LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY FOR THE AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

2024–2025–2026

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS

No 71

TUESDAY, 20 OCTOBER 2026

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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 Member had lodged petitions for presentation:

Ms Tough, from 103 and 122 residents, requesting that the Assembly call on the ACT Government to engage with the community and businesses about the future of Anketell Street in the Tuggeranong Town Centre (e-Pet 034-26 and Pet 096-26).

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

Paper: Ms Tough, by leave, presented the following paper:

Petition which does not conform with the standing orders—Tuggeranong Town Centre—Anketell Street revitalisation—Ms Tough (177 signatures).

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

3 RESPITE CARE SERVICES—IMPROVEMENT—ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF 26 MARCH 2026—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—BURRANGIRI UPDATE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Ms Stephen-Smith (Minister for Health Infrastructure) made a ministerial statement concerning the implementation progress of the Government response to the Assembly resolution of 26 March 2026 relating to respite care services improvement and presented the following paper:

Respite care services—Improvement—Assembly resolution of 26 March 2026—Government response—Burrangiri Update—Ministerial statement, 20 October 2026.

Ms Stephen-Smith moved—That the Assembly take note of the paper.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

4 YOUTH JUSTICE STRATEGIC PLAN—DEVELOPMENT—ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF 12 JUNE 2026—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Mr Pettersson (Minister for Children, Youth and Families) made a ministerial statement concerning the ACT Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-2031, in response to the Assembly resolution of 12 June 2026 concerning the development of the ACT Youth Justice Strategic Plan and presented the following papers:

ACT Youth Justice Strategic Plan 2026-2031, undated.

Youth Justice Strategic Plan—Development—Assembly resolution of 12 June 2026—Government response—Ministerial statement, 20 October 2026.

Mr Pettersson moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Question—put and passed.

5 SOCIAL POLICY—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT 5—INQUIRY INTO MEN'S SUICIDE RATES—GOVERNMENT RESPONSE—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT AND PAPER—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for Mental Health) made a ministerial statement concerning the Government response to Report 5 of the Standing Committee on Social Policy entitled *Inquiry into men's suicide rates* and presented the following papers:

Social Policy—Standing Committee—Report 5—*Inquiry into men's suicide rates*—

Government response, undated.

Government response—Ministerial statement, 20 October 2026.

Dr Paterson moved—That the Assembly take note of the ministerial statement.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

6 BUSHFIRE AND STORM SEASON—COMMENCEMENT—MINISTERIAL STATEMENT—PAPER NOTED

Dr Paterson (Minister for Police, Fire and Emergency Services) made a ministerial statement concerning the preparedness activities for the 2026-2027 bushfire and storm season and presented the following paper:

Commencement of bushfire and storm season—Ministerial statement, 20 October 2026.

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

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

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

Mr Cain, pursuant to notice, moved—That, notwithstanding standing order 174(d), the Standing Committee on Transport and City Services shall present its report on the Urban Forest and Planning Legislation Amendment Bill 2026 by 27 November 2026.

Question—put and passed.

8 LEGAL AFFAIRS—STANDING COMMITTEE (LEGISLATIVE SCRUTINY ROLE)—SCRUTINY REPORT 23—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Ms Barry (Chair) presented the following report:

Legal Affairs—Standing Committee (Legislative Scrutiny Role)—Scrutiny Report 23, dated 13 October 2026, together with extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings—

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

9 ECONOMICS, INDUSTRY AND RECREATION—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT 5—INQUIRY INTO CANBERRA'S NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY—REPORT NOTED

Mr Werner-Gibbings (Chair) presented the following report:

Economics, Industry and Recreation—Standing Committee—Report 5—*Inquiry into Canberra's Night-Time Economy,* dated 15 October 2026, together with extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings—

and moved—That the report be noted.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

10 PUBLIC ACCOUNTS AND ADMINISTRATION—STANDING COMMITTEE—REPORT 8—INQUIRY INTO AUDITOR-GENERAL REPORTS 10/2024: SAFER FAMILIES LEVY AND 13/2024: INVOICING AND PAYMENTS FOR DIGITAL HEALTH RECORD HOSTING SERVICES—REPORT NOTED

Mr Milligan (Chair) presented the following report:

Public Accounts and Administration—Standing Committee—Report 8—*Inquiry into Auditor-General Reports 10/2024: Safer Families Levy and 13/2024: Invoicing and Payments for Digital Health Record Hosting Services,* dated 28 September 2026, together with extracts of the relevant minutes of proceedings—

and moved—That the report be noted.

Question—put and passed.

11 ADMINISTRATION AND PROCEDURE—STANDING COMMITTEE—BILL NOMENCLATURE—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Mr Hanson (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Administration and Procedure had resolved not to inquire into bill nomenclature.

12 ECONOMICS, INDUSTRY AND RECREATION—STANDING COMMITTEE—INQUIRY—FUEL PRICES IN THE A.C.T.—STATEMENT BY CHAIR

Mr Werner-Gibbings (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A, informed the Assembly that the Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation had resolved to conduct an inquiry into and report on fuel prices in the ACT.

13 INTEGRITY COMMISSION AND STATUTORY OFFICE HOLDERS—STANDING COMMITTEE—CONSIDERATION OF STATUTORY APPOINTMENTS—STATEMENT BY CHAIR—PAPER

Ms Lee (Chair), pursuant to standing order 246A and Continuing Resolution 5A, made a statement concerning consideration of statutory appointments by the Standing Committee on the Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders.

Paper: Ms Lee, pursuant to Continuing Resolution 5A, presented the following paper:

Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders—Standing Committee—Schedule of Statutory Appointments—11th Assembly—Period 1 July to 31 December 2025 (Revised).

14 GAMING MACHINE (HARM PREVENTION AND REDUCTION) AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Dr Paterson (Minister for Gaming Reform), pursuant to notice, presented a Bill for an Act to amend the *Gaming Machine Act 2004* and the *Gaming Machine Regulation 2004*, and for other purposes.

Paper: Dr Paterson 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.

Dr Paterson moved—That this Bill be agreed to in principle.

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

15 BETTER REGULATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

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.

Question—That this Bill be agreed to in principle—put and passed.

Detail Stage

Bill, by leave, taken as a whole—

On the motion of Ms Cheyne (Minister for City and Government Services), her amendment No 1 (*see* Schedule 1) was made.

Paper: Ms Cheyne presented a supplementary explanatory statement to the Government amendment.

Bill, as a whole, as amended, agreed to.

Question—That this Bill, as amended, be agreed to—put and passed.

16 QUESTIONS

Questions without notice were asked.

17 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

The Speaker presented the following papers:

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 15—Annual Report 2025-2026—

ACT Auditor-General's Report No 8/2026, dated 8 October 2026.

ACT Electoral Commission, dated 10 September 2026.

ACT Integrity Commission, dated October 2026, together with a corrigendum.

ACT Ombudsman & Inspector of the ACT Integrity Commission, dated 12 October 2026.

Office of the Legislative Assembly, dated October 2026.

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to section 17—Auditor-General's Report No 9/2026—Road Maintenance, dated 9 October 2026.

Freedom of Information Act, pursuant to section 67—A report on the operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 2016*—ACT Ombudsman—Annual Report 2025-2026, undated.

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

Bills—Inquiry—

Domestic Violence Agencies Amendment Bill 2026—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Legal Affairs, dated 16 October 2026.

Gambling and Racing Control (Gambling Exclusion) Amendment Bill 2026—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Economic, Industry and Recreation, dated 30 September 2026.

Property Developers Legislation Amendment Bill 2026—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation, dated 30 September 2026.

Bills—Not inquired into—

Building and Construction Legislation Amendment Bill 2026— Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation, dated 30 September 2026.

Competition Legislation Amendment Bill 2026— Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Public Accounts and Administration, dated 28 September 2026.

Housing and Consumer Affairs Legislation Amendment Bill 2026—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Legal Affairs, dated 14 October 2026.

Road Transport (Safety and Traffic Management) (Validation) Amendment Bill 2026—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Transport and City Services, dated 3 September 2026.

Victims of Crime Legislation Amendment Bill 2026—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Legal Affairs, dated 14 October 2026.

Standing order 99B—Petitions—Referral advice—Correspondence—Petitions—Not inquired into—

e-Pet 032-26 and Pet 048-26—Inquiry into the Collapse of Gungahlin United Football Club—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation, dated 30 September 2026.

e-Pet 033-26 and Pet 040-26—Funding and multi-year support to Women's Shed, Canberra—letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Social Policy, dated 13 October 2026.

e-Pet 047-26—Inclusion of Woden Valley Soccer Club in the National Premier League (NPL) Girls—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Economics, Industry and Recreation, dated 30 September 2026.

e-Pet 005-26, Pet 053-26 and Pet 059-26—Save senior fitness programs at CIT Bruce—Letter to the Speaker from the Chair, Standing Committee on Social Policy, dated 13 October 2026.

Privileges 2026—Select Committee—Report—*Inquiry into possible contempt of an Assembly Committee*—ACT Public Sector Standards Commissioner’s response to recommendation, dated 6 October 2026.

18 PRESENTATION OF PAPERS

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

Annual Reports (Government Agencies) Act, pursuant to section 13—Annual Report—

2025-2026—

ACT Gambling and Racing Commission, dated 24 September 2026.

ACT Human Rights Commission, dated 2 October 2026.

ACT Inspector of Custodial Services, dated October 2026.

ACT Insurance Authority, dated 23 September 2026.

ACT Policing Special Purposes, dated 25 September 2026.

ACT Policing, dated 25 September 2026.

Building and Construction Industry Training Fund Authority, dated 9 September 2026.

Canberra Health Services, undated.

Chief Minister Treasury and Economic Development Directorate (Volumes 1, 2.1 and 2.2), dated 24 September 2026.

City and Environment Directorate, dated 4 September 2026.

City Renewal Authority, dated 22 September 2026.

Cultural Facilities Corporation, dated 23 September 2026.

Digital Canberra Directorate, dated 29 September 2026.

Director of Public Prosecutions, dated 7 October 2026.

Education Directorate, dated 18 September 2026.

Health and Community Services Directorate, dated 29 September 2026.

Icon Water Limited, dated 29 September 2026.

Independent Competition and Regulatory Commission, dated 2 September 2026.

Infrastructure Canberra, dated 2 October 2026.

Justice and Community Safety Directorate, dated 2 October 2026.

Legal Aid Commission (ACT), dated 22 September 2026.

Long Service Leave Authority, dated 22 September 2026.

Office of the Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment, dated 31 August 2026.

Office of the Work Health and Safety Commissioner (WorkSafe ACT), dated 8 September 2026.

Public Trustee and Guardian, dated 22 September 2026.

State of the Service, dated 23 September 2026.

Suburban Land Agency, dated 22 September 2026.

Auditor-General Act, pursuant to section 21—Auditor-General's Report No 6/2026—ACT Corrective Services rostering—Government response, dated October 2026.

Environment and Planning—Standing Committee—Report 8—Inquiry into the Planning (Missing Middle Housing) Amendment Bill 2026—Government response, dated October 2026.

Integrity Commission Act, pursuant to section 191—Investigation Report—Operation Kingfisher—An investigation into whether the procurement for the Campbell Primary School Modernisation Project was conducted with probity and whether it was affected by corrupt conduct—Government response, dated October 2026.

Integrity Commission and Statutory Office Holders—Standing Committee—

Report 7—Inquiry into the effectiveness of transparency arrangements for Members of the Legislative Assembly—Final Report—Government response, dated September 2026.

Report 8—Inquiry into the operation of the 2024 ACT Election and Electoral Act 1992—Final Report—Government response, dated October 2026.

Light Rail Stage 2A—Business Engagement Report—July to September 2026.

Multicultural Communities—Facility—Support—Assembly resolution of 22 October 2025—Government response, dated September 2026.

Official Visitor Act, pursuant to section 23DA(2)—Official Visitors Scheme—Annual Report 2025-26, undated.

Planning Act, pursuant to subsection 268(2)—Statement of Leases Granted—1 July to 30 September 2026, dated October 2026.

Private Health Insurance Rebate—Assembly Resolution of 17 September 2026—Government response—Correspondence to Federal Minister for Health and Ageing.

Secure Local Jobs Code—Independent Review—Assembly Resolution of 15 September 2026—Government response to paragraphs (3)(d)(i) and (3)(d)(ii), dated October 2026.

Water Resources Act, pursuant to subsection 67D(3)—ACT and Region Catchment Management Coordination Group—Annual report—2025-26, undated, together with a statement.

Subordinate legislation (including explanatory statements unless otherwise stated)

Legislation Act, pursuant to section 64—

Building Act—Building (Ministerial Exemptions for Regulated Swimming Pools) Guidelines 2026—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-213 (LR, 1 October 2026).

Civil Law (Wrongs) Act—Civil Law (Wrongs) (Fees) Determination 2026—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-207 (LR, 24 September 2026).

Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement Act—

Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Energy Savings Contribution) Determination 2026, including a regulatory impact statement—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-211 (LR, 29 September 2026).

Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Energy Savings Target) Determination 2026, including a regulatory impact statement—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-208 (LR, 29 September 2026).

Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Penalties for Noncompliance) Determination 2026, including a regulatory impact statement—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-210 (LR, 29 September 2026).

Energy Efficiency (Cost of Living) Improvement (Priority Household Target) Determination 2026, including a regulatory impact statement—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-209 (LR, 29 September 2026).

Gambling and Racing Control Act—Gambling and Racing Control (Code of Practice) Amendment Regulation 2026 (No 1), including a regulatory impact assessment—Subordinate Law SL2026-15 (LR, 17 September 2026).

Magistrates Court Act—Magistrates Court (Property Developers Infringement Notices) Regulation 2026—Subordinate Law SL2026-16 (LR, 30 September 2026).

Motor Accident Injuries Act—Motor Accident Injuries (Premiums) Guidelines 2026 (No 1)—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-204 (LR, 21 September 2026).

Official Visitor Act—Official Visitor (Chair) Appointment 2026—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-206 (LR, 21 September 2026).

Professional Engineers Act—Professional Engineers (Qualifications, Experience and Competencies) Determination 2026—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-212 (LR, 1 October 2026).

Road Transport (General) Act—Road Transport (General) Application of Road Transport Legislation (Deciding Applications for Registration – Wheelchair-Accessible Taxis) Declaration 2026—Disallowable Instrument DI2026-205 (LR, 18 September 2026).

19 CONTINUING RESOLUTION 10—SUB JUDICE—STATEMENT BY SPEAKER

The Speaker made a statement to remind Members of the responsibilities under Continuing Resolution 10 relating to sub judice principles, ahead of the debate on private Members' business notice No 1 concerning sentencing law reform.

20 SENTENCING LAW REFORM

Ms Barry, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) the sentence delivered in *DPP v Hancock (a pseudonym)* [2026] ACTSC 389 did not meet community expectations by considering that the young offender's prior lack of sexual experience and inevitably limited insight into societal norms in Australia given his very short time in the country prior to the offending are factors mitigating his moral culpability;

(b) the sentence has attracted significant community concern, media scrutiny and ongoing commentary around the public interest in sentencing outcomes for serious and violent offences, and is a catalyst for a review that investigates broader concerns regarding current sentencing laws and outcomes; and

(c) a lack of sexual experience or understanding of societal norms is not an excuse for sexual assault;

(2) further notes that:

(a) while sentencing is an independent and impartial exercise of "instinctive synthesis" by judicial officers, the legislature has a responsibility to reflect community expectations in sentencing legislation and respond to current concerns;

(b) ACT Police statistics report 3,650 sexual assault charges over the past five years;

(c) the ACT Director of Public Prosecution's (DPP) 2025-2026 annual report revealed that sexual violence prosecutions have increased by 96 percent over the past five years due to sustained growth in demand;

(d) in 2024, the Law Reform and Sentencing Advisory Council was established to provide evidence-based and systemic analyses of sentencing, including by considering community expectations; and

(e) in 2025, the Attorney-General abolished the Law Reform and Sentencing Advisory Council; and

(3) calls on the Attorney-General to:

(a) introduce legislation to allow the Attorney-General to instruct the DPP to appeal a decision if it is considered manifestly inadequate and contrary to public expectations;

(b) in consultation with relevant stakeholders, commission a formal, independent and systematic review of ACT sentencing law to examine:

(i) sentencing purposes;

(ii) sentencing options;

(iii) statutory penalties for serious crime;

(iv) forms of imprisonment and attached conditions;

(v) non-parole periods and the decision-making function and transparency of the ACT Sentence Administration Board;

(vi) mitigating and aggravating factors;

(vii) rehabilitation facilities;

(viii) community safety measures, including any mandatory use of electronic monitoring devices for community-based sentences; and

(ix) the re-establishment of an independent and representative ACT Sentencing Council to advise the Attorney-General on sentencing matters and monitor trends and community expectations;

(c) examine in that review whether sentencing outcomes for serious offences are achieving the intent of sentencing legislation, including the *Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005* and the *Crimes Act 1900*, the youth justice framework, the Government's stated criminal justice policy objectives and community expectations; and

(d) table the findings and recommendations in the Assembly, together with the Government's response and proposed reforms, within 12 months.

Debate ensued.

Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General, by leave, moved the following amendments together:

1. Omit all text in paragraphs (1)(a) and (b), substitute:

"(a) sexual violence is unacceptable, and ACT laws apply equally to everyone;".

2. In paragraph (1)(c), omit "assault", substitute: "violence".

3. After all text in paragraph (1)(c), insert new paragraphs:

"(c) sentencing outcomes for serious sexual violence offending can attract media scrutiny and strong community concern; and

(d) while a single sentencing judgement does not establish a system-wide pattern, it may be timely to review current sentencing laws and outcomes for serious sexual violence offending;".

4. In paragraph (2)(d), after "Council was established", insert: ", in part,".

5. Omit all text in paragraph (3), substitute:

"(3) calls on the Attorney-General to affirm:

(a) the importance of prosecutorial independence; and

(b) that prosecutorial independence does not remove the need to examine credible evidence of any deficiencies in the sentencing framework;".

6. Add:

"(4) calls on the Government to:

(a) in consultation with relevant stakeholders, undertake a targeted review of the *Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005* as it applies to serious sexual violence offences since the 2021 Report: *Listen. Take Action to Prevent, Believe and Heal*, including an examination of:

(i) suspended sentences, the treatment of mitigating factors, and the young-offender provisions;

(ii) community safety measures, including use of electronic monitoring devices for community-based sentences; and

(iii) the re-establishment of an independent and representative ACT Sentencing Council to advise the Attorney-General on sentencing matters and monitor trends and community expectations; and

(b) table the findings and recommendations in the Legislative Assembly, together with the ACT Government's response and proposed reforms, within 12 months".

Debate continued.

Mr Cocks, by leave, was granted an extension of time.

Debate continued.

Question—put.

The Assembly voted—

AYES, 16		NOES, 7
Andrew Barr	Suzanne Orr	Chiaka Barry
Yvette Berry	Marisa Paterson	Peter Cain
Andrew Braddock	Chris Steel	Ed Cocks
Fiona Carrick	Rachel Stephen-Smith	Jeremy Hanson
Leanne Castley	Caitlin Tough	James Milligan
Tara Cheyne	Rebecca Vassarotti	Deborah Morris
Jo Clay	Taimus Werner-Gibbings	Mark Parton
Thomas Emerson		
Laura Nuttall		

And so it was resolved in the affirmative.

Question—That the motion, as amended, viz:

"That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) sexual violence is unacceptable, and ACT laws apply equally to everyone;

(b) a lack of sexual experience or understanding of societal norms is not an excuse for sexual violence;

(c) sentencing outcomes for serious sexual violence offending can attract media scrutiny and strong community concern; and

(d) while a single sentencing judgement does not establish a system-wide pattern, it may be timely to review current sentencing laws and outcomes for serious sexual violence offending;

(2) further notes that:

(a) while sentencing is an independent and impartial exercise of 'instinctive synthesis' by judicial officers, the legislature has a responsibility to reflect community expectations in sentencing legislation and respond to current concerns;

(b) ACT Police statistics report 3,650 sexual assault charges over the past five years;

(c) the ACT Director of Public Prosecution's (DPP) 2025-2026 annual report revealed that sexual violence prosecutions have increased by 96 percent over the past five years due to sustained growth in demand;

(d) in 2024, the Law Reform and Sentencing Advisory Council was established, in part, to provide evidence-based and systemic analyses of sentencing, including by considering community expectations; and

(e) in 2025, the Attorney-General abolished the Law Reform and Sentencing Advisory Council; and

(3) calls on the Attorney-General to affirm:

(a) the importance of prosecutorial independence; and

(b) that prosecutorial independence does not remove the need to examine credible evidence of any deficiencies in the sentencing framework;

(4) calls on the Government to:

(a) in consultation with relevant stakeholders, undertake a targeted review of the *Crimes (Sentencing) Act 2005* as it applies to serious sexual violence offences since the 2021 Report: *Listen. Take Action to Prevent, Believe and Heal*, including an examination of:

(i) suspended sentences, the treatment of mitigating factors, and the young-offender provisions;

(ii) community safety measures, including use of electronic monitoring devices for community-based sentences; and

(iii) the re-establishment of an independent and representative ACT Sentencing Council to advise the Attorney-General on sentencing matters and monitor trends and community expectations; and

(b) table the findings and recommendations in the Legislative Assembly, together with the ACT Government's response and proposed reforms, within 12 months."—

be agreed to—put and passed.

21 URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY

Ms Castley, pursuant to notice, moved—That this Assembly:

(1) notes that:

(a) the Assembly agreed to a motion on 10 April 2025 to establish an Urban Growth Boundary (UGB) following the *ACT State of the Environment Report 2023* and a 2024 election policy of the ACT Greens;

(b) the stated purpose of the UGB is to protect land of environmental and agricultural value while supporting the Territory's long-term housing and employment needs;

(c) the Government has agreed to formalise the UGB policy through an amendment to the Territory Plan by June 2027;

(d) in response to question on notice No 122 of the Select Committee on Estimates 2026-2027, the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development stated that no alternative policies have been considered by the Government; and

(e) the Minister for Planning and Sustainable Development has stated the UGB is being considered through the development of a new planning and transport strategy, with a UGB to be progressed through a future major plan amendment;

(2) further notes that:

(a) housing affordability is a critically important issue for Canberrans, with research by Building a Better Canberra showing the typical house price rising from 2.5 to 2.9 years of median income in 1981 to 7.3 years today;

(b) Reserve Bank of Australia research has identified supply as the key driver of affordability, finding that as a rule of thumb, every 1 percent increase in the number of dwellings, when driven by an increase in supply, lowers the cost of housing by 2.5 percent; and

(c) by restricting new residential land release, the UGB has the potential to seriously impact housing supply and affordability in the ACT, which could substantially accelerate housing development and urban sprawl beyond the Territory's borders; and

(3) calls on the Government to:

(a) commission an independent assessment of the impact of the UGB on land supply and housing affordability over the long term and publish this as a supporting report to the draft planning and transport strategy; and

(b) publish the draft planning and transport strategy alongside any future major plan amendment to establish a UGB.

Debate ensued.

Question—put and passed.

22 PAPERS PRESENTED ON 20 OCTOBER 2026—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.

23 MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Seven Members' statements were made.

24 ADJOURNMENT

Ms Cheyne (Attorney-General) moved—That the Assembly do now adjourn.

Debate ensued.

Mr Cain, by leave, was granted an extension of time.

Debate continued.

Question—put and passed.

And then the Assembly, at 5.56 pm adjourned until tomorrow at 10 am.

MEMBERS' ATTENDANCE: All Members were present at some time during the sitting.

Hamish Finlay
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly

SCHEDULE OF AMENDMENT

Schedule 1

BETTER REGULATION LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2026

Amendment circulated by the Minister for City and Government Services

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1
Clause 2 (2)
Page 2, line 9—

omit clause 2 (2), substitute

(2) The following provisions commence 6 months after this Act's notification day:

- section 4
- part 7
- parts 11 to 16
- parts 20 to 23.
