



LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS

No. 93 — Thursday, 18 February 2021

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- 1 The President took the Chair at 9.51 a.m., read the Prayer and made an Acknowledgement of Country.
- 2 **SCRUTINY OF ACTS AND REGULATIONS COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP** — The President read a letter from Ms Sonya Kilkenny resigning from the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee, effective from Wednesday, 17 February 2021.
Ms Symes moved, by leave, That Ms Watt be a member of the Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee.
Question — put and agreed to.
- 3 **PAPERS PURSUANT TO STATUTE** — The following Papers, pursuant to the directions of several Acts of Parliament, were laid on the Table by the Acting Clerk:
Auditor-General's Report on Grants to the Migrant Workers Centre, February 2021 (*Ordered to be published*).
Family Violence Protection Act 2008 — Report on the implementation of the Family Violence Risk Assessment and Management Framework, 2019-20.
Gippsland Waste and Resource Recovery Group — Minister's report of receipt of the 2019-20 report.
Goulburn Valley Waste and Resource Recovery Group — Minister's report of receipt of the 2019-20 report.
Metropolitan Waste and Resource Recovery Group — Report, 2019-20.
Subordinate Legislation Act 1994 — Documents under section 15 in respect of Statutory Rule Nos. 149/2020 and 5/2021.
- 4 **ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE — TABLING OUT OF SESSION — INQUIRY INTO THE INCREASE IN VICTORIA'S ROAD TOLL** — Mr Erdogan moved, by leave, That if the Economy and Infrastructure Committee proposes to transmit a report for the Inquiry into the increase in Victoria's road toll to the House on a day when the House is not sitting, the Chair may give the report to the Clerk and —
(1) the Clerk must —
(a) as soon as practicable after the report is received —
(i) give a copy of the report to each member of the House;
(ii) cause the report to be published on the Tabled Documents Database and the Committee's website;
(b) cause the report to be tabled in the House on the next sitting day of the House; and
(2) the report will be taken to be published by authority of the House.
Question — put and agreed to.
- 5 **MEMBERS' STATEMENTS** — Statements were made by Members pursuant to Standing Order 5.13 and further statements were received from Members for incorporation in Hansard pursuant to an Order of the Council of 15 September 2020.

6 ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REFERENCE — IMPACT OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC ON THE TOURISM AND EVENTS SECTORS — Mr Davis moved, by leave, in an amended form, That this House —

- (1) notes —
 - (a) that prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism contributed to 6.5 per cent of the Victorian economy, supporting 263,000 direct and indirect jobs, comprising 7.8 per cent of Victoria's employment, 142,300 jobs in Melbourne and 110,000 in regional Victoria;
 - (b) the severe impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry, including Victoria's second wave, driven by the closure of international and state borders and the severe restrictions on movement imposed by Victorian public health orders;
 - (c) that the COVID-19 pandemic has seen Victoria's visitor economy haemorrhage almost \$2.5 billion per month and is projected to shed 85,300 jobs by September 2021;
- (2) recognises that the more than \$10 billion annual Victorian events sector is a major sector in its own right and is vital to supporting tourism through central city events, regional events and festivals and business events, which importantly drives visitation into Melbourne and regional areas in the off-peak and shoulder seasons and has been severely impacted by the COVID-19 restrictions, including the impact of snap border closures on consumer confidence levels;
- (3) further notes that a number of businesses within the sector have had trouble accessing State Government support and that the many sole traders within the tourism and events sector have received inadequate State Government support;
- (4) further notes that additional State Government support should be urgently provided to tourism and events industry businesses; and
- (5) requires the Economy and Infrastructure Committee to inquire into, hold public hearings in Melbourne and regional Victoria to identify key issues and areas of concern, and report by 30 June 2021, on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism and events sectors and provide recommendations for State Government support measures that will restore the tourism and events sectors to their critical role in the Victorian economy and restore lost jobs.

Debate ensued.

Question — put and agreed to.

7 ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REFERENCE — MULTI PURPOSE TAXI PROGRAM — Mr Barton moved, That this House requires the Economy and Infrastructure Committee to inquire into, consider and report, by no later than Friday, 18 February 2022, on the safety standards for members of the public that travel on the Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP), including but not limited to —

- (1) a review of the minimum safety requirements for vehicles operating within the MPTP scheme;
- (2) the consideration of a mandatory maximum fare rate across all MPTP work;
- (3) an examination of how roting and exploitation of vulnerable users will be prevented;
- (4) an assessment of the financial impacts to services within the broader disability sector and how this will be managed;
- (5) an examination of pathways for the industry to absorb major change post-COVID-19; and
- (6) ensuring proper probity and good governance are applied following careful consideration and reporting of all possible ramifications of consultations with both industry and disability stakeholders.

Business having been interrupted at 12.00 noon pursuant to Sessional Orders —

8 QUESTIONS AND MINISTERS' STATEMENTS — Questions without notice were taken and Ministers' Statements were made pursuant to Sessional Order 13.

WORKSAFE – HOTEL QUARANTINE — Ms Stitt having given answers to a question without notice and supplementary question relating to Worksafe – hotel quarantine —

On the motion of Mr O'Donohue, the Minister's answers were ordered to be taken into consideration on the next day of meeting.

QUESTIONS — Questions without notice and Ministers' Statements continued.

AUDITOR-GENERAL'S REPORT ON GRANTS TO THE MIGRANT WORKERS CENTRE —

Ms Symes having given answers to a question without notice and supplementary question relating to the Auditor-General's Report on Grants to the Migrant Workers Centre —

On the motion of Mr Davis, the Minister's answers were ordered to be taken into consideration on the next day of meeting.

QUESTIONS — Questions without notice and Ministers' Statements continued.

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QUESTIONS DIRECTED FOR WRITTEN RESPONSE — The President directed written responses be provided to questions without notice pursuant to Standing Order 8.07 as follows:

- **Social housing in regional Victoria** — substantive and supplementary questions asked by Mr Grimley — response from Ms Stitt due Monday, 22 February 2021.
- **Duck shooting bag limit** — substantive and supplementary questions asked by Mr Meddick — response from Ms Tierney due Monday, 22 February 2021.

9 CONSTITUENCY QUESTIONS — Constituency questions were taken pursuant to Standing Order 8.08 and further questions were received from Members for incorporation in Hansard pursuant to an Order of the Council of 15 September 2020.

10 ECONOMY AND INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE REFERENCE — MULTI PURPOSE TAXI PROGRAM — Debate continued on the question, That this House requires the Economy and Infrastructure Committee to inquire into, consider and report, by no later than Friday, 18 February 2022, on the safety standards for members of the public that travel on the Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP), including but not limited to —

- (1) a review of the minimum safety requirements for vehicles operating within the MPTP scheme;
- (2) the consideration of a mandatory maximum fare rate across all MPTP work;
- (3) an examination of how roorting and exploitation of vulnerable users will be prevented;
- (4) an assessment of the financial impacts to services within the broader disability sector and how this will be managed;
- (5) an examination of pathways for the industry to absorb major change post-COVID-19; and
- (6) ensuring proper probity and good governance are applied following careful consideration and reporting of all possible ramifications of consultations with both industry and disability stakeholders.

Ms Terpstra moved, as amendments, That —

1. In paragraph (6) **omit** "stakeholders." and **insert** "stakeholders;".
2. After paragraph (6) **insert**:
“(7) an assessment of the impact of the expansion on MPTP clients, taking into account feedback on the expansion from Victorians living with disability and the disability sector.”.

Debate ensued.

Question — That the amendments moved by Ms Terpstra be agreed to — put and agreed to.

Question — That the motion, amended as follows, be agreed to — That this House requires the Economy and Infrastructure Committee to inquire into, consider and report, by no later than Friday, 18 February 2022, on the safety standards for members of the public that travel on the Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP), including but not limited to —

- (1) a review of the minimum safety requirements for vehicles operating within the MPTP scheme;
- (2) the consideration of a mandatory maximum fare rate across all MPTP work;
- (3) an examination of how roorting and exploitation of vulnerable users will be prevented;
- (4) an assessment of the financial impacts to services within the broader disability sector and how this will be managed;
- (5) an examination of pathways for the industry to absorb major change post-COVID-19; and
- (6) ensuring proper probity and good governance are applied following careful consideration and reporting of all possible ramifications of consultations with both industry and disability stakeholders;

- (7) an assessment of the impact of the expansion on MPTP clients, taking into account feedback on the expansion from Victorians living with disability and the disability sector — put and agreed to.

11 OWNERS CORPORATIONS AND OTHER ACTS AMENDMENT BILL 2019 — The Acting President read a Message from the Assembly informing the Council that they had agreed to the amendments made by the Council in this Bill.

12 PRODUCTION OF DOCUMENTS — AUDITING HOTELS USED IN THE HOTEL QUARANTINE PROGRAM — Ms Crozier moved, That this House, in accordance with Standing Order 11.01, requires the Leader of the Government to table in the Council, within 14 calendar days of the House agreeing to this resolution, all documents and information relating to the auditing of hotels used in the hotel quarantine program.

Debate ensued.

The Acting President advised that the total time allocated for debate, pursuant to Sessional Order 8, had elapsed —

Question — put and agreed to.

13 SUPPORT FOR SMALL LICENSED BUSINESSES — Mr Finn (for Mr Davis) moved, That this House —

- (1) expresses concern at the State Government's mismanagement of support programs for small licenced businesses, noting that at least 293 businesses were incorrectly paid and have been ordered to swiftly repay the department despite serious impacts on the viability of these small businesses resulting from COVID-19 restrictions;
- (2) calls on the Minister for Industry Support and Recovery, the Hon Martin Pakula MP, and the Minister for Small Business, the Hon Jaala Pulford MLC, to urgently meet with representatives of these impacted businesses; and
- (3) given the purpose of these grants is to support vulnerable businesses facing severe impacts caused by the COVID-19 crisis, further calls on the Government to pause their harsh claw back until these meetings have occurred at which point the Government would be in a position to craft a fairer regime.

Business having been interrupted at 5.15 p.m. pursuant to an Order of the Council of 16 February 2021, the debate stood adjourned in the name of Mr Finn.

14 STATEMENTS ON REPORTS, PAPERS AND PETITIONS — Statements on reports, papers and petitions were made by Members pursuant to Sessional Order 16.

15 ADJOURNMENT — Ms Pulford moved, That the House do now adjourn.

Debate ensued and responses to certain Adjournment matters were circulated pursuant to Standing Order 4.13.

And then the Council, at 6.31 p.m., adjourned until tomorrow.

ANNE SARGENT

Acting Clerk of the Legislative Council