

## Legislative Assembly Hansard – 19 September 2019

**FILTERED SMOKE STACKS**

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (10:42):** I move:

That this House:

- (1) Acknowledges that vehicle exhaust fumes pose a health risk to the community due to presence of carbon monoxide, nitrogen oxides as well as PM2.5 and PM10 particles.
- (2) Recognises that air pollution related deaths are on the rise in Australia, largely due to road pollution.
- (3) Calls on the Premier to honour her commitment to filter the proposed stacks at Iron Cove Bridge and Rozelle Rail Yards, in line with the world's best practice.
- (4) Acknowledges the concerns of the Premier regarding exhaust fumes when in opposition and calls on the Government to deliver the proposal.

Global experience of major toll road construction throughout the world demonstrates conclusively that projects like WestConnex actually increase air pollution, encourage car use, fleece road users with exorbitant tolls and eventually fill the increased road capacity they create. WestConnex is shaping up as the most expensive road project in the world but it will not deliver on the most basic promise of solving Sydney's congestion problem. Governments sell tollways like this to the public as a way to reduce traffic congestion. It is a logical enough idea and it is one that makes sense to a lot of people who have been stuck in traffic. On Saturday mornings in Sydney people might think, "Well, small communities are served by small roads. They grow bigger and roads need to grow with them."

More lanes create greater capacity, meaning cars should be able to pass through faster and people should be able to get to their destination quicker. But what actually happens when these roads are built—and anyone paying attention to the international literature will know—is that when construction is undertaken for these motorways that increased roadway capacity actually encourages more people to drive and therefore it fails to improve congestion. This is called "induced demand". Induced demand occurs because trips that would have once been best embarked upon by bicycle, bus or train may now be more attractive to take in a car. This mode shifting puts more people in cars, which fills the increased capacity of the new tollway. That is why governments around the world are tearing down tollways and investing in world-class public transport. That is what my community wants.

In a memo prepared by Transport for NSW in 2017 on potential rail improvements between Sydney and Wollongong—a project that would compete against funds for the proposed F6 motorway—it was revealed that the Government had said clearly that public transport alternatives to motorway projects should be ignored by officials and that they should not be taken into account when determining the performance of these motorway projects. If public transport is proactively not considered, this Government is absolutely heading the wrong way. But this project is even worse because it proposes to build five exhaust stacks up to 35 metres high in Rozelle, St Peters and our inner west community.

The Government will talk about ventilation stacks but in fact they are chimneys that take the concentrated exhaust from this motorway into our communities. The concept design that is proposed provides for four unfiltered stacks to be placed in Rozelle, which will release exhaust fumes from the whole tunnel from St Peters to Rozelle, the Cross Harbour Tunnel travelling south, the tunnel from Haberfield to Rozelle and the tunnel from Iron Cove to the Rozelle Rail Yards. It represents concentrated pollution from almost 15 kilometres of mostly four-way tollways being poured into Rozelle. At a community meeting at the recent Western Harbour Tunnel proposal, parents were told that emissions from the tunnel would be pumped back 2.5 kilometres into Terry Street, Rozelle, again increasing the amount of toxic and potentially deadly emissions released into our local area.

I present this motion on behalf of parents, students and residents who want to work, recreate and exercise locally and are concerned about these impacts. We know that the Government has been concerned about these proposals because we have heard the Premier speak about them. In fact, the Premier was so concerned about a similar proposal to build unfiltered stacks as part of the Lane Cove Tunnel in 2008 she was implacably opposed to it. She delivered a rousing speech to the House, in which she said:

Members of Parliament should examine their conscience and consider how they would feel if their children or the children of loved ones were exposed to this level of fumes every day and they were part of a government that could have put in place measures to reduce the impact of the fumes.

...

World best practice is to filter tunnels, to ethically provide information to constituents, and to ensure the health and safety of constituents by maximising the purity of the air.

I agree with the Premier. The then planning Minister who approved the Rozelle interchange without any detailed design, Anthony Roberts, was also enraged in 2008. He said:

The issue then is one, I believe, that transcends party politics. There is no difficulty, in my view and as one who is familiar with the stack filtration issues during the last few years, for any person of integrity in telling the good guys from the bad guys, especially in the saga of events recounted.

...

I believe the totality of the evidence is beyond reasonable doubt in favour of installing filtration and makes it obligatory for Government to unanimously endorse the installation of filtration technology in tunnels and stacks as a responsibility and a duty of care.

The then planning Minister went on to list the schools in his electorate. In regard to the stacks that were proposed to be built in his community, the 2017 education Minister was quoted as saying, "I will not be party to putting stacks near kids." We want that to apply not just to Coalition electorates. We want it to apply to all electorates around New South Wales to ensure that our air is clean. The impacts on my local community in particular when it comes to proximity to schools is quite alarming. One stack is planned for Terry Street, Rozelle, which will be less than 200 metres from the playground at Rozelle Public School. The school is located at the top of the hill on a stretch of road between Victoria Road and Rozelle Bay at the Iron Cove Bridge. Because the base of the stack will be several metres closer to sea level than the Iron Cove Bridge, the top of the stack will probably be a similar height to the playground. Sydney Secondary College is only 400 metres from the stack, as is King George Park, where 4,000 kids from over 17 local schools come to participate in Little Athletics, run cross-country and compete in carnivals.

We want a duty of care. I live in Rozelle and I believe this community needs protection, as do all communities that are impacted by these stacks. I congratulate in particular the work of Sunil Badami and Ben Prag, who are both parents of students who attend Rozelle Public School, and all the local residents behind Rozelle Against WestConnex, Leichhardt Against WestConnex, Annandale Against WestConnex and the WestConnex Action Group, who have been staunch and unflinching supporters of our community. Of course, we have had some wins. During this Government's tenure there was a parliamentary inquiry into WestConnex. That inquiry recommended that the New South Wales Government install filtration systems on all current and future motorway tunnels in order to reduce the level of pollution emitted from vehicle stacks.

We have heard it from the Premier, from the former planning Minister and from the current planning Minister: All of them want to ensure that we have filtration on these stacks to help protect the air quality in our local communities rather than the concentrated pollution from kilometre after kilometre of these tollways being emitted on our local community. Is it any wonder our community is so cynical when the Premier and the Minister for Counter Terrorism and Corrections supported filtration when they were in opposition yet now when they are in government they refuse to act. I call on the House to support this motion.

**Ms ELENi PETINOS (Miranda) (10:49):** I speak in opposition to the motion moved by the member for Balmain. The New South Wales Government recognises that good air quality is important for everyone. As our population continues to grow, we are committed to maintaining high air quality standards. The Office of Environment and Heritage data shows that Sydney's air quality has improved significantly in the past 30 years. Rather than filtration, which would not meaningfully reduce community exposure to motor vehicle emissions, the best approach is to continue to reduce emissions at the source by adopting cleaner fuels and vehicles.

Although there are more cars on the road, NSW Environment Protection Authority data shows that total emissions from motor vehicles in Sydney have fallen significantly over the past 20 years as a result of improvements in fuel quality and better engine designs. Total emissions from motor vehicles are set to continue to fall over the next decade due to the new cleaner vehicles continuing to replace old-technology vehicles. This is despite an increase in the number of cars in Sydney as the population grows. The New South Wales Government will continue to work with the Commonwealth and support initiatives to further reduce motor vehicle emissions at the source.

When we came to government we moved to address community concerns around ventilation outlets for motorway tunnels by establishing in 2013 the Advisory Committee on Tunnel and Air Quality [ACTAQ], which advises government on tunnel ventilation design and operation. The committee is chaired by the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer and consists of a range of experts in fields related to road tunnels, air quality and human health. This includes the New South Wales Chief Health Officer and an independent international air quality expert. The committee's *Initial Report on Tunnel Air Quality* stated:

... emissions from well-designed road tunnels cause a negligible change to surrounding air quality and, as such, there is little to no health benefit for surrounding communities in installing filtration and air treatment systems in such tunnels.

Motorway tunnels enhance the road network and minimise disruption to communities. Removing vehicles from surface roads into a tunnel network reduces local traffic congestion and emissions by transferring stop-start traffic from surface roads into free-flowing underground motorways. The Government has in place strong protections around air quality in motorway tunnels. Recent New South Wales tunnels longer than one kilometre are required to have zero emissions from portals, with tunnel air exhausted from ventilation systems that use fans to eject emissions high into the atmosphere. Outside Australia almost all road tunnels have portal emissions. These emissions are released at ground level, do not disperse as well and can have an impact on the quality of the air people breathe.

Sydney's motorway tunnel ventilation outlets are designed and operated to propel tunnel air high into the atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere the ejected tunnel air is diluted hundreds of times as it mixes with the surrounding air before mixing down to ground level, resulting in little if any change to the quality of the air people breathe. This dispersion is so effective that if a filtration plant is put in the bottom of a ventilation outlet and monitoring stations are located in the local area it would be difficult to measure a difference in the air quality between when the filtration plant is working and when it is not. Filtration does not remove all pollutants from tunnel air, so we still need to run ventilation outlets to protect local air quality.

Members might wonder how we know a ventilation design will achieve the necessary dispersion of tunnel air. The effectiveness of a ventilation outlet design in dispersing tunnel air under all operating and weather conditions is assessed through sophisticated computer modelling using real hour-by-hour weather data for all 8,760 hours of a year. A comprehensive air quality assessment was conducted for the M4-M5 link, which included the proposed ventilation facilities at Iron Cove Bridge and the Rozelle Rail Yards. The assessment was subject to a detailed review by independent international experts, coordinated by the Office of the NSW Chief Scientist & Engineer. The expert review concluded:

Our overall conclusion of the WestConnex environmental impact statement [EIS] is that it constitutes a thorough review of high quality. It covers all of the major issues and areas that an EIS for a project of this scale should.

...

We find that the assessment methodology is sound and represents best practice. All of the models and data used are appropriate and expertly used.

...

Overall, the project (as assessed) seems to deliver improved air quality at a majority of receptors despite increased emissions and traffic—a simple yet important conclusion that the EIS does not emphasise.

The Government has introduced requirements for new motorway tunnels to undergo additional checks before displaying the environmental impact statement. These include that the Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality will coordinate a scientific review of a project's air emissions from ventilation outlets, the NSW Chief Health Officer will release a statement on the potential health impacts of emissions from tunnel ventilation outlets and the planning Minister will not approve a motorway tunnel project until the ACTAQ scientific review is considered. This new enhanced process is being used for the first time for the F6 Extension stage 1 environmental impact statement [EIS]. Following review of the F6 stage 1 EIS, the NSW Chief Health Officer stated:

Well-designed and operated road tunnel ventilation outlets discharge in-tunnel air to the atmosphere at a height and velocity that promotes dispersion of the in-tunnel air, minimising ground-level impacts.

The EIS predicts that the contribution of emissions from road tunnel ventilation outlets to community exposures is small, relative to the contribution of emissions from traffic on surface roads from other pollution sources.

The NSW Chief Health Officer specified:

The primary source of community exposure to air pollution is from pre-existing regional air pollution, followed by pollution from surface road traffic.

Any potential air pollution-related health effects from the project are likely to be primarily a result of changes in volumes of traffic on the surface road network, not a result of the tunnel ventilation outlets.

Sydney's tunnels are designed and operated so that tunnel air from the ventilation outlets will have a negligible effect on local air quality. Ambient monitoring in the community has confirmed this for operating tunnels. All new tunnels will be required to conduct ambient monitoring for at least two years to detect any effect due to the ventilation outlets. The best approach to reduce community exposure to motor vehicle emissions is to continue to adopt cleaner fuels and vehicles to reduce emissions at the source rather than attempt to filter them out of the air once they have been released. I oppose this motion.

**Ms KATE WASHINGTON (Port Stephens) (10:55):** I thank the member for Balmain for moving this motion today. I speak in support of it. I also thank the member for Miranda for her contribution. She read a very sanitised script prepared by the department for the purposes of her contribution today. It seems apparent from the member for Miranda's contribution and the department's script that it is considered by the Government not to be its responsibility to protect communities, such as that of the member for Balmain, from the impacts of air pollution that is emitted from the very infrastructure they are creating.

According to the Government, it is up to the motorists and up to everybody else to solve these problems. It is certainly something that the Government seems to think it has no responsibility for whatsoever. There are two very important elements to the member for Balmain's motion. Firstly, the motion recognises that air pollution is a serious health issue that needs to be addressed and ought to be addressed by the Government. It is an issue that has been completely disregarded by the Government, notwithstanding the very real and significant impacts on people's health, which continue to increase. The Doctors for the Environment Australia state:

Ambient air pollution contributes to over 3,000 premature deaths each year in Australia. Even at low concentrations nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and ozone are impacting public health.

This is an issue that the Government should take very seriously but fails to do. Secondly, of course, the motion holds the Premier to account for her own words, which were said in this place on 8 May 2008. *Hansard* is a wonderful document. It seems that the Premier, when in opposition, was very vocal on this issue relating to the filtering of smokestacks. We know what her real views on this issue are because she spelled them out in a 3,000-word speech in this Chamber 11 years ago. I for one am very grateful that the Premier was given an extension of time during that debate, otherwise her contribution may have been much less. The Premier stated:

World best practice is to filter tunnels ... and to ensure the health and safety of constituents by maximising the purity of the air. There is not a lot of ambiguity in those words. However, the Premier was even more explicit than that. She said that whatever the then Government says on climate change, the environment, health and youth, it means nothing if you do not filter smokestacks. She said this issue was a matter of safeguarding the health of local residents, ensuring air quality and taking out insurance on the future health of people who live, work and play in the vicinity of these stacks. Yet when it comes to the Iron Cove Bridge and the Rozelle Rail Yards the Premier is now not interested in safeguarding the health of local residents.

As the leader of the Government she is now not interested in ensuring local air quality. According to her own words, this is what is required, and the way to do it is to filter these stacks. She has no interest in taking out insurance for the future health of people who live, work and play in the vicinity of these stacks, yet she seemed to in 2008. When it comes to air quality, air pollution and concerns about the health of communities the Government is found wanting. On the very basics that we need—the air we breathe, the water we drink—the Government is failing communities across New South Wales.

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH (Wollondilly) (11:00):** I oppose this motion, even though over recent weeks I have had many discussions in the elevator with the member for Balmain, who has been telling me about his Prius. I think the member for Castle Hill has one as well.

**Mr Ray Williams:** No, I've still got a hybrid. I have had two Priuses.

**Mr NATHANIEL SMITH:** He has a hybrid. Getting back to the motion, the New South Wales Government manages the assessment, determination and compliance of significant road tunnels and associated ventilation systems. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment assesses proposals under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979 in consultation with relevant State government agencies. The assessment process is public and transparent, with formal opportunities for agencies, local government and the public to provide comment. Prior to public exhibition of the environmental impact statement [EIS], for all tunnel projects after WestConnex the Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer [OCSE], on behalf of the non-Roads and Maritime Services members of the Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality [ACTAQ], provides a scientific review of the project's air emissions from ventilation outlets for the planning Minister's consideration. The Chief Health Officer then releases a statement on potential health impacts of emissions from tunnel ventilation outlets, informed by the review by the OCSE.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority [EPA] provides technical advice to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on operational air quality impacts during the assessment of the EIS. NSW Health advises the department on air quality health impacts, including appropriate health assessment methodologies, for in-tunnel and ambient air quality during the assessment of the EIS. The OCSE, on behalf of the non-conflicted members of the ACTAQ, provides advice on the technical adequacy and appropriateness of the air quality modelling and impacts during the public exhibition of the EIS. The department may also seek advice from an independent air quality expert during the assessment of the EIS.

The planning Minister is the approval authority for complex infrastructure proposals, including road tunnels. If approved by the Minister, a significant road tunnel will be regulated by the project approval. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment regulates the construction and operation of the project in accordance with the project approval. These functions are generally delegated to the secretary of the department, or their nominee, under the project approval. The EPA currently licenses tunnel construction activities under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997. The EPA will license emissions from tunnel ventilation facilities once the New South Wales Government initiative announced in February 2018 to strengthen the approach of addressing air quality issues associated with road tunnels is fully implemented. I oppose the motion.

**Ms JENNY LEONG (Newtown) (11:03):** I support the motion moved by my Greens colleague the member for Balmain highlighting the need to filter smokestacks in our community. We heard the member for Balmain outline the real impact that it has on his community. From the quotes that he provided from the Premier and the planning Minister when they were in opposition, and from what we have heard now from the current Labor Opposition, it is clear that there is a need for us to address air quality across our city because the impacts are huge. Just the other day the Lord Mayor of Sydney, Clover Moore, joined with the Minister for Energy and Environment to install an air quality monitoring station back in the CBD, the first one to be returned there in 15 years. I don't know. Maybe what is going on here is that the Liberal Government is more concerned about the health of the corporate business types working in the city than about the schoolchildren in our communities.

Air quality and air pollution monitoring in this city has been problematic, and the introduction and delivery of WestConnex has been concerning when it comes to air quality monitoring. It is worth repeating that when the Premier was in opposition she called for the filtering of stacks in her community. In 2008 she delivered a speech in this House chastising the then Lemma Labor Government for refusing to filter the stacks. Let us not be fooled, sadly both the former Labor Government and the current Liberal-Nationals Government of New South Wales have an absolute commitment to delivering big, polluting toll roads in our city and failing to filter the stacks. It is not just this Government that is doing that, it is governments from all sides of politics. We need to stop the State's addiction to the idea of delivering toll roads that cause worse air pollution. When in opposition the Premier stated:

Members of Parliament should examine their conscience and consider how they would feel if their children or the children of loved ones were exposed to this level of fumes every day and they were part of a government that could put in place measures to reduce the impact of fumes.

The Premier went on to say:

World best practice is to filter tunnels, to ethically provide information to constituents, and to ensure the health and safety of constituents by maximising the purity of the air.

As the member for Balmain pointed out, the planning Minister, when he was in opposition and before becoming the planning Minister or the education Minister, called for the filtering of stacks.

**Mr Jamie Parker:** It was 2017.

**Ms JENNY LEONG:** It was in 2017, so as a Minister he was calling for the filtering of the stacks. It cannot be the case that we want to protect the lungs of the children just in our own electorates. We should have a slightly larger and more holistic perspective. Rather than just being about protecting the lungs of the kids in our own electorates, let us try to protect the lungs of the kids in all 93 electorates. Maybe that is a good idea. Instead, when we look at it we see that the impact of WestConnex has been huge, particularly in a range of areas in the inner city and inner west. I will quote Dr Chris Ho, a social researcher at the University of Technology Sydney. She is a parent at St Peters Public School, which has been hugely impacted by WestConnex. I acknowledge Wendy Bacon, an investigative journalist and activist, who has been doing a lot of work exposing the completely outrageous— [*Extension of time not granted.*]

**Mr RAY WILLIAMS (Castle Hill) (11:08):** First and foremost, I place firmly on record my congratulations to the Government on constructing the great WestConnex and providing a seamless motorway from the foot of the Blue Mountains all the way to Wattle Street, Ashfield. Tens of thousands of vehicles have been removed from Parramatta Road, and one can only imagine the immense reduction in emissions along that road by virtue of putting vehicles in an underground tunnel and introducing world's best practice ventilation stacks to eject dangerous emissions high above communities and improve the air quality for everybody. It is very similar to what will be achieved on NorthConnex when we remove tens of thousands of vehicles—including heavy vehicles—from Pennant Hills Road, once again ejecting the dangerous emissions high above the community and improving the quality of air for all of our communities.

The New South Wales Government manages the assessment, determination and compliance of significant road tunnels and associated ventilation systems. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment assesses proposals under the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act in consultation with the relevant State government agencies. The assessment process is public and transparent, with formal opportunities for agencies, local government and the public to comment. Prior to the public exhibition of the environmental impact statement [EIS], the Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer [OCSE], on behalf of non-Roads and Maritime members of the Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality [ACTAQ], provides a scientific review of a project's air emissions ventilation outlets for the planning Minister's consideration. The Chief Health Officer releases a statement on the potential health impacts of emissions from tunnel ventilation outlets, informed by the review of the OCSE.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority [EPA] provides technical advice to the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment on operational air quality impacts during the assessment of the EIS. NSW Health advises the department on quality of health impacts including appropriate health assessment methodologies for in-tunnel and ambient air quality under the assessment of the EIS. The OCSE, on behalf of the non-conflicted members of the ACTAQ, provides advice on the technical adequacy and appropriateness of the air quality modelling and impacts during the public exhibition of the EIS. The department may also seek advice from an independent air quality expert during the assessment of the EIS.

The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces is the approval authority for complex infrastructure proposals, including road tunnels. If approved by the Minister, a significant road tunnel will be regulated by project approval. The Department of Planning, Industry and Environment regulates the construction and operation of the project in accordance with the project approval. These functions are generally delegated to the secretary of the department, or their nominee, under the project approval. The EPA currently licenses tunnel construction activities under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997. The EPA will license emissions from tunnel ventilation facilities once the New South Wales Government initiative to strengthen the approach of addressing air quality issues associated with road tunnels, which was announced in February 2018, is fully implemented.

I add for the record once more that the fact is that we have delivered a tunnel under Parramatta Road to complete that particular road corridor and we had to do it because of the failure of our predecessors to retain a road corridor from Concord through to Wattle Street, Ashfield. They chose instead to sell the corridor and force the new government to build a tunnel underneath. We are the ones who delivered the WestConnex project and I look forward to the next stage.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ (Auburn) (11:12):** By leave: I think I have heard it all now. I have heard everything from that side of the Chamber. It is just the most outrageous—

**Mr Mark Coure:** You haven't heard my speech. I am next.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ:** That is good. I will be interested in your speech, because you can answer a few of these questions. I have been around Parliament long enough to remember 2003, when those members sitting opposite stood up with the Residents Against Polluting Stacks group. If they want to, members can have a look at its website that still exists. They will see John Brogden standing up there with all his Liberal mates and saying that they are going to put filtration systems in stacks and they are going to deliver all these things.

Duncan Gay was marching up and down before the election in 2007, saying, "We're going to put them in the M5 East tunnel. We're going to have them in every stack that we put up." But the minute those opposite are in government, what do they do? Suddenly the science—which they will not accept on any other issue—does not suit them, so they are not going to do it. Instead they hide as they always do, by saying, "We have done community consultation, we have got environmental impact statements and we are doing the right thing." This is the mob who said that they would build an open cut tunnel up Parramatta Road as their expressway. Marie Ficarra still owes me \$1,000 over that bet. How long did that solution last? About two minutes.

Now members opposite are in this Chamber saying that back in 1981 or 1975 the Labor Party did something or other. They ignore all the Labor infrastructure that was built such as the roads, the hospitals, the stadiums and the Lane Cove Tunnel because apparently they are the only blokes that ever did anything. They never bothered delivering anything in the 1990s when they were in government. They had to wait for a Labor government to deliver it.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** Order! Government members will come to order.

**Ms LYNDIA VOLTZ:** They gave a rock-solid guarantee that they would put filtration systems in every stack across Sydney. That great policy has disappeared like every promise they come up with.

**Mr MARK COURE (Oatley) (11:15):** By leave: I am surprised that the member for Auburn gave up halfway through her allocated time. She still had another two minutes to go.

**Mr Jamie Parker:** She wanted to give you a go.

**Mr MARK COURE:** That is very nice of her. As we have heard, the New South Wales Government recognises that good air quality is important to everyone. It will continue to work with the Commonwealth and support initiatives to further reduce motor vehicle emissions at the source. Office of Environment and Heritage data shows that Sydney's air quality has improved significantly over the past 30-odd years. As our population grows, we are committed to maintaining high air quality standards. Rather than filtration, which would normally meaningfully reduce community exposure to motor vehicle emissions, the best approach is to continue to reduce emissions at the source by adopting cleaner fuels and vehicles.

There has been some discussion about the M4 and the M2 et cetera. Sydney's motorway tunnel ventilation outlets are designed and operated to propel tunnel air high into the atmosphere. Once in the atmosphere, the ejected tunnel air is diluted hundreds of times as it mixes with the surrounding air before mixing down to ground level, resulting in little if any change to the quality of the air people breathe. Recent New South Wales tunnels longer than one kilometre are required to have zero emissions from portals, with tunnel air exhausted from ventilation systems that use fans to eject emissions high into the atmosphere. The Government has in place strong protections around air quality and in motorway tunnels.

Outside Australia almost all road tunnels have portal emissions. These emissions are released at ground level, do not disperse as well and can have an impact on the quality of the air people breathe. Sydney's motorway tunnel ventilation outlets are designed and operated to propel tunnel air high into the atmosphere. We have seen that in recent examples. A comprehensive air quality assessment was conducted for the M4-M5 link, which included the proposed ventilation facilities at the Iron Cove Bridge and the Rozelle Rail Yards. The assessment was subject to a detailed review by independent international experts, coordinated by the Office of the Chief Scientist & Engineer. The expert review concluded:

Our overall conclusion of the WestConnex EIS is that it constitutes a thorough review of high quality. It covers all of the major issues and areas that an EIS for a project of this scale should. ... We find that the assessment methodology is sound and represents best practice. All of the models and data used are appropriate and expertly used. ... Overall, the project (as assessed) seems to deliver improved air quality ...

In the 40 seconds that I have left, I point out that this Government has introduced requirements for new motorway tunnels to undergo additional checks and balances before displaying their environmental impact statements, including that the Advisory Committee on Tunnel Air Quality [ACTAQ] and the Chief Health Officer will release statements on the potential impacts of emissions from tunnel ventilation outlets. The Minister for Planning and Public Spaces will not approve a motorway tunnel project until the ACTAQ scientific review has been considered. We have seen that previously and we will see it in the future. I thank the member for Balmain for his motion and I thank many of the speakers who have made contributions to the debate.

**Mr JAMIE PARKER (Balmain) (11:19):** In reply: I thank the members for the electorates of Miranda, Port Stephens, Newtown, Wollondilly, Castle Hill, Auburn and Oatley for their contributions. First, I again point out that tollway projects induce traffic because people shift modes when transport in a vehicle is easier. We know that. That is international experience and the literature demonstrates it conclusively. Secondly, if Government members were so proud of their tollways they would not have instructed public officials to ignore public transport options when examining motorway options like the F6. If tollways are so good, they should be compared and benchmarked against similar public transport options. However, this Government directed Transport for NSW not to compare motorway projects to public transport options and that is a scandal.

We have heard quotes from the now Premier, the now planning Minister and the former Minister for Planning, all of whom demanded emphatically that filtration was world's best practice and that the science demanded it. In fact, we know more about the science today, which makes filtration even more pressing. This highlights again why people are so disillusioned with politicians. A few short years ago the current Premier and the current planning Minister, who is the former education Minister, stood up in this Parliament and said how important filtration is. Now when they are in government they say, "No, we're not going to do it."

We have heard also about the geography issue. Several members, including the member for Oatley, have said that these stacks are 35 metres high and are pushing the pollution up into the sky. The Rozelle stack is just a few hundred metres from a school. The geography of the place means it is located quite low down while the school is on a ridge, so we know that the fumes are more likely to drift directly from the stack into the playground and into the lungs of the children. Those 700 small children face the prospect of being showered with pollution, including diesel and particulates, before, during and after school, as they play, eat lunch and stand in line for morning class. It is absolutely unacceptable.

We have been told that reduction in vehicle movements must be addressed. New South Wales and Australia have some of the filthiest fuel standards in the world. In fact, our fuel standards are the lowest in the OECD. Everyone used to laugh about Mexico; now Australia has the filthiest fuel in the OECD. For example, regular unleaded fuel in Australia has 150 parts per million of sulphur while premium unleaded has about 50 parts per million. Those standards have not changed since 2005 and 2008. In the rest of the world they are down to 10 parts per million of sulphur. Our air quality standards in Australia are a joke. If we compare our sulphur and air quality standards with those of the World Health Organization, we are a laughing-stock. I understand that the Environment Protection Authority has done some work on this but the Federal and State governments must address our air quality standards and fuel standards.

We notice this in particular with cruise ship pollution. Cruise ships that could not even berth in North America and Europe are sent here to Australia. The filthiest, dirtiest vessels are sent out to the edge of the old colony, here in Australia, where we accept those filthy vessels that no other country will take. In places like the Rozelle goods yards three 35-metre stacks will spew unfiltered pollution from kilometre after kilometre of motorways onto people who are down in the Rozelle Rail Yards area. We hear members say today that ambient measures are better. That is because all of the filtered pollution from those roads will be taken and exhausted in one location. We are merely asking for the same standards that people in Tokyo, Spain and other places get, which is filtration of those stacks. The parliamentary inquiry recommended it. The Premier and the planning Minister supported it and so should this House.

**TEMPORARY SPEAKER (Mr Greg Piper):** The question is that the motion be agreed to.

**The House divided.**

Ayes	41
Noes	50
Majority	9

AYES

Aitchison, Ms J	Atalla, Mr E	Bali, Mr S
Barr, Mr C	Car, Ms P	Catley, Ms Y
Chanthivong, Mr A	Cotsis, Ms S	Crakanthorp, Mr T
Daley, Mr M	Dib, Mr J	Doyle, Ms T
Finn, Ms J	Greenwich, Mr A	Harris, Mr D
Harrison, Ms J	Haylen, Ms J	Hoenig, Mr R
Hornery, Ms S	Kamper, Mr S	Lalich, Mr N

Leong, Ms J	Lynch, Mr P	McDermott, Dr H
McGirr, Dr J	McKay, Ms J	Mehan, Mr D (teller)
Mihailuk, Ms T	Minns, Mr C	O'Neill, Dr M
Park, Mr R	Parker, Mr J	Saffin, Ms J
Scully, Mr P	Smith, Ms T.F.	Tesch, Ms L
Voltz, Ms L	Warren, Mr G	Washington, Ms K
Watson, Ms A (teller)	Zangari, Mr G	

## NOES

Anderson, Mr K	Ayres, Mr S	Barilaro, Mr J
Berejiklian, Ms G	Bromhead, Mr S	Clancy, Mr J
Conolly, Mr K	Constance, Mr A	Cooke, Ms S (teller)
Coure, Mr M	Crouch, Mr A (teller)	Dalton, Mrs H
Davies, Mrs T	Dominello, Mr V	Donato, Mr P
Elliott, Mr D	Evans, Mr L.J.	Gibbons, Ms M
Griffin, Mr J	Gulaptis, Mr C	Hancock, Mrs S
Hazzard, Mr B	Henskens, Mr A	Johnsen, Mr M
Kean, Mr M	Lee, Dr G	Lindsay, Ms W
Marshall, Mr A	O'Dea, Mr J	Pavey, Mrs M
Perrottet, Mr D	Petinos, Ms E	Preston, Ms R
Provest, Mr G	Roberts, Mr A	Saunders, Mr D
Sidgreaves, Mr P	Sidoti, Mr J	Singh, Mr G
Smith, Mr N	Speakman, Mr M	Stokes, Mr R
Taylor, Mr M	Toole, Mr P	Tuckerman, Mrs W
Upton, Ms G	Ward, Mr G	Williams, Mr R
Williams, Mrs L	Wilson, Ms F	

**Motion negatived.**