

of less than \$5 million a year. Seventy-nine councils and the Department of Primary Industries are expected to share such a meagre yearly amount to manage over 12 000 kilometres of roadside noxious weeds, fast-multiplying pests and all associated costs. It will be the ratepayers who will be forced to pick up the tab. The issue is an indication of what seems to be a pattern of cost-shifting decisions by this government made with utter disrespect for regional and rural Victorians.

Barwon River Parklands: funding

Mr TREZISE (Geelong) — Recently I had the pleasure, together with the member for South Barwon, of announcing further funding of \$475 000 towards the creation of the Barwon River Parklands, which I know the Minister for Community Services, who is at the table, also fully supports. For the information of the house, Barwon River Parklands, an initiative of this state government, is the creation of a 30-kilometre shared pathway stretching from Buckley Falls in Geelong to the sea at Barwon Heads. The Brumby government has committed \$3 million over four years to creating this exciting project that will ensure locals and visitors alike can enjoy the natural environment of the magnificent Barwon River.

This environmental commitment of the Brumby government is in direct contrast to the opposition's plans for the Barwon River that were trotted out in 1999, 2002 and 2006. In 1999 the then Kennett government promised to carve a kilometre-long concrete rowing course through the Barwon River and the Belmont Common, destroying the river through Geelong. In 2002 and 2006 the opposition committed itself to creating a two bob replica of Southbank along the banks of the river. Both proposals would have destroyed the natural beauty of the river, and of course they were soundly rejected by the people of Geelong.

The creation of the Barwon River Parklands will ensure that the natural beauty of the river and its surrounding environments is protected and enhanced whilst ensuring people get to enjoy a healthy walk, run or ride along the return paths to Barwon Heads. Barwon River Parklands is a great project which, when completed, will be appreciated and enjoyed by all.

Montrose Recreation Reserve: funding

Mr HODGETT (Kilsyth) — I rise to condemn the Rudd federal Labor government for its gross negligence towards and political thievery from the community of Montrose following the removal of \$660 000 of funding through Kevin Rudd's sanctimonious scrapping of the Regional Partnerships program. Has

the penny dropped for the Prime Minister? Is he reconsidering? The regional development grant I speak of was approved as part of an application to improve facilities at the Montrose Recreation Reserve, which is used by a number of my constituents who are involved with local sporting clubs, the FIDA (Football Integration Development Association) disability clinic, the scout group and the local environmental group, which have been working together to enhance their reserve for sport and recreation.

This was not some project cooked up to win votes from the members of the Montrose Football Club but rather a concerted community effort involving local people from all walks of life. Aside from the state government's allocation of funding to the tune of \$380 000, the Montrose Recreation Reserve project also received a commitment of \$660 000 from the Shire of Yarra Ranges this year and in excess of \$100 000 from the Montrose community through local fundraising.

If the state government and the local council are behind this project, if the local state members, including me, and the federal member for Casey, Tony Smith, are behind this project, and if the local community has put up its own money and is behind this project, then why have federal Labor — the colleagues of those opposite — and Labor's great Messiah, Kevin Rudd, abandoned this project? How can government members of this house continue to pat their federal colleagues on the back when this act of gross indecency has been perpetrated on the people of Montrose? Perhaps they should hold another summit on it.

Australian-Polish Community Services: 25th anniversary

Ms THOMSON (Footscray) — I want to congratulate Australian-Polish Community Services (APCS) on 25 years of providing good work and service to the Polish community. The organisation is one of the most professional, and has the most profound effect on its community. It has provided services to those who have come out on the wave of Solidarity to settle here. It has helped them to settle; it has helped to provide jobs for people who have emigrated here from Poland; it provides fantastic aged-care facilities to the Polish community; and it also runs a number of elderly citizens services for the Polish community.

I was very pleased to be able to share in the celebrations last Saturday night. I want to congratulate Elizabeth Drozd, the board, past and present, and staff of APCS, and the volunteers for the effort they have put in to make this such a professional and caring service. Not