Petitioner and now Member Ms Tough MLA;

(c) despite two petitions, the shops have remained vacant contrary to significant community interest and current government policy settings;

(d) under Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*, failing to use land for a continuous period of at least one year for the purpose for which the lease over the land is granted constitutes an offence;

(e) the site is zoned CZ4 – Local Centre Zone in the Territory Plan 2023, permissible land use under the current Commercial Zones Policy within the CZ4 zone includes: an animal care facility, bulky good retailing, business agency, café, community activity centre, craft workshop, drink establishment, early childhood education and care, health facility, indoor entertainment facility, multi-unit housing, office, produce market, restaurant, shop, take-away food shop, veterinary clinic and veterinary hospital;

(f) there are three, undeveloped and unleased ACT Government sites adjacent to the Richardson Shops site; and

(g) in 2020 the ACT Government opened a new playground next to the Richardson Shops;

(2) further notes that:

(a) a survey undertaken by the office of Miss Nuttall MLA with 203 respondents from the area found that 95 percent of respondents favoured the shops being redeveloped; and

(b) the following percentage of respondents favoured the following uses for the site:

(i) 82 percent: commercial property;

(ii) 38 percent: community group centres;

(iii) 37 percent: community services; and

(iv) 35 percent: shop-top housing;

(3) calls on the ACT Government to:

(a) negotiate with the owner to ensure appropriate use of the Richardson Shops site aligned with community desires by 31 December 2025;

(b) investigate why the shops were left empty for three years and how similar situations could be avoided;

(c) review the process for issuing and renewing crown leases, including purpose and withdrawal clause requirements, to safeguard against properties left vacant for a year or more;

(d) investigate tougher measures for property owners who leave their shop spaces vacant or unused, such as:

(i) stronger enforcement of existing compliance mechanisms (such as Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*);

(ii) an additional levy on vacant retail properties;

(iii) provision to add withdrawal clauses to Crown Leases should they be left vacant for more than one year;

(iv) provision of subsidised community space; and

(v) other changes to the Planning Act to disincentivise shop squatting;

(e) review planning controls around the Richardson local centre including opportunities to encourage mixed-use development such as shop-top housing;

(f) release the undeveloped, unleased sites to the north of the Richardson Shops site to support the broader redevelopment of the local centre; and

(g) report back to the Assembly by the last sitting week of 2025, and every six months thereafter until a tenant has been found, on the above measures and:

(i) verify whether Richardson Shops has – or will shortly have – a tenant that meets community need; and

(ii) if a tenant has not been found, take action to enforce compliance with Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023*; and

(4) calls on the owners of the Richardson Shops site to:

(a) proactively and constructively engage with the local Richardson community on the community need for the Richardson Shops site;

(b) work collaboratively with the ACT Government to find a solution that prioritises the Richardson community's vision for the site; and

(c) comply with Schedule 4(10) of the *Planning Act 2023* and arrange for the site to be used in line with the lease purpose clause and community expectations as soon as possible but by no later than 31 December 2025."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

19 HEALTH DATA AND PROCESSES—INDEPENDENT INQUIRY

Ms Castley (Leader of the Opposition) and Mr Rattenbury, pursuant to notice, moved—
That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) growing concerns from clinicians and patients about excessive elective surgery waiting lists, the lack of access to data on wait times for specialist procedures and appointments, delayed access to urgent care and reports of interference in clinical decision making; and

(b) the only available data for wait times for specialist appointments for 2022-2023 shows that clinical time frames are not being met. The average patient in either category one, category two, or category three was not seen in a clinically indicated time frame for the following craft groups:

(i) ear, nose and throat;

(ii) general surgery;

(iii) neurosurgery;

(iv) ophthalmology;

(v) plastic surgery;

(vi) vascular surgery;

(vii) dermatology;

(viii) endocrinology;

(ix) gastroenterology;

(x) paediatrics;

(xi) respiratory and sleep;

(xii) gynaecology; and

(xiii) rheumatology;

(2) acknowledges the dedication of frontline clinicians, allied health professionals, and support staff who continue to deliver high-quality care despite systemic pressures;

(3) calls on the Government to establish, within three months, an independent inquiry into identifying relevant health data and processes that would allow Canberrans, clinicians and policy makers to be best informed about the functionality of the ACT health system. The inquiry should:

(a) be led by a suitably qualified chair with no current or recent past employment, or contractual relationship with ACT public hospitals, and has an understanding of the particular characteristics of a health system like the ACT, including the role of the Canberra Hospital as a teaching hospital;

(b) investigate:

(i) required improvements to the health data currently made publicly available including, but not limited to, wait times for specialist appointments;

(ii) inter-jurisdictional comparisons of publicly available health data;

(iii) centralising the publication of health data;

(iv) required improvements in the presentation of data to demonstrate longitudinal comparison, changes, and segmentation to demonstrate determinants;

(v) the extent and impact of any interference—administrative, managerial, or political—in clinical care decisions;

(vi) current and projected resourcing needs (workforce, theatres, equipment, and beds) relative to demand;

(vii) drivers of waiting-list growth, including referral pathways and peri-operative capacity constraints;

(viii) inter-jurisdictional comparisons of drivers of waiting-list growth, including referral pathways and peri-operative capacity constraints;

(ix) factors affecting recruitment, retention, and morale of medical, nursing, and allied health staff;

(x) the effectiveness, risks, and unintended consequences of the planned care reforms and the Digital Health Record implementation, including potential improvements in data, updates to privacy legislation, and oversight required to facilitate patients' treatment; and

(xi) concerns raised in this debate about cardiology and orthopaedic surgery groups in the ACT public health system;

(c) undertake confidential stakeholder consultations, accept written submissions, and publish hearing transcripts (subject to privacy concerns);

(d) make evidence-based recommendations to improve governance, resourcing, data required to facilitate patient, policy and clinical outcomes, and staff wellbeing; and

(e) make its report publicly available, including by the Minister for Health tabling the final report in the Assembly by 30 June 2026; and

(4) calls on the Minister to table a formal response to the report by the last sitting day of 2026.

Debate ensued.

Papers: Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health) presented the following papers:

Canberra Hospital data—

Reduction in Elective Waitlist—Cardiac Catheter Lab, Canberra Hospital (April 2024 – May 2025), undated.

Timely Management of Category 1 Patients, undated.

Question—put and passed.

20 PAPERS PRESENTED ON 24 JUNE 2025—PAPERS NOTED

The Speaker, pursuant to standing order 211A, proposed—That the papers presented under standing order 211 during the presentation of papers in the routine of business today be noted.

Question—put and passed.

21 LEGAL AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE (LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY ROLE)—SCRUTINY REPORT 7—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Mr Cain (Chair) presented the following report:

Legal Affairs—Standing Committee (Legislative Scrutiny Role)—Scrutiny Report 7, dated 17 June 2025, together with a copy of the extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings and revised extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings for Report 6—

and, by leave, made a statement in relation to the report.

22 ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—WODEN TOWN CENTRE—THE ROLE AND FUTURE OF—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Ms Clay (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on the role and future of Woden Town Centre in the context of a compact city.

23 ENVIRONMENT, PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND CITY SERVICES—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—FIX MY STREET EFFECTIVENESS—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Ms Clay (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Environment, Planning, Transport and City Services, having considered the Assembly resolution of 14 May 2025 on the referral of Fix My Street effectiveness to the Committee, had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on the effectiveness of Fix My Street.

24 INTEGRITY COMMISSION AND STATUTORY OFFICE HOLDERS—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—TRANSPARENCY ARRANGEMENTS FOR MEMBERS—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Mr Cocks (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders, having considered the Assembly resolution of 9 April 2025 on the referral of transparency arrangements for Members to the Committee, had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on issues surrounding transparency arrangements for Members.

25 PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ADMINISTRATION—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—HOME BUYER CONCESSION SCHEME ADMINISTRATION—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Ms Carrick (Deputy Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration, having considered the Assembly resolution of 13 May 2025 on the referral of transparency arrangements for Members to the Committee had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on the administration of Home Buyer Concession Scheme.

26 APPROPRIATION BILL 2025-2026

Mr Steel (Treasurer) presented a Bill for an Act to appropriate money for the purposes of the Territory for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2025, and for other purposes.

Papers: Mr Steel presented the following papers:

Explanatory statement to the Bill, incorporating a compatibility statement, pursuant to section 37 of the *Human Rights Act 2004*.

Budget 2025-2026—Financial Management Act, pursuant to section 10—

Budget at a Glance.

Budget Outlook.

Budget Statements—

A—ACT Electoral Commission | ACT Executive | ACT Integrity Commission | Auditor-General | Office of the Legislative Assembly.

B—Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate together with associated agencies.

C—Health and Community Services Directorate | ACT Local Hospital Network | Canberra Health Services | Housing ACT | ACT Health Directorate – Discontinued.

D—Justice and Community Safety Directorate | Legal Aid Commission (ACT) | Public Trustee and Guardian for the ACT.

E—City and Environment Directorate | ACT Gambling and Racing Commission | Cemeteries and Crematoria Authority | Transport Canberra Operations | Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate – Discontinued.

F—Education Directorate.

G—Infrastructure Canberra.

Financial Management Act, pursuant to subsection 62(1)—Statements of Intent—2025-2026—

ACT Long Service Leave Authority.

Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority.

Title read by Clerk.

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

Debate adjourned (Ms Castley—Leader of the Opposition) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

27 APPROPRIATION (OFFICE OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY) BILL 2025-2026

Mr Steel (Treasurer) presented a Bill for an Act to appropriate money for expenditure in relation to the Office of the Legislative Assembly and officers of the Assembly for the financial year beginning on 1 July 2025, and for other purposes.

Paper: Mr Steel 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.

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

Debate adjourned (Ms Castley—Leader of the Opposition) and the resumption of the debate made an order of the day for the next sitting.

28 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Three Members' statements were made.

29 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Cheyne (Manager of Government Business) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 5.42 pm, adjourned until tomorrow at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting, except Mr Milligan* and Mr Pettersson*.

*on leave.

Tom Duncan
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly