

Legislative Council
Hansard
Tuesday 1 September 2026

[excerpt...]

The President, **Mr Farrell**, took the Chair at 11 a.m., acknowledged the Traditional People and read Prayers.

MOTION

Environment Tasmania's Map the Crap Campaign

[11.57 a.m.]

Ms WEBB (Nelson) - I rise to speak on the motion before us and thank the honourable member for Huon for providing this opportunity. It might be your first motion brought in this Chamber, so congratulations on that too.

Mr President, at the outset I also need to acknowledge the initiative and work undertaken by Environment Tasmania, an excellent organisation, and their work in developing their interactive Map the Crap online tool. It is fantastic, not least because it gives us the opportunity to say a naughty word in the Chamber today. Map the Crap, which is designed to monitor and expose the volume of undertreated sewerage entering our local waterways, which is of concern to many Tasmanians who absolutely love engaging with their public waterways and enjoying all sorts of recreation therein. The data is based on TasWater records and it's an invaluable piece of civic society work to have this work available online. It's ideally one which of course should be unnecessary, but until it is, it provides a significant and important reality check for us, and important information for making decisions about our waterways.

We pride ourselves for being the natural, clean, green state, and it's almost de rigueur for local tourism campaigns to highlight our state's pristine natural waterways, rivers and beaches. But that sort of promotion of brand may not be so effective, should potential visitors hear of that shocking statistic which was cited in clause one of the motion before us, that apparently in 2024-25 over 600 million litres of undertreated sewage was released into those self-same waterways. This occurred during a so-called bypass event, which is an expression used to describe the situation when sewage skips the secondary treatment process which is meant to make it safer prior to release. It's not very reassuring when a bypass event can result in over 600 million litres of undertreated sewage being released into our waterways. In fact, it's a somewhat benign descriptor, I think, for something that's really quite disgusting.

Tasmania must be unique across all our national states and territories that none of our lower House or upper House electorates are completely landlocked. Instead, every single one of our electorates has a little girting by waterway, whether it's coastal or river.

Ms Rattray - Not the proposed new Lyons. That'll be landlocked.

Ms WEBB - Well, it has river, because it has the upper part of the Derwent here, just north of the city.

Mr PRESIDENT - Which we know is the most magnificent river in the country.

Ms WEBB - Indeed. The health and enjoyment of those waterways is something very immediate to all of us here and the communities that we represent. The flip side of that is those shorelines and waterways can't be taken for granted. Well, they can be taken for granted, but if we do, we do so at our peril. Locals, certainly, never take it for granted, I think, when we live near these beautiful waterways and we're worried about the condition that they're in. My electorate's particular 'girt by sand' section is the Blackmans Bay area, which I share with the member for Huon as the northern end of Blackmans Bay Beach is in the electorate of Nelson and then southern end is in the electorate of Huon, and I'm sure that, like me, the member for Huon often hears concerns raised by locals in that area about the condition of the water at the beach and whether they or their kids are able to swim safely. In fact, very recently I attended a planning session that the Blackmans Bay Community Association was holding and I noted on a piece of butcher's paper with the heading, 'What are our dreams and hopes for our suburb in times to come?' Almost every comment on that butcher's paper related to wanting to be able to swim at the beach safely with their families and their kids. It was quite striking and quite sad that such a simple thing that you would think people living in a beachside suburb would be able to hope and aspire to do with their families and, far too often, they simply can't. So, these sorts of efforts to ensure that our waterways are cleaner and that we can use data and be informed to make choices and decisions about how to achieve that is really important.

I note media reports during June this year when Environment Tasmania launched the Map the Crap online site, the Tasmanian government acknowledged the issues, particularly the public health implications surrounding the release of undertreated sewage into waterways as a concern. But, not surprisingly, we were told it is ultimately the responsibility of TasWater and not the government. I think, in some sense, that's really splitting hairs. Therefore, I support the proposal outlined in clause 7 of the motion before us, particularly it's urging for a collaborative approach across key, relevant, responsible authorities, including the Tasmanian government, TasWater, the EPA Tasmania and the Department of Health and local councils. That call to consider real time, or near real time, monitoring and a public statewide live map, website and alert system for bypass events is an incredibly sensible suggestion and that collaboration across those agencies is of central importance to that.

I note also that the motion requests an update report to be provided to this parliament within six months of the passage of this motion and I think that's a very sensible request of the government that I hope is respected. Some may argue that six months is insufficient time but, while it would be potentially insufficient to achieve an end point in something, it should be entirely sufficient to achieve a report back on progress. I trust that the government, should this motion pass as I hope it will, won't ignore that part of the motion and will in fact bring us an update report. There hasn't been a good history of the government doing such things in response to motions passed in this Chamber, but I think this is an opportunity for the government to turn over a new leaf.

Ms Rattray - Noted.

Ms WEBB - This is essential infrastructure that we're talking about. It's public health, and our beautiful, valued environment that we're talking about. We really should be able to put a collaborative response together. We should be able to report back and point to progress made.

To conclude, I again wish to express my thanks both to the work of Environment Tasmania in the Map the Crap online tool and to the member for Huon for providing this opportunity for us to acknowledge that good work and the contribution it's making to our community's health and quality of life. I also urge the government to heed the calls in clause 7 and I hope that we do receive that update report on the implementation, the cost and the timeframes for a statewide, close-to-real time public live map website and alert system for

bypass events.

As Environment Tasmania's Map the Crap site states, 'Stay in the loop, not in the sludge.' I think we could all live by that motto, couldn't we? So, I commend and support this motion.