



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2017

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 14 June 2017

Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (**Hon Kate Doust**) took the chair at 1.00 pm, and read prayers.

ANIMAL WELFARE ACT — REVIEW

Petition

HON ALANNA CLOHESY (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.01 pm]: I present a petition containing 600 signatures, couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned residents of Western Australia respectfully ask the State Government to review the Western Australian (WA) Animal Welfare Act 2002 and enforce harsher penalties and punishments. In light of the tragic event on Wednesday 17th May 2017, in which Luna a beloved family Labrador was fatally stabbed ... at Polyantha Reserve in Apple Blossom Drive, Mirrabooka and other animal welfare cases that have been failed by the system, the WA Animal Welfare Act 2002 does not provide animals with adequate protection. The killing of a companion animal is a serious offence requiring the Act and the judiciary to apply penalties and punishments that more adequately reflect community sentiment. We refer to Part 3 of the Act: Offences Against Animals (under clause 19:1 and 2) which does not include the inhumane killing of an animal as a serious offence, nor does it enforce harsher punishments and penalties to suit.

Under the —

Animal Welfare Act 2002, —

The offender —

if convicted ... is likely to face no more than a monetary fine and if deemed appropriate up to 5 years (maximum) in prison. Current penalties do not match the severity of these crimes and are not considered tough enough to deter animal cruelty and in particular, the inhumane killing of a companion animal.

Your petitioners therefore respectfully request the Legislative Council recommends a review of the WA Animal Welfare Act 2002 and enforce harsher penalties and punishments. Temporary animal bans, community service and monetary fines are simply too lenient. Penalties such as prison time need to be enforced by the judiciary, as well as permanent animal bans.

For the people signing the petition this is the first step in making our voice heard and where animals are silent, it is hoped that justice can be served. In the memory of Luna and the many other animals who have suffered and tragically lost their lives.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper 268.]

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME

Statement by Minister for Disability Services

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Disability Services) [1.04 pm]: I rise to update the Parliament and the people of Western Australia on the status of state government considerations on the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The state government inherited a bilateral agreement for a nationally consistent, locally delivered NDIS in WA, which was signed by the former government on the eve of the caretaker period and without reference to the former state cabinet. It has become apparent to the Premier and I that this agreement was entered into without sufficient consideration and detailed evaluation of alternatives, including entry into the commonwealth scheme. This is a significant decision that will not be rushed by the McGowan Labor government. The government is properly evaluating the alternatives, with an eye to the long-term best interests of Western Australia and its people.

Since coming into government I have prioritised consultation on this critical issue with people with disability, their families and carers, peak bodies representing individuals and the sector, individual service provider organisations, along with a range of industry and special interest groups. Feedback from the consultation has been varied, with positive and negative reflections on the experience of both the state and federal schemes. This engagement has also identified key policy challenges that require consideration. These considerations include the

specific challenges for people living in rural and remote parts of Western Australia; ensuring scheme design meets the needs of people who require exceptionally high support; the importance of localised decision-making contact points and genuine choice and control; and the need to safeguard and develop WA's disability sector workforce.

It is noteworthy that the Productivity Commission review of the sustainability of the NDIS is due to report in September, and the commonwealth government has recently acknowledged that the scheme needs improvement based on initial experience. It is a positive sign that the commonwealth is listening. While the state has been consulting the community, the Disability Services Commission was instructed to pause investments needed to progress the rollout of the current agreement. However, from 1 July 2017 the state government will roll out the state-administered NDIS in the new regions of Kimberley and Pilbara and the remaining parts of the south metropolitan area. We expect that the National Disability Insurance Agency trial sites will be maintained by the federal government during negotiations.

I have heard overwhelmingly that people want certainty and service, and we are committed to delivering that. Western Australians also expect that any NDIS contribution made by WA is fair and equitable. This includes ensuring a reasonable return of moneys raised via the Medicare levy back to Western Australia. Western Australians expect a quality service for people with disability and their families, no less than what they were already receiving and, in many cases, after years of battling, finally receiving services to which they are entitled. I can confirm that the state government is in discussion with the commonwealth government about the costs and benefits of participation in the national scheme. It is in the mutual interests of both the state and commonwealth governments that there is certainty for people with disabilities, their families and carers. This includes a commitment from our government to avoid detrimental impacts on people with disability and to ensure continuity of service while these discussions take place, and that is what we will deliver. The commonwealth has confirmed that it is open to providing all the information that the state needs to make a final decision.

The WA government will make a fully informed decision about the most effective way of bringing the NDIS to all eligible Western Australians. We look forward to more constructive conversations with the commonwealth and hope to bring this matter to a conclusion as soon as possible.

I thank people with disabilities and their families for their forbearance while these discussions are underway.

PAPER TABLED

A paper was tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

EDUCATION CENTRAL POLICY — PERTH MODERN SCHOOL

Motion

Resumed from 24 May on the following motion moved by Hon Donna Faragher —

That this house notes both the significant concerns being raised across the community and the lack of consultation undertaken by the McGowan government on its Education Central policy, particularly the proposed relocation of the state's only fully academically selective senior high school, currently at Perth Modern School, to a high-rise inner-city school within the Perth City Link, and calls on the government to —

- (1) reverse its Education Central policy and maintain Perth Modern School as a fully academically selective school; and
- (2) revert to the comprehensive western suburbs secondary schooling strategy announced in September 2016.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [1.09 pm]: As they say, a week is a long time in politics and since I last rose in this place to speak to this motion, we have certainly seen some significant changes, most notably the announcement by the government this week that Perth Modern School would not have to be moved from its existing location and that Education Central would potentially now be built at a different location. I had it in mind that I would have to once again elaborate on all the reasons why it was a really bad idea to look at moving Perth Mod from its current location, and I am really relieved that I no longer have to try to make that case and that that decision has now been taken off the table.

I will say how disappointed I am that so much distress was experienced by so many of the parents, students and alumni of Perth Mod while uncertainty raged around what was going to happen to the school. I maintain, as I outlined in my remarks last time I spoke to this motion, that good consultation would have indicated very early on just how unwanted this decision was for the Perth Mod community. I am very clear about how important that sense of history and tradition is and how important the current location is to the Modernian community. It is a really important part of their sense of identity. I hope this means that lessons have been learnt and that it is now understood that sometimes it is really important to not mess with communities when they are going pretty well, thank you very much.

I want to reflect a bit more on the distress involved. I have met with parents and have seen people in tears. It has also been reported to me that the decision had a very divisive impact on that community; not because people were divided about whether or not to move, but because people were starting to feel so paralysed about what to do about it and about how to make the government listen and to reverse this decision that was so unpopular and so unwarranted, and that people so absolutely did not want.

I also want to express my sadness to that community over the recent loss of one of their students. I know how difficult that has made it for the parent body to feel as though they can move forward and do something to recognise the significance of that passing. I am hoping that this week's announcement means that there can be some sense of comfort about how people move on that.

There is a broader issue here about consultation. I have spoken in this place before about what consultation looks like and what it means around the National Disability Insurance Scheme and a range of other issues that are incredibly important to various communities in which people's lives are affected. We are going to have to start talking about the basic standard for consultation. This decision in no sense involved consultation and, as I said, should never have occurred in the first place. I hope that Perth Mod parents feel as though they were well heard, and I hope there can be an opportunity for them to move forward and feel as though their community has been respected.

I also want to talk about some other issues that came up during the course of the campaign; I feel it would be remiss of me not to raise them in this place. Throughout the course of the campaign to try to keep Perth Mod at its current location there were different tactics employed to try to make the case for saving Perth Mod. I have to say, from the outset, that the Greens did not agree with two of the positions that were put, and I need to put on the record where we stand on them.

The first matter is that comments were made by some parents about St George's Anglican Grammar School, which is our first inner-city vertical school. It is not the first inner-city school; there is another school in Fremantle that has been going for a very long time, Lance Holt School, which is held in very high regard and is what we term an inner-city school. It is not high-rise, but it is an inner-city school, and it is an excellent school. For years it has taken advantage of the community of Fremantle and the surrounds. I want to speak out in support of St George's because I know that some of the comments made about it have also caused distress. I would like to tell people that St George's parents love their children every bit as much as Perth Mod parents, and St George's parents are every bit as concerned about the wellbeing of their children as Perth Mod parents. If one talks to the students of St George's, one will find that they are every bit as proud of their school as students at Perth Modern, and there are reasons for that, because it is an excellent school. It is also, in my opinion, a potential model for how vertical inner-city schools need to operate.

There are some distinct differences between St George's and what was proposed for Education Central, but I will speak specifically about St George's. St George's is six storeys and has effectively been kitted out as a purpose-built building. It has facilities on the roof, such as basketball facilities and areas for the kids to hang out and spend time together. It is a small school; it is capped out at just over 400 students. It needs to be acknowledged that the Anglican Schools Commission put an awful lot of work into developing its model for St George's, and a huge amount of work went into it. It has a range of arrangements with the City of Perth, in particular. The children undertake chapel at St George's Cathedral. The school library is the beautiful new Perth State Library. The students do rowing down at Elizabeth Quay and sports on the Esplanade. They use Beatty Park Leisure Centre for swimming and they do their theatre arts at the Heath Ledger Theatre. They also use the Art Gallery of Western Australia. The school has truly the most exceptional arrangement. I also acknowledge that, as a private school, St George's has the money for an appropriate staff-to-student ratio. It is absolutely diligent in how it ensures the ongoing wellbeing of its students, and it really takes advantage of the opportunities that are available to an inner-city school.

It is a wonderful model. I encourage people to go and check it out, but I would suggest that if they want to check it out, they will have to get on a waiting list. I will challenge some of the comments made around this, because I was told during the campaign that St George's student numbers were dropping. I am sorry, but there is absolutely no truth to that whatsoever. Over its two years of existence, St George's has increased its enrolments by 20 per cent per annum. That is projected for the future and, indeed, it has students on its waiting list up until 2029. Over the last 12 months alone, the number of requests from parents of prospective students for tours of the facility has doubled, to the point at which there is now a waiting list for prospective parents to undertake tours.

The reality is that this particular model of school is very popular with a lot of people. I do not want to see the baby thrown out with the bathwater by people confusing a passionate desire to maintain a school like Perth Mod with effective denigration of another school. I am speaking out very heavily around that.

Hon Peter Collier: I opened that school. The parents at St George's had the choice.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Absolutely. I am talking about making sure that when people are trying to save their own school, they do not denigrate another.

Another thing I want to say is that I have heard a lot of comments made about high-rise or vertical schools. As I have already articulated, there are models and there are models. St George's is a model that has pretty much got the balance right. They have provided some wonderful opportunities for their kids and there is a very strong sense of community within that school. The Greens are not prepared to throw out the option of any sort of high-rise or vertical schools as we go into the future. It is very important for people who live in the middle of the city and it is particularly important for people who live immediately around the city, and it is a good use of space. As a model, it is something that has been explored internationally, and we have excellent models here in Australia as well. There are plenty of opportunities for us to get it right.

I went to two public high schools where the footprint was huge and there were massive ovals. I have to say that my experience, as has been described by others, is that I was not a sporty person. Certainly most of the people I knew used the oval at lunchtime to go down there and smoke. I think we need to talk realistically about the way people use these spaces. I understand that for a lot of people it is really important, but it is not true to say that children who attend inner-city schools are not exposed to green space and do not get access to a range of sporting facilities. In some cases, they get more opportunities than are available to other people. I felt that I needed to say that, and I say it as somebody who can claim to be a long-term mental health advocate and who strongly supports saving our green spaces and urban bushland and encouraging people to keep mature trees. I feel quite confident that my credentials on this issue are pretty well known. I needed to comment about those two matters.

Getting back to the second part of the motion, I am really glad that this is where the debate needs to happen. Perth Modern School has been saved. Good. It needed to be saved. It should never have been on the table in the first place. Now the discussion—I have a feeling this discussion will be heard in this chamber for quite a long time—is about where is the next need for a school. We have two options. An inner-city school has been proposed with the Subiaco option and on the table is one in particular that we have been talking about—the western suburbs secondary school plan, which was put out before. As I say, I do not think this discussion will go away in a hurry. If it was up to me, and I suspect everyone around this place would agree, and we had the money, I would love to do both. I would love there to be an inner-city school and I would love a western suburbs secondary school to be an option. The reality is that we need to cater to the growing number of people living in the middle of the city. We also need to do something for people who live out towards the eastern suburbs, particularly given the pressures on Mount Lawley Senior High School. However, we know we have to deal with Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School. The projected overcrowding is a huge problem.

As I mentioned last time I spoke, I am being lobbied very heavily by parents, particularly around City Beach, who thought they were getting a school, which was the option presented to them, and are becoming very alarmed because they feel that that option has been taken off the table. Not only that, people are getting concerned about what will happen about the rest of the schools originally proposed in the western suburbs secondary schooling plan. It was going to impact on schools such as Carine and Mount Lawley Senior High Schools. It has a massive flow-on effect for a lot of people.

One of the things I will not get into in this place is whether Education Central, which I assume is still the name we are using to talk about this strategy, is best placed in Subiaco. Frankly, I do not have the data to be able to independently make that assessment. That is one of the difficulties I have in this place. The former Minister for Education is obviously in a unique position having been privy to population data, projected need and all those sorts of figures, and the existing Minister for Education, since taking on her portfolio, has also been subject to receiving this information. I have not received that information independently. I have never been an education minister and I am not an education minister now, but I am expected to somehow use competing data—that is what I have been presented with—to try to figure out what the Greens are supposed to support. I have to say that that is pretty difficult for me. I am not quite sure. I accept that more and more people are attracted to inner-city living and the vibrancy that brings, which is borne out by the population data. I am also aware that the western suburbs, through bad planning by successive governments on both sides of this place, have been left at a real crisis point with a lack of schools and failure to consider projected overcrowding of schools, which will be absolutely untenable. One of my difficulties is to figure out what side of the fence I am supposed to support with this competing data.

In trying to assess at this point where I need to lie, given I have a particular motion in front of me, I come back to the basics around consultation and who knows what is going on and how these conversations have been had. The parents who are contacting me and are concerned that City Beach in particular has been taken off the table are saying that they did the consultation and were part of the discussions, so they thought this was something that had been agreed and that they were moving forward. I am not suggesting there is not a dire need for an inner-city school but we know that that same level of community engagement has not occurred. We also know that we are at a crisis point with what Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School face with the overcrowding that will occur very soon. I note Hon Donna Faragher's comments; I saw her on the television news on Sunday commenting that City Beach was "shovel-ready". I have been thinking about that, and it is true; in many ways it is ready to go. The time frame is consistent with us being able to get some movement on it fairly soon. I know

also that no matter where the most dire need is—again I cannot make that assessment—we will need a western suburbs school at some point. I am looking at whether we proceed with an inner-city school—I will say “inner city” rather than talk about the Subiaco option because I want to focus on the inner city as a model, and, again, I am fine with a certain type of vertical school—or do we need to proceed with City Beach as a matter of priority? The City Beach site seems ready to go and we know we will need both at some point. That will create difficulties for the budget. I imagine that people are concerned about—I agree—that most of the small amount of money that is available will be utilised for City Beach and the money will never be released to create what I accept and recognise is a necessary inner-city school to provide additional options to deal with growing populations. I take Hon Peter Collier’s point about choice and that we do not know what will happen. However, we know that the City Beach site will be needed, so I am reluctantly trying to fall on one side—and I will explain why I say reluctantly in a moment. At this point, weighing up all options, we will probably support the City Beach option as a priority over an inner-city option. I say reluctantly because—the Greens came out during the election campaign with this—it is doing my head in that these decisions appear to be politicised. I say that because if this were genuinely being independently determined, there would be no discussion about which model is the best or most desperately needed because it would have effectively been sorted out by an independent body. Then we would know where we need to spend our dollars and the argument would be about how many dollars we spend and how many schools we can build and when. That would be the argument.

One thing the Greens have been calling for is the establishment of something like an independent schools commission. To be very clear, we are talking about a similar model to that of the Electoral Commission. The Electoral Commission is charged with the responsibility of determining the redistribution of electoral boundaries. It uses population data. It looks at the existing population, projected population and communities of interest. The commission also calls for submissions. I know that most parties put in submissions about their ideas of what things should look like and all sorts of things. I should add that individuals can also make submissions, not just political parties. The Electoral Commission consults and can factor in the information it receives. The Electoral Commission has the data and uses it to get some idea of where the need might be. With that consultation, bearing in mind communities of interest and what communities want, as well as where there is demonstrated need, the commission announces where the electoral boundaries will be.

One thing that bothers me about new schools and upgrades of schools is that all the announcements are made during election times. I have lived and raised my children in what is termed a safe seat, and I can tell members now that the high school in that safe seat is never offered upgrades or offers to be made pretty. The school really needs it, and I would see other schools in marginal seats get offered thing after thing. I think that people get really sick of that. People want to see genuine decisions made about the public education system, about where schools are opened—that is, as opposed to an identified need in a new suburb; clearly where there is a new suburb, a new school is needed. People want to feel as though things are done because a genuine need has been demonstrated. A particular high school that is falling apart and is covered in asbestos—but is in a safe seat—should get equal attention to the very large school in a marginal seat. That is one of the things the Greens are talking about. The reason that we will continue to maintain these decisions are not independent is that there is a situation right here in which we can see a lack of transparency in how either of the decisions were made. Even as a member in this place I cannot independently assess which proposal is most important based on its merits. The public expects these decisions to be made in a way similar to the way that the Electoral Commission spells them out: “This is why we have made this decision; this is why we are doing the redistribution in this way.” People can then see where they fit within the scheme of things, and that a regional high school, for example, does not have to go without. These are the sorts of things that vex me.

I want to reiterate where we are at. I am really, really glad that Perth Modern School has been left alone. I reiterate to parents, students and all former Modernians that I hope they will now be able to get some peace, regroup and use this opportunity to reflect on how well they campaigned on so many things. Hopefully it becomes a unifying experience for the Perth Mod community—I genuinely hope that—and I look forward to getting my invitation to come to Perth Modern soon! I remind people that it is really important not to bring other schools down and that we need to keep an open mind about different types and models of schooling arrangements. I understand that the government has made it clear that it is quite supportive of looking at vertical schools. The Greens are supportive of vertical schools. I certainly do not want to misrepresent where the opposition is, but I understand it is also open, depending on the model, to the possibility of vertical schools in the future. This is something we should keep on the table. This is something we should keep an open mind about. We should also look at some of the best practice. The Greens are not interested in dismissing any of those options. I can say we do not know which is more important at this point—the inner-city school or the western suburbs school. We do know that the western suburbs will need one at some point and they are ready to go. I just wish that we were able to remove all of this discussion from this place and that the topic was not politicised, so we could ensure that these decisions were independently determined and out of the hands of politicians. Then, everyone could feel very confident that no matter where they live, if their child goes to a public school, that public school is given every opportunity to be the best public school it possibly can be regardless of whether it is in a safe seat or not.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [1.36 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of this motion. What a dismal topic of discussion this has been, brought about by a dismal process of decision-making and naked politicking. I welcome the government's decision to backflip yesterday, but it really did not go far enough. Although the parents of the students at Perth Modern School are probably now satisfied, absent in yesterday's statement was any sense of contrition or apology for the distress and disruption —

Hon Sue Ellery: That's exactly what I did.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Okay.

Hon Peter Collier: You blamed us.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: The government blamed us. It was galling. There was no sense of responsibility or accountability.

Hon Peter Collier: You blamed us for your mistake.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Indeed.

Let us go back a little bit. It was an ill-conceived thought bubble. Putting together artists' renderings and dropping them to *The Sunday Times* does not comprise an inner-city school plan; it is not a plan at all. I have worked in the planning industry and the property development sector. Commissioning artists' renderings is the easiest thing to do; that is not planning for education. The proposal was completely bereft of any analysis.

Hon Jim Chown: The policy of scoundrels.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I would not say that!

There was no demographic underpinning and absolutely no consultation. I will talk to members opposite: consultation does not mean making a decision, dropping a statement and then saying, "We have made a decision; people have voted on this." That was a completely disingenuous statement that the minister made when this issue was first brought on in this place. It was focused primarily at winning marginal and inner-city seats to the disadvantage of western suburbs families. That is all it was about—it was about regaining the seats of Perth and Mount Lawley. I know that hurt the Labor Party. I know the pain of losing seats, but sometimes the Labor Party overreaches. It reminded me a bit of another overreach that the Labor Party considered. Twelve months out from the state election there was a bizarre weekend when Stephen Smith was coming back to the rescue. The Labor Party was getting close, but sometimes the anxiety of being close is so tantalising that we need to go a bit above and beyond. That is exactly the same thing that happened with this policy.

Hon Peter Collier: He acted totally alone.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: He acted totally alone. There was no-one there; no support for that measure. The Premier's bacon was saved and I am sure those people who supported the Premier have been given their due recompense.

The PRESIDENT: Member, I am listening carefully and waiting for you to get back on track to talk about the actual motion in front of you and to make sure things are relevant.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Thank you, Madam President; I will take your guidance.

I recall that when this issue was first brought on Hon Donna Faragher tabled a petition containing about 6 500 signatures. This is an issue that has had thousands of words devoted to it—hours and hours of conversation. Those numbers did not really matter; they did not seem to have a bearing on the government, but one number seemed to, and I think that is where it all changed. It was the \$30 000 that the Minister for Education and Training and the Minister for Planning spent on a one-day trip to Sydney. I am still staggered that a one-day trip can cost that much money. Perhaps that mythical key that my friend Hon Peter Collier never found when he was a minister should be on the reception desk of every minister of this government so that if they need to consult with people who live in the eastern states, they can go to the fourteenth floor of Dumas House and use the videoconferencing facility. That is a completely unjustified expenditure of public money—just a jolly! It is an interesting acceleration of hubris. This is the kind of stuff that normally happens in a second or third-term government. Members opposite have done it within three months of their first term in government. It is unbelievable. I wonder what will happen in four years' time.

Yesterday's backflip perpetuates the sins that got the government into this trouble in the first place. This is just a replacement thought bubble for the original thought bubble. It is bereft of analysis. There is no demographic proof. It is just a statement of opinion that there is a need for a new school and Kitchener Park is the place for it. I cannot understand the Labor Party's obsession with Kitchener Park and all things to do with Subiaco Oval. It is a perennial issue. This is another decision by this government that has been made with no consultation and no analysis. I refer to the tripartite statement that was made yesterday. That media statement has an interesting title, "New Inner City College at the heart of Subiaco Oval transformation". The government has dressed up an

education backflip as a land development opportunity. That says all we need to know about the government's commitment to education policy. This is not about Perth Modern. This is not about the parents and students at Perth Modern. This is not about dealing with the undersupply of schools. This is about dressing up Subiaco. This is the kind of thing a government does when it is running away from its own embarrassment. The reason I know the government is running away from its own embarrassment is because it made the clichéd and euphemistic statement that it has listened to the public. That is what a government does when it knows it is on a hiding to nothing.

However, what struck me most was the speed of this backflip. The Premier said in his statement, "We have moved swiftly to come up with a complete plan". That underscored by the statement from the Minister for Planning, "We have moved quickly to establish a new plan for Subiaco Oval". In that speed and in that haste, what has the government missed out? What has the government not told us about this plan? The government has missed out telling us pretty much everything. Kitchener Park is an A-class reserve. How does the government propose to deal with that planning impediment? How does the government plan to deal with the thousands of schoolchildren who will need to cross Roberts Road? I will be interested to know. The government has absolutely no plan to deal with that. The government has rolled out this plan, without any thought, because it was boxed into a corner. The government has rolled out this plan not out of any sense of moral obligation, but out of embarrassment to save the Minister for Education and Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council from herself. This is a very sad and salutary lesson about how not to govern. I am glad the government has learnt this lesson in its first three months in government, and I hope it does not repeat it.

Although the decision not to mess with Perth Modern is welcome, the Education Central policy is still not dead. The government is still obsessed with that policy. That is to the detriment of other needs. I speak here as an alumnus from Carine Senior High School. It is about 23 or 24 years since I went to that school. I want to remind members in this place that the former government had a comprehensive plan to deal with overcrowding in high schools in the western suburbs. I know that for this government the western suburbs is *persona non grata*. The Minister for Education went to great pains to reinforce that there is no class agenda here. I thought the minister doth protest too much about that particular point.

I want to speak for my former school, Carine Senior High School. Carine is not a wealthy area. It is a comfortable area. It is an ambitious area. However, these are not the kinds of parents who can easily afford to send their children to a private school. They rely on the excellent local high school in their area. I want to talk about what Carine Senior High School will miss out on by virtue of the Labor government's jettisoning of the previous government's excellent, thorough, well-considered and well-articulated plan. It will miss out on \$18.8 million worth of upgrades to provide accommodation for an additional 300 students who live north of Scarborough Beach Road. Those students are now in facilities that are overcrowded and unfit for use, to be perfectly honest. Carine Senior High School was also to be home to a science, technology, engineering and mathematics-focused gifted and talented student cohort. I spoke earlier about how if we fail to invest in STEM-based education, our children will be global academic and economic also-rans. The government is taking away that opportunity from students who live in Carine and Duncraig and nearby suburbs. The government is doing that to its shame. That is an appalling thing to do. The building of that expanded accommodation was due to begin this year. It would probably be underway by now, in the same way that the expansion of City Beach Senior High School would probably be underway by now. The former government had proposed a raft of shovel-ready projects. The bulldozers would be busily working on those projects now were it not for the Labor Party's spite in wanting to get rid of that plan, just because it does not fit its policy agenda. That is a shameful thing to do.

In 2016, Carine Senior High School was the ninth top public school in Western Australia, with a median Australian tertiary admission rank score of 82.5 per cent. That is an excellent result. Carine Senior High School is led by an excellent principal, Damian Shuttleworth. I lament missed opportunities. That school could do so much better, and it would do so much better, if it were to receive a very modest upgrade of its facilities. Other northern suburbs and western suburbs schools will also miss out on opportunities because of this government's obsession with Perth Modern. I would like to know where this obsession originated and whose hands are on the policy drafting process.

I will take up some of the remarks made by Hon Alison Xamon. I agree that there is a need for a clear-headed and clear-sighted review of school needs across the state. The Perth Modern inner-city school policy was the antithesis of that. That policy dealt with the needs of people who live in the inner-city area, to the exclusion of everybody else. That underscores the nakedly political motivation behind the Education Central policy. I also echo the comment of my friend Hon Alison Xamon that the need for new schools will not go away. Sooner or later, the government will need to deal with schools not only in the inner city and the western suburbs but in every suburb. We are yet to see from this government an expansive schools policy. This is a details-light and lazy government that is not prepared to do the hard work to deliver results for people irrespective of where they live and how they traditionally vote.

Madam President, that is all I wish to say on this motion.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [1.47 pm]: Madam President, I rise because there are some things that I want to ask, in the hope that we will get some response from the government. I also feel that there is no answer to the questions that I want to ask, and that is another reason those questions need to be placed on the record. I did pause briefly before I rose to speak, because I know there are a number of members opposite who are determined to do the right thing by their community. I say that sincerely. However, I have not seen any member on the government benches rise to applaud the actions of the Premier, and of the Minister for Education and the Minister for Planning. Perhaps they are still shell-shocked. The silence is absolutely deafening.

Several members interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Madam President, the unruly interjections here are outrageous!

The PRESIDENT: Order! The only person on his feet is Hon Simon O'Brien, who can address his comments to me and not to the rest of the chamber.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Thank you, Madam President. I was amazed when I saw the news of this backflip. In fact, it was more than a backflip. I think I described it yesterday as a backflip with a full pike and a half twist. It was very acrobatic indeed, but a bit showy and poorly executed and with a tragic landing at the end. I want to make sure that members, particularly members opposite, understand where this is going seriously, seriously wrong. We have had the benefit of the advice of my colleague Hon Donna Faragher, whom I congratulate on bringing this motion to the chamber with great effect. She has been going around and doing the things that needed to be done, such as consultation with affected parties, to great effect. She had a lot to add to this debate. We have listened to the former Minister for Education, who had a great deal to offer to this debate because he knows what he is talking about. I hope members here in the house of review are prepared to take on board the advice of those who know what they are talking about in contemplating this matter, rather than getting caught up in some sort of misguided "let us all have our eyes down and pretend we're doing something else" demeanour that it seems is being adopted now. This government is being run off the rails in this matter. The taxpayers and the affected schoolchildren now and into the future are going to suffer. They are under threat. Members opposite want to sit there and twiddle their thumbs instead of using the forums available to them, whether it is the caucus room or all the other mechanisms available to them to communicate their concerns. However, they ought to be using them, because, if not, they will stand condemned.

A couple of days ago, members opposite were prepared to be a cheer squad for this lunatic discredited scheme to move Perth Modern School into some high-rise building yet to be constructed in Northbridge. They were a cheer squad for it. They not only were notable for their silence in opposing, but also thought it was a great idea. I did not hear any of them say, "Hang on, maybe we should be doing something different." Ultimately, somewhere in the counsel of government they decided that they better change tack, not because it was the right thing to do or because they had it wrong, but because they might be haemorrhaging a bit politically. That is a misplaced priority if ever I saw one.

As my friend Hon Tjorn Sibma has just pointed out, it is extraordinary to see this amount of decay in a government that is only five minutes old. Hon Tjorn Sibma introduced some matters of substance and put some flesh on the bones, because the government certainly is not doing that. The government has come up with a graphic. I will not dignify it by calling it a pretty graphic, but it has come up with a graphic showing a set of buildings at Kitchener Park. There is a big orange bit to the north of Subiaco Oval. Is that the train line? I am not sure what is involved.

Several members interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I apologise for the unruly interjections of these people here.

The PRESIDENT: I do not think you need assistance from your own team.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Thank you, Leader of the Opposition. I will deal with this. This Perth Modern School idea was misconceived. We have been through that in some detail in the last few days. We know that the government has backed off from that, but it has now opened up a problem for itself and for a lot of families and students now and in the future. Heaven only knows why the government would want to commit itself to such an unnecessary injury as the one that it is now inflicting upon itself. I hope that there is some debate going on in the Labor caucus room because I am not seeing it anywhere else. Someone needs to say, "Hang on, whose bright idea was this?" Hon Tjorn Sibma, as an alumnus of Carine Senior High School, was reminding us that it is not about Kitchener Park and whatever this new school will be called; it is about real people and real institutions. The government brags about how it will not refurbish City Beach senior high school, which is needed. The government is not going to do that, so that is one school community that the government has ripped off. Where is the complaint about that? The government is going to hear plenty of complaint from us. But there is one school community the government has ripped off to the tune of millions of dollars.

The government has also ripped off the Churchlands Senior High School community, because it was going to benefit from the City Beach refurbishment. Hon Tjorn Sibma has reminded us that the Carine Senior High School community and students who were going to join that community have also been ripped off by millions of dollars, which this Labor government is now going to do what with? I do not know. Misspend it? Stick it in its pocket? It is not spending it on the communities that need it. Furthermore, what about the people of Mt Lawley? What is going to happen with Mount Lawley Senior High School? The Leader of the Opposition, the former Minister for Education, was able to tell the house in great detail again—he even has the figures on the tip of his tongue—about the amounts that were to be spent on Mount Lawley Senior High School. In addition, I have mentioned Carine and City Beach.

Hon Peter Collier: It is \$39.6 million.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It is \$39 million. Was that to be spent on Mount Lawley Senior High School?

Hon Peter Collier: And they need it for another 650 students.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: I wonder what the new member for Mount Lawley thinks about that. I do not even know who the member for Mount Lawley is and I am not finding out now because that new member should be raising merry hell about this. Yesterday we had a ministerial statement and a press release. What did the member call it—the triumvirate?

Hon Tjorn Sibma: I don't know. Triumvirate, tripartite —

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Not a triumph that is for sure! Perhaps the triweekly—I do not know. But the announcement yesterday was about an inner-city college, the first stage of which will cost \$68 million. That seems like it came straight off the back of an envelope. What is the government doing? Where is that \$68 million coming from? If anywhere, it is presumably coming from some of the projects that I have outlined. The government is robbing Peter to pay Paul.

Hon Peter Collier: It's certainly robbing me.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Yes. There is a thunderous silence and a glaring omission from all the government's announcements about who has been consulted. As we have heard this morning, the answer is basically nobody. There is a thunderous silence about how this plan has been developed. Just remember that yesterday when we got up, this was not needed. Are we saying that while the government was saying that this is not needed, it had someone in a secret back room plotting a course that was not needed? No, this has been done up in crisis mode on the run.

Hon Peter Collier: On the back of an envelope.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: As the Leader of the Opposition says, it has been done on the back of the proverbial envelope and there is no business case.

Hon Peter Collier: And political expediency.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It will be a political hamstring for this government. We have mentioned some of the communities that are being ripped off to pursue another folly. Whose folly are we going to call? Three ministers put out yesterday's press release, so I do not know whose folly it is. Is it McGowan's, Ellery's or Saffioti's folly? It is a tri-folly! But it is not a joke; it is a very remarkable case of a collapse of process by people who ought to know better. It is purely in support of trying to address a political bushfire that has broken out. It is purely of the government's own creation. In order to deal with it, the government has thrown some more petrol onto it, as it will shortly discover. I hope we have the instruments available to us in this house to properly examine the government's conduct on this matter. I would like the benefit of advice from the Department of Education about what it thinks the government should be doing.

Hon Peter Collier: The estimates committee might like to look at it.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Perhaps one or several of our standing committees might be able to examine this and get to the truth. I find it very hard to believe that the plan announced in September last year, which had been worked on for years, was somehow redundant and that a thought bubble, "Hey, that sounds like a good, progressive idea; let's move Perth Mod to a high-rise building in Northbridge" could somehow supplant a plan that had been worked on for years, only to be overturned by another plan that has had even less preparation time—the so-called Kitchener Park model. If we look hard enough, there are good ministers in this government. When is the government going to say, "Hang on, enough is enough of this nonsense"? "This carry-on is damaging the reputation and standing of this government." Perhaps the government thinks it can get away with it. Maybe it realises there is no election this Saturday so it is determined to tough it out. It was determined to tough out the policy to move Perth Mod, until it backflipped on it. Perhaps the government will try to tough out the Kitchener Park policy. I would suggest that all government members, whether backbenchers or in cabinet, take another look at this and work out whether this is the sort of government that they want to support. They should ask themselves, "Is this the sort of thing that we're doing? Does this make me feel proud? Does this pass

any test of reasonableness?” If government members think it does, go out and consult after the fact! Go and talk with the Carine Senior High School community. Go and talk with the City Beach people whom we have seen out in the public domain—they are not very happy. Go and talk with the Mt Lawley community. The government might find that what it is doing is absolutely indefensible.

I would like an answer to this question: what is wrong with the plan that Hon Peter Collier described to us in such detail which was developed in concert with the education department? Do not give us any throwaway lines, “Oh, no, no; that’s not where the people live.” The education department knows where the students live. It knows where they have to come from. It has projected that, the way we are going, there will be 4 000 students at Churchlands Senior High School and it knows where those students will come from. Do not tell us that Kitchener Park is somehow across the road for all of these schoolchildren and that is where the school needs to be, because that is rubbish. Tell us how the government arrived at the Kitchener Park conclusion, if it can genuinely point out that the education department was deficient. The government can demonstrate to us, if it can, that this is not a matter of petulance and that it wants to abandon something simply because it was a plan developed during the term of the previous government.

While the government is at it, it might also tell us how it arrived at a cost of \$68 million for the first stage of a high school. The Leader of the Opposition is the former Minister for Education and I am a former Minister for Finance. I was in charge of a number of building agencies, including ones that used to build high schools—they still do, if they get the chance. What does the first stage of the school mean? How many stages are there? Why does the first stage for this school cost \$68 million? I know what \$68 million looks like in the hands of government building agencies. People will debate the value for money of those things, but it is a heck of a lot of money. But why is it \$68 million just for a first stage? We do not know how big a first stage is. It sounds to me as though it is going to be pretty big—pretty substantial. That strikes me as an extraordinary amount of money and more than it would cost to refurbish the other schools we have been talking about. What on earth does the government think it is doing? We want those works to go ahead now, it is ready to go now, and the money is available now—or it was—yet what is this government going to do? It is going to do nothing. It will not spend the money that has been planned and budgeted for. No, it is not going to do that. It will go ahead with this other Kitchener Park idea that has not even got to first base with any planning or design requirements. Again, what is the first stage? How many stages are there? How did the government arrive at these costs? These are questions that obviously require answers, but I will be disappointed today because I am not going to get those answers and this house is not going to get those answers. The public of Western Australia is not going to get those answers. Why? For one reason, I do not believe the answers to those questions exist. I cannot believe that the government has done any appropriate amount of homework in arriving at the announced course of action. Members opposite ought to be asking: what are the answers to the questions that are being posed? Otherwise, what are they doing here? Members are not here just to be a cheer squad for their party; they are here to stand up for their communities.

I was looking at the motion moved by Hon Donna Faragher. I was thinking: in view of the announcement yesterday—it seems as though it was weeks ago; it was only yesterday—perhaps we need to revisit the wording of this motion. Is it still current? I read through the notice paper, and do members know what? I think this motion is entirely appropriate to proceed with unamended. The government has not addressed the concerns that were being expressed, except to the extent that there is a stay of execution or the axe has been removed from over the head of Perth Modern School.

It is still necessary in part (a) of the motion to reverse this Education Central policy that clearly is ill-conceived, has not been properly developed and does not pass muster on any criteria, and many of those criteria have been mentioned during the course of this debate. The government certainly needs to revert to the comprehensive western suburbs secondary schooling strategy announced in September 2016. Will it do so? I doubt it, but then again in view of the extraordinary way it has behaved during the course of this issue, I do not know what it is going to do. I honestly do not know. The really sad thing is that I do not think the government knows either; it has not got a clue. I wonder whether the Minister for Education and Training was the author of the backflip or whether it was foisted upon her. I do not know; perhaps I will never know. There are times when all of us can recognise a dog of a policy direction. I tell you what, I am looking at one right now, and I do not think anyone wants to own it. The Minister for Education and Training wishes she was somewhere else. Again, I do not know whether she was the author of this backflip or whether she was just doing what the government decided to do, whether she liked it or not. I do not know who else wants to claim ownership of this policy direction: let us involve the people. I do not think Hon Tjorn Sibma is really on board with it yet. We know about Hon Donna Faragher; she is not on board yet. What about our friends in the Nationals? I do not see them marching in the streets saying, “Good on you, Mr McGowan, this is a terrific policy.”

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: We didn’t see them doing that with Mr Barnett either, so at least they are being consistent.

Hon SIMON O’BRIEN: That is a fair point. If that is the only hurdle government members have to come up against, good luck to them.

I do not see anyone else on the crossbenches saying to me, “Sit down, member. There is nothing wrong with this. It is a great policy. How dare you?” Nobody is saying that to me because everyone can recognise what a pointless and ultimately destructive policy direction this is and one that should be abandoned, apart from a number of members sitting on the government benches. What do they think? I can go on about this issue, and I probably will until the cows come home. This will be like groundhog day. I am sure that through standing committees in this place, through the good work of Hon Donna Faragher and in umpteen other ways we will keep revisiting this quagmire until the government comes to its senses. The chances are that that will be a very long time. In the meantime, I am going to sit down now. For the record, I have plenty more time if I were interested in using up time. As Hon Peter Collier knows, I know how to do it. However, this is a time-limited debate. I am going to sit down now, specifically to hear a government member—who knows, maybe even a parliamentary secretary—stand up and tell us —

Hon Stephen Dawson: Our minister has spoken so you might as well use your time.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: What is it about these people opposite that they just cannot help getting themselves in trouble? Despite that interjection, I think the house is quite able to vote on this motion. We should vote to support it. We should congratulate the mover, Hon Donna Faragher, on bringing it forward. For now I will give a chance to members opposite if they do want to stand up and defend the indefensible.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [2.14 pm] — in reply: Thank you, Mr Acting President. I did hover for a moment in case there was a member on the other side, from the government, who was prepared to stand up and speak to the motion.

Hon Alanna Clohesy: How the mighty have fallen.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I think that probably the mighty have fallen on Hon Alanna Clohesy's side of the house this week and none of them has bothered to stand up and defend any of their decisions thus far.

Hon Sue Ellery: I did, and I made a ministerial statement to the house yesterday.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes, and this is the motion today, not the ministerial statement.

Hon Sue Ellery: It's about the same thing—exactly the same thing.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: The minister should give me a minute and we will go through a couple of things.

I thank members who have contributed to this debate and for what has been a very good debate. I acknowledge particularly the comments made by Hon Alison Xamon—I will say something about her comments in a moment—Hon Tjorn Sibma, Hon Simon O'Brien and Hon Peter Collier, as well as the comments that were made by the minister in this place a couple of weeks ago. As Hon Alison Xamon said, a week is certainly a long time in politics. I am very pleased, as indeed the Liberal opposition is, that at least one part of the motion that is currently before the house has been achieved; that is, that the flawed, misguided and unnecessary Education Central policy is now gone, particularly as it relates to Perth Modern School. I have said in this place, and I have certainly said outside of this place, that the Liberal Party wholeheartedly supports the government in its decision. In my view good sense has finally prevailed. It took too long; the government allowed around five months for this issue to fester. It caused immense distress, frustration and concern for far too many people with an interest in this issue—parents, students, supporters of Perth Modern School, the Perth Modernian Society, and many others who just felt that the Education Central policy was the wrong policy. I picked up on the comments made by all of the members. I accepted what the minister said in this place a couple of weeks ago that it was not her intention to cause such unhappiness and concern for parents and students in particular. I accept that. I know the minister and I know that she would not have wanted that to occur, but it did occur so I am pleased that, with the announcement yesterday, now the Perth Modern community can finally go back to what it does best—that is, educating outstanding young Western Australians at a fantastic school with a fantastic history and wonderful traditions in the same place that it has taught education for a hundred-odd years. For that I say to the government, thank you, and thank you for finally listening.

It is important to reflect though that it was not just an issue for parents, families and students in the western suburbs. I will say that it was not comments that were made in this place but certainly there were some ill thought out comments made. I know that we do not refer to members in the other place, but some ill thought out comments were made by members in the other place about this issue and the people it affected. It was not just an issue for students and families living in the western suburbs. The fact that I presented a petition in this place on two occasions signed by 8 418 people is testament to that fact, particularly when those signatures came from people right across Western Australia—north, south, east and west; from metropolitan Perth to the most regional parts of Western Australia. People power has worked in this instance. The protest that was held—I think they called it the peaceful rally—was an important reflection of the depth of concern and unhappiness in that community. I am delighted that that has been fixed.

I will comment on the remarks made by Hon Alison Xamon about St George's Anglican Grammar School. I read some of the same comments the honourable member has referred to. Unfortunately, sometimes in the heat of a debate on a subject as emotional as this and that raises much concern, people sometimes look to pit one issue against another. On this occasion I do not think it was many, but there were some examples of an argument being used in favour of not moving Perth Modern by referring to St George's. Certainly, the Liberal opposition never did that. I agree with and accept the comments of Hon Alison Xamon that on an issue such as this it is not helpful to effectively pit one school against another because students and parents are involved and they are two quite separate issues. I certainly take on board those comments and I am sure that the Liberal opposition would be pleased for Hon Alison Xamon to relay these comments to the St George's community if any concern had been raised.

I come back to the second part of the motion. The opposition maintains that the western suburbs strategy announced in September last year by the former minister, Hon Peter Collier, is still the best way to deal with overcrowding in western suburbs schools. It was comprehensive, multifaceted and shovel-ready. A lot has been said about the City Beach site. It is interesting that when overcrowding has been referred to in the debate the only the reference often made is about whether a school is going to be built at City Beach or now Subiaco. The fact is that the strategy announced by the former minister—Hon Simon O'Brien went through a number of those elements—included not only a complete redevelopment of City Beach. Some comments have been made in the past 24 hours that apparently the government was just going to carry out a refurbishment.

Hon Peter Collier: A bit of spit and polish! How condescending!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes, a bit of spit and polish.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Laurie Graham): Order, please!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: As Hon Peter Collier has said, a \$58 million refurb is not just a spit and polish. It is absolutely incorrect to suggest that is what the former government was intending to do at the City Beach high school site. Equally, however, it was about not only the City Beach high school site, but also expansions and extensions at Churchlands Senior High School and Shenton College and improvements at Carine Senior High School—Hon Tjorn Sibma has gone through that—and Balcatta Senior High School. It is interesting that when the government refers to the inner city and the need to deal with overcrowding problems in inner-city areas, they do not mention Mount Lawley Senior High School. The government has announced expenditure of \$4 million probably for a —

Hon Peter Collier: It's a spit and polish.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I think that is probably for a "spit and polish", to use Hon Peter Collier's terminology, at Mount Lawley. We, as the former government, had put forward a \$39 million commitment to Mount Lawley. That would have included capacity to cater for an additional 650-odd students at Mount Lawley Senior High School. It also included, I think, a number of other improvements in general learning areas, food and textiles, performing arts —

Hon Peter Collier: Science.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: In taking Hon Peter Collier's interjection, it included improvements in science. There has been no mention at all about Mount Lawley. I find it interesting that in all the commentary the government focussed on only City Beach and not the entire strategy that we put forward.

There is a shovel-ready school site at City Beach and buildings could have been going up now. But what have we got? Two weeks ago, the government said that the school absolutely had to be in Northbridge. We heard ad nauseam why that was absolutely necessary. Two weeks later, the government is saying that it absolutely has to be in Subiaco. Apparently all the planning is organised and everything is ready to go and there will be a new school in 2020. Phew! A lot happens in a week in politics. All I say to the minister is that the Liberal opposition will be watching the government—it will be not only us watching—every step of the way on this matter. The government has made a decision to just step away without, I might say, ever being able to articulate why the western suburbs strategy was not the right policy. It has never been able to properly articulate what was wrong with that policy. The government just has a philosophical objection to what we put forward.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, please, members!

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: It's about where the students are.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If so, the government should support some improvements at Mount Lawley.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, please!

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: It's about where the people are.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If that is the case, does the government support more money going to extensions for Mount Lawley Senior High School for another 650 students? There is silence. All I say is this —

Hon Peter Collier: The minister's own department made that determination.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That is exactly right.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, please!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Because we are running out of time, all I say is this: it is now squarely on the minister and her government to deliver this project. We will still take a different view, but the government has now made a clear decision to locate the school at Kitchener Park—as I say, two weeks ago it was Northbridge but now it is Subiaco—and we will hold the government to that every step of the way. The government has said that it is going to be built by 2020. We are going to follow this matter very, very closely, and watching the government will be not only the Liberal opposition, but also the parents and students who were presented last year with a very strong, credible and comprehensive plan that would have dealt with overcrowding in the western suburb schools. They were given a plan, which I have to say everyone agreed with when it was announced. I do not think even the then opposition said anything, so we all thought it was not an issue; the problem was fixed last year. This government created a problem. It fixed only part of the problem yesterday, which is fantastic, but the problem still exists. We will continue to hold this government to account. We will follow this matter every step of the way, and if the government does not have a school at Subiaco by 2020, which the government says it is going to build, then the matter will be in the government's hands. The minister, the government and all members here—that is, the members for the North and East Metropolitan Regions—will have to explain to the community in the western suburbs and inner-city areas why the government did not go ahead with the former government's proposal.

I urge the house to support the motion.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting President (Hon Laurie Graham) casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (20)

Hon Jacqui Boydell	Hon Colin de Grussa	Hon Rick Mazza	Hon Aaron Stonehouse
Hon Robin Chapple	Hon Diane Evers	Hon Simon O'Brien	Hon Dr Steve Thomas
Hon Jim Chown	Hon Donna Faragher	Hon Robin Scott	Hon Colin Tincknell
Hon Tim Clifford	Hon Nick Goiran	Hon Tjorn Sibma	Hon Alison Xamon
Hon Peter Collier	Hon Colin Holt	Hon Charles Smith	Hon Ken Baston (<i>Teller</i>)

Noes (11)

Hon Alanna Clohesy	Hon Adele Farina	Hon Kyle McGinn	Hon Pierre Yang
Hon Stephen Dawson	Hon Laurie Graham	Hon Samantha Rowe	Hon Martin Pritchard (<i>Teller</i>)
Hon Sue Ellery	Hon Alannah MacTiernan	Hon Matthew Swinbourn	

Pairs

Hon Michael Mischin	Hon Darren West
Hon Martin Aldridge	Hon Dr Sally Talbot

Question thus passed.

CLIMATE CHANGE — AMELIORATION MEASURES

Motion

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [2.34 pm]: I move —

That the house notes the impact of climate change and give consideration to measures that may be introduced to ameliorate its damaging and long-term effects on Western Australia's social, economic and environmental prosperity.

As members will know, the motions I move are not about casting aspersions on either side of the house, but rather about establishing a debate about the ways forward. My contribution to the debate on this motion will be about where the Greens think we should heading. I will also try to elicit from members of the opposition, the government and the crossbenches their ideas about a way forward. I must congratulate my colleagues in the National Party; on previous occasions when the Greens have moved motions of this nature, the Nationals have really engaged in the process of genuine debate as opposed to blame or chest-thumping.

Climate change, as we know, is here; it is real and it is a major problem. I am reminded of some comments made to me about three or four years ago by Dr Karl Kruszelnicki, better known as Dr Karl. I was having a discussion with him about climate change—although one does not really have a discussion with Dr Karl because he actually talks at you a lot and trying to get a word in edgeways is rather difficult!—and he proffered the view that he did not believe in climate change. I was staggered. I said, “What do you mean, you don’t believe in climate change?” He said, “That is the wrong question. You don’t believe or disbelieve in science; science is, and peer-reviewed science is even more scientific.” That is, the world is not flat, it is round—science has proved that. This notion of whether one should or should not believe in climate change is passé and parked in history.

It is to history I want to now turn. This Parliament has dealt with the question of climate change over many years, and governments have dealt with it in different ways. I have the advantage of being an older gentleman—I will leave it at that!—and I actually remember what went on quite a long time ago. I went through my filing system today and I would like to go back to some documents that were produced back in 1988. I was talking to one of my staff today and he said that he was not actually born then!

We used to have a greenhouse strategy for Western Australia. It was an amazing document. It had plans and it had directions, and there were many others. We had the annual report of the Climate Commission here in Western Australia. That commission had ministerial members and was a 12-person committee. I want to turn to some of the things it referred to back in 1988 and reflect upon where we are today in comparison with the views that were expressed at that time.

I want to also go back to one particular document; there have been a couple of changes over time. I am referring to a foreword to a 2002 document by the then Minister for Environment and Heritage and Chair of the WA Greenhouse Task Force, Bob Pearce, MLA.

Other documents set out a number of directions, and I will go to the first one, which is the 1991 direction. The Western Australian Climate Commission and the Western Australian Greenhouse Co-ordination Council were established, to which various ministers were party. I will read the foreword to that report by Bob Pearce, MLA, Minister for the Environment. It states —

The Greenhouse Effect is the first global environmental effect of actions by people.

We all contribute to it in the way we live—at work, recreation, and home.

We are all likely to be affected by it as new rainfall, wind and temperature patterns come to the regions in which we live.

Some of the effects may be harmful or costly, such as increased beach erosion, damage from cyclones, heatstroke, floods or reduced agricultural production from reduced rainfall.

Other effects may be beneficial, as new rainfall patterns or warmer weather cause increased agricultural productivity or a longer tourist season in some areas.

To minimise potential harm and maximise potential benefits, Western Australia needs to respond to climate change in a manner that is as informed, effective and flexible as possible.

It is also important that all sectors of society respond each according to its interests and concerns.

In May 1989 the Western Australian Government appointed an inaugural Greenhouse Co-ordination Council to report on how the state might best respond to climate change. The Council was broadly representative of all sectors of our society.

The Greenhouse Co-ordination Council has prepared this report after extensive consideration of the scientific basis of climate change, and its social, environmental and economic aspects.

As part of its considerations, the Council released a discussion paper for public comment, and sponsored or attended many public meetings.

I think the largest meeting was in Busselton, where approximately 150 scientists from around the world attended, and I think about 500 or 800 people attended. It continues —

The Council also sponsored Australia’s first Greenhouse gas audit, to provide an initial information base to develop policies and programmes to reduce our contribution to the Greenhouse Effect.

The recommendations in the report have been approved in principle by Cabinet. A new Greenhouse Co-ordination Council has been appointed to implement the recommendations and to improve Western Australia’s response to climate change.

I thank the inaugural Council for the preparation of this report, and commend it to all Western Australians.

We have come a long way since then. There have been different iterations of climate change staff and bodies representing the issues around climate change. There have also been changes in policy direction within the Environmental Protection Authority, and I will come to that in a moment.

I want to go back to who the members were on that original council. It comprised the chair, Professor A. Main, Mr R. Southern, Mr J. Lenzo and Mrs K Sanderson. I think members know which K. Sanderson we are referring to there. There was also Mr M. Wills, Miss S. O'Loughlan, Ms Rachel Siewert, who is now a senator, Mr W.A. Meier, Mr C. Sanders, Mr D. Sanders and Mr Richard McKellar, executive officer.

There are several really good documents here and I could use all my time reading them into *Hansard* but I will refer to some of the basic directions. After dealing with many of the issues there were reports on agriculture, on the pastoral industry and on every other sector of industry. The strategy adopted and committed to reads as follows —

The core of any comprehensive Strategy relating to the Greenhouse Effect must address its cause—changes to the chemistry of the atmosphere. Accordingly, the State government has made a commitment to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions by 20% by the year 2000,

I am leaving that date hanging in the air at the moment, and I will come back to deal with where we are at shortly.

That was a government policy. At a later stage, the year was changed to 2002 in the forward projections. The figure of 20 per cent reduction remained. However, over time, things have changed and targets have been watered down. Conditions were placed on every government department—I will try to come to that in a minute—to monitor their emissions and every year report to the house a five per cent reduction in the release of CO₂ equivalent into the atmosphere. Those reports came before the house for many years; we could see them. However, slowly but surely, they have diminished; they were kept in house we were told and they eventually disappeared, as did many of the directions established in 1988. These documents are in most libraries. I urge people to read them and see how progressive we were a long while ago and where we are at now. I am not apportioning any blame, but we start with something good—I think we have all seen this—and slowly but surely the process is watered down and we end up with nothing like what we started out with.

When we looked at some of the recommendations for WA—this comes out of the 1990–91 Annual Report of the WA Climate Impact Group, with which CSIRO was heavily involved—it made some predictions. It states —

Global average warming 0.20.5°C per decade, with a best estimate of 0.3°C per decade.

Australia in 2030, relative to 1990:

- +1 or 2°C in northern coastal areas;
- +1 to 3°C in southern coastal areas;
- +2 to 4°C inland;
- more in drier areas, less in wetter areas.

If we read current statistics, we will know that we are already there—we have achieved one per cent across the board and two per cent inland. That was the projection for 2030. We are roughly halfway to where we were supposed to be. I think we have a very serious problem. On the issue of rainfall, it was very interesting. The Climate Impact Group predicted that the south west would lose 20 per cent of its rainfall over the projected life of the program it was referring to. We know from the Bureau of Meteorology that, unfortunately, the reduction is at 25 per cent already. We have seen increased rainfall in the desert regions and are seeing very cyclical rainfall in the Kimberley. The year before last, on my property on the Gibb River Road there was no wet season. I was living in a desert, not in the lush green that one imagines would occur in the Kimberley. The roos were digging into the dirt trying to find tubers. It was a catastrophic situation. We have lost every mango plantation up there. All the non-endemic species that were in the region could not handle it. I had three of the most beautiful mango trees on my property and I am really sorry to have lost them all. I got probably a tonne of mangoes a year, but they have all gone. We are starting to see some really serious effects, yet we do not have a program in any way, shape or form of ameliorating that or doing anything about it.

It is quite often really valuable to read old scientific reports in hindsight and it is quite interesting to see where we are at now. I will come to that shortly. I will then talk about what the Greens would like to do about it. I hope that from that we can entice comment from other members in the chamber presenting what they will do about bringing some normality back into the situation and addressing the issues that were so well addressed back in 1988 at the Bunbury conference.

The state government leadership program that was articulated in a Western Australian government report of August 2002, entitled “Western Australia and Greenhouse”, is interesting. Again, I want to talk about where governments saw they should be going and reflect on where we are. The document states —

All community sectors must play a part in responding to the greenhouse challenge.

However, because climate change is a major issue for Western Australia and short term action is necessary, the Western Australian Government will show leadership by:

- reducing emissions from its own operations in ways that help a Western Australian transition to a low-emission future;
- integrating consideration of greenhouse issues into key Government decision-making processes.

Reducing Government contribution to the Greenhouse Effect

Government is a major purchaser of goods and services, and therefore has a major part to play in reducing the State's Greenhouse gas emissions by:

- directly reducing emissions from its own operations, and
- supporting the development of low emissions options.

Energy Smart Government:

The Government is requiring agencies to reduce Greenhouse gas emissions by 5% immediately and by 12% in 5 years through energy efficiency programs. By 2005–6 this is expected to result in a reduction of 54,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide per year, the equivalent of removing 12,000 cars from the road or planting 4.3 million pine trees. This project will be coordinated by the new Energy Development Office ...

The Energy Development Office no longer exists and, as I say, the reports came to the house quite periodically and then slowly petered out and now no longer exist. I wonder how we can have a process of government that is for the long haul—a process of government that goes beyond the four-year term of different parliamentarians and governments that is enshrined somehow in a way forward. The document continues —

The State Government's vehicle fleet and commuter train system will be carbon neutral through purchases of carbon offsets.

To a degree, that still operates, and we have seen the advent of some of the new buses that certainly have had a significant impact. Further, the document states —

The State Government will also seek renewable energy sources for an increasing proportion of its electricity requirements. The Green Power option will be increased from 10% in 2003/4 to 50% in 2020.

That disappeared completely and utterly. There were energy initiatives by the former government that have been beneficial, but they do not address anything near the directions being sought in the late 1980s through to the 2000s. The document also states —

If the State Government were to meet the Kyoto Protocol targets for Australia, average annual emissions from State Government operations during the period 2008–2012 would be not more than 108% of the emissions from State Government operations ...

That was a position statement then, but we are well beyond that now and I will turn to that shortly. Again, I do not mean this in any way as a negative commentary on the former government, but we asked the government what it was doing internally and we were told that it was a federal responsibility and not a state responsibility. We are actually all part of this planet and as such we need to keep playing our part. It will be interesting to hear from the government what it is going to do. Is this state government just going to allow these issues to be dealt with by another government in another place or is it going to take some control over the issues?

A further document was put out that was really rather telling because it touches on where we are now. It is table 4 of the report entitled "Addressing the Greenhouse Effect". Back in 1989 when the data for this document was collected, emissions used to be recorded. We knew where all our emissions were coming from—whether they were coming from heavy industry, light industry, road, transport or whatever—because we had a recording process. We no longer have a recording process. We are wholly reliant on a program called National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting, which is a federal database in which only emissions over 100 000 tonnes of CO₂ emissions are recorded; anything below that is not recorded. That is an interesting component that I will come back to in a moment. Just going through the table quickly, the highest CO₂ emissions were from fossil fuels, with 17 per cent from natural gas, 20 per cent from coal, a further 11 per cent from natural gas used in energy and 31 per cent from petroleum. That was about it. All the other minor emission numbers took the total to 100 per cent. Since then the situation has changed quite dramatically.

In 2012 I was very privileged to have a retired librarian working for me who did a very detailed report into the state of Western Australia in that year. It is interesting to note that this report, which is on my website, is from 2012.

Hon Donna Faragher: What is that?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I am glad to have an interjection.

Hon Donna Faragher: What is the website?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Believe it or not, I do not know what it is. Members can just type in “Robin Chapple” in Google and they will get there.

Hon Donna Faragher: We’ve missed that web address for a while!

Hon Peter Collier: We love your website!

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Do not worry; I am sure the government has already been aware that a couple of my questions have referred to a website! For those members who do not understand what we are talking about, one really good way of asking questions in this place—I am using an interjection that did not actually happen—is to put up the information that we want to ask the question about on a website and then the government cannot say we do not know anything about it, because we point to where the information is. I am sure that the honourable members on the opposition benches at the moment rue the day I started that practice!

Hon Peter Collier: What is that?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Putting up information on the website so the government could answer a question about it.

Hon Donna Faragher: Hon Norman Moore used to have a bit to say about that!

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I remember entering into a bit of banter with him. Hon Norman Moore was really opposed to us having laptops—not in the chamber, just laptops full stop!

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I have to move on; my time is limited. This report was quite interesting because the data is very, very conservative. We were not able to get about 20 per cent of the data we wanted. It took a year of going to all the Environmental Protection Authority reports and acquiring all the data it had. We wrote to all the corporations, and only 20 per cent of them replied. The report that we have is based on hard data, and everything in it is referenced. However, it acknowledges that we are about 20 per cent short on the data for Western Australia.

In essence, in 1990, which is the year in which the federal government signed off on the Kyoto agreement, the emissions for WA were 52 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum. By 2010, this had increased to 74.3 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum. Those statistics come from government reports, because the government was still reporting on that issue at that time. Our research, based on the data that we have, and acknowledging that some data is missing, showed that by 2012 our emissions were 85 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum, which is getting close to almost a 100 per cent increase. I will not make any extrapolations about where we could be, because that is not scientific.

We then went to the Environmental Protection Authority and to corporations for data about projects that were coming onstream, including Wheatstone, Gorgon and Browse Basin. It is projected that by the time those projects come onstream, our emissions will increase by 83 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum,

Hon Rick Mazza: With those tonnages that you are quoting, by how many parts per million will it increase the amount of CO₂ in the atmosphere?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I am sorry, but I cannot tell the member. I will come back to that. I understand where the member is coming from. However, I am dealing just with the emissions from WA. I think the member can see that although we had a commitment that we would halve our emissions by 2020, we are not anywhere near that at this time. We are not even getting anywhere near our commitment to a 108 per cent increase, which is the national figure. I understand the member’s issue. The issue is that by comparison with the total emissions in Australia, Western Australia is a relatively small emitter. However, we are the highest per capita emitter anywhere in the world. Although there is no data around this, I would argue that because of the size of Western Australia’s population —

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, member! Hansard is having a problem in picking up your voice, so could you speak into the microphone rather than to the side of the room, please.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I do apologise to Hansard. I had hoped Hansard would get my booming voice.

Hon Sue Ellery: We cannot hear either.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I have got my hearing aids in today. It is all right.

We are in a situation where our emissions are burgeoning. We need to look at where those emissions are coming from and at the highest capacity emitters in Western Australia. Woodside Energy is emitting 12.5 million tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum. That has reduced from the level it was at three years ago as a result of an emission

from the plant that needed to be scrubbed out, and in the process they managed to remove some CO₂ emissions. Verve Energy is emitting 7.9 million, or nearly eight million, tonnes of CO₂ equivalent per annum; Alcoa Australia is emitting four million tonnes; and Worsley Alumina is emitting 3.5 million tonnes. We are not saying that those industries should be closed down; we are saying we should use the technologies that are available to industry to reduce emissions. Pluto, which is a Woodside development on the North West Shelf, does not flare. That has dramatically reduced its CO₂ equivalent emissions. The emissions from the old Woodside facilities, which flared non-stop, were the CO₂ equivalent of about four million cars a day. The Prelude LNG project—the Browse Basin as it was—does not flare either, firstly because flaring is a hazard, and secondly because the technology does not require a flaring tower and the emissions associated with it. Therefore, it is not the case that industry cannot resolve the problem.

I want to talk now about what we believe are some of the answers to the problem of climate change. It has done it again! We have had a bizarre situation with our printer, where it is printing out all the wrong words. I have never seen this happen before. If anyone wants to see it, it is gobbledygook. It is not our policy that is gobbledygook! It is just the way the printer works!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! We are starting to digress a little from the motion that is being addressed by Hon Robin Chapple.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I think I have another copy of our policy. No, I do not.

Hon Peter Collier: You could just say something else for a moment and you can continue next week.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Bear with me. I have technology by my side, and I will be able to address the salient points from a mobile phone, thanks to the ability of my colleague.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! If the honourable member wants to seek leave to continue his remarks on the next sitting Wednesday, I am sure the house will give him the opportunity to find the hard copy that he is searching for.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Just very quickly, does anybody remember “Earth2000”? See! None of these people were born when this stuff came out! *The West Australian* used to have a 14-page lift-out every week—believe it or not—on climate change. That is *The West Australian*. This went on for years. The copy I have is from 1992. It is interesting to see how we were thinking about climate change back then and where we are at now. It is quite bizarre.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

PETROLEUM LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2017

Introduction and First Reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Hon Alannah MacTiernan (Minister for Regional Development)**, and read a first time.

Second Reading

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [3.10 pm]:
I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill amends the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967 and the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982. The bill addresses two main issues: the requirement for apportionment provisions where a petroleum pool extends into two licence areas and amendments to allow for future maritime boundary changes. The bill also makes minor amendments to the Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982 to remove references to the term “designated authority”, which has been redundant since 2012.

Turning firstly to the petroleum pool apportionment amendments in the bill, the need to provide a more practical mechanism for apportioning petroleum from a resource shared between the state and commonwealth jurisdictions first arose in 2015. This was when negotiations commenced for an apportionment agreement for the Torosa petroleum pool in the Browse retention lease areas that straddle the boundary between commonwealth and Western Australian offshore waters. The Torosa resource is extremely large and will be of considerable economic significance to both the commonwealth and the Western Australian economies.

The 2015 negotiations were triggered by a reassessment of the maritime boundary between commonwealth and Western Australian waters in the vicinity of the Torosa resource in 2014. All parties—the commonwealth, the state and the Browse joint venture—were concerned to reach an understanding of the relative proportions of the resource underlying the commonwealth and state jurisdictions. The commonwealth and Western Australia wished to establish their likely future revenue streams from the project, and the titleholders wished to establish their likely future state royalty and commonwealth tax exposure. It quickly became apparent, however, that the

existing apportionment provisions of both the state and the commonwealth petroleum legislation required a relatively detailed understanding of the geology of the Torosa resource.

At the early stage of the Torosa project, and given the very large and complex nature of the resource, the requirements of the current legislation could not be met with any degree of certainty. In particular, while current geological knowledge indicated that the entire resource was contained within a single pool, it was quite possible that, when information became available in the future, particularly once production commenced, the current outer bounds of the pool might be found to comprise two pools, or multiple pools. If that occurred, the agreement would fail and the benefits to all parties of the agreed apportionment would be lost. The amendments in the bill also enable the making of an apportionment agreement about a specified part of the seabed that contains a common pool, but where connectivity between jurisdictions is not necessarily confined to the pool. This is where either the outer bounds of the pool are not currently ascertained, or there are indications that there is a broader area of the licences on either or both sides of the boundary where petroleum has the potential to move between licence areas in response to changes in pressure in the seabed—for example, as a result of petroleum production.

These amendments will therefore ensure greater certainty and flexibility in the development of an apportionment agreement to support future investment decisions. While these apportionment amendments have been developed as a consequence of difficulties encountered in negotiating a particular agreement for the Torosa field, the benefits of the amendments are by no means limited to that one agreement. There will be other boundary changes identified within the next few years and it is quite possible that these will require apportionment of a resource that is bisected by a relocated jurisdictional boundary. In that event, governments and titleholders will be able to choose the apportionment mechanism that best suits their situation.

The amendments to the state apportionment provisions in this bill have been developed based on changes to the commonwealth's petroleum legislation. The bill also updates the existing state apportionment provisions for a petroleum pool extending into two licence areas so that they provide a similar regime to the current one found in the commonwealth legislation.

Turning to the second main part of the bill dealing with the maritime boundary amendments, the commonwealth agency Geoscience Australia has an ongoing responsibility to define the limits of Australia's maritime jurisdiction. The boundary between commonwealth and state coastal waters changes automatically by operation of the commonwealth Coastal Waters (State Title) Act 1980, to reflect actual changes to the territorial sea baseline. In practice, however, changes to Australia's maritime boundaries are only identified through the publication of new maps or datasets.

In May 2014, the Australian government announced that the maritime boundaries around the Scott and Seringapatam Reefs offshore of Western Australia had changed to reflect the outcomes of a Geoscience Australia review of the area's most seaward features. The revised boundaries intersected two state and three existing commonwealth offshore petroleum titles. As a result of the boundary change, affected blocks within those commonwealth petroleum titles now lie within Western Australian jurisdiction. To maintain certainty for offshore petroleum titleholders, both state and commonwealth petroleum legislation contains delaying provisions that postpone the effect of the change in jurisdictional boundary until the affected title ceases to be in force. However, these existing provisions contain a regulatory gap whereby, upon cessation of the existing title, blocks affected by the boundary change would become vacant acreage.

Following the May 2014 boundary changes to prevent this situation from occurring at Scott Reef, the Western Australian government passed Browse Basin-specific legislation, the Petroleum Titles (Browse Basin) Act 2014. This legislation provided that upon cessation of the affected commonwealth titles in the Scott Reef and Seringapatam Reef areas the affected blocks automatically transitioned to analogous Western Australian titles. If the situation was to occur elsewhere, there is currently no generic mechanism in the state legislation to enable affected blocks to transfer, with continuity of tenure for the holder of the commonwealth title, from commonwealth to state jurisdiction. Instead, affected blocks would become vacant acreage in state waters upon cessation of the commonwealth title and existing titleholders would lose title over those blocks. Those titleholders may have already spent considerable sums of money and effort undertaking exploration activities under their title. It is therefore considered critical that titleholders should have continuity of tenure in the event of a boundary change.

The commonwealth moved to address this issue from its perspective in 2015 by amendments to its petroleum legislation to remove the risk this poses for titleholders. Modelled on the 2015 commonwealth changes, the state's response in this bill ensures that amendments will preserve continuity of tenure for titleholders and provide for the seamless and efficient transition of affected blocks between jurisdictions in the event of future boundary changes.

Finally, the bill also deletes the term "designated authority" from the Western Australian Petroleum (Submerged Lands) Act 1982. This term has been redundant since 1 January 2012, when the commonwealth introduced the National Offshore Petroleum Titles Administrator.

In conclusion, this bill addresses the lack of functionality in the petroleum legislation's apportionment provisions where a petroleum resource straddles commonwealth and state jurisdictions and provides certainty for future revenue and investment decisions. The bill also provides for the creation of like-for-like titles following any future maritime boundary changes and removes the prospect of any sovereign risk that could arise from a loss of tenure.

Pursuant to Legislative Council standing order 126(1), I advise that this bill is a uniform legislation bill. By reason of its subject matter, this bill is part of a uniform scheme or uniform laws throughout the commonwealth.

I commend the bill to the house and table the explanatory memorandum.

[See paper 269.]

Debate adjourned and bill referred to the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review, pursuant to standing orders.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 13 June on the following motion moved by Hon Sally Talbot —

That the following address be presented to Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor in and over the state of Western Australia and its dependencies in the commonwealth of Australia —

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [3.22 pm]: I will just finish from where I left off last night when Hon Adele Farina and I were in furious agreement on the Busselton–Margaret River airport project and the great benefits that will bring to the south west, and I will also talk about some other things today.

I listened with great intent last night to the contribution made by Hon Tim Clifford in his maiden speech when he talked about housing affordability and homelessness. Having been the Minister for Housing, I thought I would share with him some of my insights and thinking behind providing housing to those most in need. Indeed, we should provide resources at the state government level to meet the needs of people who are most vulnerable, especially those who are escaping domestic violence. The real pinch point is how we manage that. Often we leave the perpetrator at home and take mum and kids away, and for good reasons. We can take them away to a secure location that is unknown to the perpetrator so we can keep them safe. But what happens to them after we have gotten them away from immediate danger? We should absolutely try to do more for them in that space. Hon Tim Clifford also talked about the housing waiting list. It is a cautionary tale to measure housing affordability, or the lack of affordability, by the housing waiting list. When a person gets a house from the Housing Authority, they often consider they have won the golden ticket. It is not necessarily the people who are homeless and most vulnerable from the lower extreme who are on the waiting list. There are people on that waiting list who just want to win the golden ticket and be looked after with a cheap rental to make the most of that opportunity. That is where the dilemma and challenge lies. A lot of people go on the waiting list just for that reason. About 18 000 people are on the waiting list at the moment; it has been much higher in the past and sometimes lower. However, some of the people on the waiting list are not in the category of requiring emergency shelter. That is the challenge when working with the housing list, having seen it and having tried to pick it apart. That is where the problem lies.

In recognition of that, the previous government talked about a continuum in housing, comprising people with the most need requiring emergency shelter all the way to home ownership. The previous government did a lot of work on that. The affordable housing strategy was based on investment along that continuum to try to get people into not only their own home but also social housing. In 2010, the former government set itself a target of providing 20 000 more affordable homes, which it met in 2015. It then set a new target for 2020 of providing 30 000 new homes. During that period, when I was the Minister for Housing in the previous government, we committed \$560 million to build 1 000 more social housing units. That program recognised the need in that middle part, between emergency shelter and home ownership of some description—either shared equity, a Keystart loan or home ownership in the sense that most people understand. There is always plenty to do in that space. When I was in the chair overseeing that area, we created some partnerships across the state, including a really successful one with the Yawuru people of Broome working with Keystart. The Yawuru people brought land to the proposition, and Keystart lent the Yawuru people some money to build homes on that land. These people had been on the social housing spectrum their entire life. When we think about the history of those places up north, there was very little home ownership and it was mostly government-owned housing. The Yawuru people in Broome had been caught in this situation, yet Keystart and the Yawuru people were able to work

together to create partnership in which the Yawuru corporation brought the land into the equation and Keystart, knowing there was equity in the land, lent them money to build houses. I have heard many great stories of people—young families and young mothers—moving out of a social housing situation into home ownership. This was a great model that proved things could be done differently, especially in some of the regional areas where it is a real challenge.

In East Kimberley, the former government established the transitional housing project based on taking people out of a difficult housing situation and giving them a rental arrangement that reflected a mortgage repayment and some real support around income management. They had to send their kids to school to qualify for transitional housing. In that way, and with the right support, they got the hang of moving out of social housing into their own building so they could look at home ownership. The success of the program was measured by school attendance. I may not have this quite right, but in some of those communities the district average school attendance rate was 65 per cent. The attendance rate went up to 95 per cent for people in the transitional housing program. It gave those people an incentive to participate in the program and to send their kids to school. They were fantastic programs, and I hope that the new government continues to invest in them. The only way to start that transition on the housing continuum is to invest in all sections of it.

When I first became the Minister for Housing, I became aware of a policy that was implemented by a previous government so that a social housing tenant who turned 100 and had lived in a Housing Authority home, would get free rent from that point on. There is nothing wrong with that. They are 100 years old and it is a great reward. I remember going out to meet a woman who turned 100 and was getting free rent. She and her husband had lived in a Housing Authority, Homeswest or Department of Housing—all its iterations—home for over 60 years from when they were a young married couple. They raised their family in a Homeswest house and she was now living out her last days in a Homeswest house. I wondered why their family had not had the aspiration for home ownership. What did we not do right? We took on a young family who may have been quite capable of funding their own home through various mechanisms, such as shared equity or Keystart loans. What happened in the interim so they never progressed out of social housing? In my mind, if, under different policy settings, we had encouraged them, we would have moved that family. I do not know their individual circumstances, but there are circumstances in which we could have moved that family out of that Homeswest home, or they could have bought it. That would allow people from the housing waiting list who are most in need, way down this end of the continuum, an opportunity to get a roof over their heads. We started that process back in 2010. We made some great inroads into it and the program is well worth considering and continuing; it wraps the right supports around them.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: We agree with you, member.

Hon COLIN HOLT: Thank you. That is good to hear. The Housing Authority has made some massive shifts in the way it does business. It used to be about building a house, collecting rent and maybe trying to keep people from doing too much damage to the house, but now it is much more about how to assist people to move along the continuum from homelessness to a stable social housing environment, maybe shared equity, a Keystart loan and home ownership. That has to be the way that we continue to do it. Therefore, it worried me a little to read in today's paper about the potential of the first home owner grant being cut back yet more. There was \$15 000 for the first home owner grant and the boost of \$5 000 has been reduced six months ahead of schedule. I hope that the government will maintain the existing \$10 000 first home owner grant, because in my mind it is a critical component to get people to move along that continuum out of social housing. If we do not have that grant to assist people to make that leap, we will have more people taking up social housing spots.

Hon Rick Mazza: Get it for established homes too.

Hon COLIN HOLT: That was only for builds.

Hon Rick Mazza: It should be for established homes.

Hon COLIN HOLT: That is part of the policy mix; we have to look at all those sorts of things. The real estate industry wants existing homes to be included in the first home owner grant. The building industry does not; it only wants first home owner grants on new homes because it assists its business. It is undeniable that we need more houses. Maybe it has come off a bit now that some of the dynamics in Western Australia have changed, but five to eight years ago we did not have enough homes. I hope that the government maintains the first home owner grant. We need it. Housing is not only a social issue but also an economic issue, and the grant should be retained. It will be encouraging to see that the Housing Authority's approach to the housing continuum continues to be supported through the new government.

I want to thank Hon Tim Clifford for raising those issues and I just wanted to give him my viewpoint about them and to caution around judging housing waiting lists, as it can be a means of not getting it quite right. When I was the minister, the waiting list did not change too much—from 22 000 to 24 000 people. It was estimated that if we wanted to get everyone off the waiting list, we would have to invest about \$7 billion to build new social housing. I could almost guarantee members that next week there would be 18 000 people back on it, because everyone wants that golden ticket to get into social housing, if they are at that end of the spectrum.

The previous government also did a large number of asset transfers to the community housing sector. It is a model that has not matured to the extent it needs to in Western Australia. It works well over east. There is some difference between the community housing sector and the state housing provider, but in the right mix they can work very well together. I was very encouraged about what the community housing sector was doing and the way it was wrapping extra support services around the people it was trying to work with. The government should continue to invest in and look at asset transfers to that sector as well to see what it can do from a not-for-profit business point of view to invest in the housing affordability strategy. Some of those community housing organisations are now looking at trying to attract superannuation funds to be partners with them to build more social housing. We should absolutely be doing that because it is a long-term stable return on investment. We need to continue to work in that space as a state. We can learn a lot from the eastern states and I hope the government will continue to work in that space.

Since Parliament has come back, we have talked a lot about education and it has always been centred on Education Central. Hon Simon O'Brien encouraged contribution from the Nationals in the last debate. I thought I would leave my comments until now. We have had a lot of debate about Education Central, gifted and talented programs and specialist schools in central Perth. I can tell members now—the Minister for Education and Training will know this very soon—that there are a great many challenges for educational outcomes in regional Western Australia. We have not done enough work on it. The Nationals, through royalties for regions, has implemented some programs. We went to the Department of Education with some money on the table to try to implement changes in the way that we delivered education to regional Western Australia, to ensure it was not a two-tiered system. I was pretty disappointed with how the education department responded. It did not really understand what we were trying to achieve as the Nationals and I do not know whether it ever thought about how it was going to do business differently. It needs to do business differently in some of the regional areas because of population dynamics and the quality and number of teachers that we get in regional Western Australia to meet those educational needs, from not only a student and family viewpoint, but also a community viewpoint.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Maybe it was the problem with the minister you had at the time.

Hon COLIN HOLT: I will not comment on that. All I can do is put forward my views and I do not think that the education department did not really grapple with the solution. That difficulty still exists. We will see how the new minister addresses some of those issues and she might bring about some change.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: You will be pleased.

Hon COLIN HOLT: Let us judge it on the actions not the words and we will see.

The debate today was around specialist schools. Members will be aware that I have spoken in this place about the only gifted and talented education school outside metropolitan Perth. It only offers the academic stream. It is in Bunbury and has been going for only three years now. There is no other gifted and talented education stream school in regional Western Australia. I would have thought there is a great opportunity for gifted and talented education through arts, drama and music, as well as academic streams, in many of our regional areas. The proposal we put forward that was never really taken up was to centre some of those schools on the areas that have hostel accommodation for visiting students. In my mind, Broome is a great example. It has a hostel and a great school. If the government made it a gifted and talented education school, maybe in the field of visual arts, it might just keep Kimberley kids in school and in their region. It provides another avenue of engagement at a school level. I would certainly like to see the new government progress those opportunities for regional students. It is well known that in some areas in regional Western Australia, kids get to school generally two years behind their counterparts in the city. They then have to catch up those two years when they are at school, and they never do.

Generally, they never catch up. Support mechanisms are not available in the schools and sometimes graduate teachers, who are still learning their trade, do not know how to accelerate students' learning so those students can never catch up. When those students leave school, they are not well equipped to take up opportunities in higher education or at university. Even if they want go on to higher education, they have to go to Perth and that creates challenges around renting and being supported away from home. I would like the new minister to progress some of those issues and to work to change those outcomes for regional students.

The last topic I want to talk about is the Western Australian Totalisator Agency Board. As a minister who did a lot of work in this area, I absolutely believe that it is time to test the market to see what the WA TAB can deliver for the industry. The biggest mistake is to think—this has come from all sides of politics—that the TAB is a government asset to sell. It is not a government asset; it is an industry asset. The TAB is part of the mix that funds the industry. There is no government investment in the WA TAB. The TAB has been built and maintained by the industry itself, through the punting dollar. It is time for a change. The WA TAB is under pressure from corporate bookmakers and different wagering market businesses. If members have watched any television in the past 10 years, they will have noticed that in the last four years the amount of advertising by corporate bookmakers and alternative wagering websites has increased, and they are competing for the WA TAB market.

It is absolutely time to test that market. I would love to have done it when I was in government so that the outcomes went to the industry. I could not get my partners in government to do that. I wanted them to test the market so that we could ensure that the benefits went back to the industry, because it is the industry's asset. It is time that the new government, through its leadership, took up the mantle and tested the market.

I read through some of the *Hansard* debate from 2015 when this matter was a hot issue and the then Leader of the Opposition was basically saying that no-one wanted to sell the TAB and that even people like Fred Kersley did not want to sell it. I have been working with the Western Australian Racing Representative Group for about 18 months and Fred Kersley is a member of that group. I can tell members that he would be the first to say to the new government that it is time to test the market and see what our WA TAB can return to the industry. There are ways of doing that that will deliver a good outcome to the racing industry. The racing industry has a backlog of infrastructure projects worth probably \$150 million that need to be done now, but the current funding model will never deliver anywhere near the surplus cash to carry out any of those projects. We have a fantastic racecourse at Ascot but a dog of a racecourse at Belmont. It needs upgrading because it is located in what will be a world-class entertainment precinct. There is no way that those groups are able to afford those upgrades with their existing industry funds. The WA TAB is barely returning to the industry now. Members are not able to see the figures, but if they are interested in this issue—there probably are not too many, except for maybe Hon Samantha Rowe and the member for Belmont—I am more than happy to share my knowledge on this issue with them.

Hon Samantha Rowe: Honourable member, would you take an interjection?

Hon COLIN HOLT: Of course, if it is a good one.

Hon Samantha Rowe: Yes, it is. The group that you have been consulting with, with your knowledge, have they actually consulted with the local industry, and the trainers and everyone that actually operates in that space at Ascot? It is my understanding that they haven't.

Hon COLIN HOLT: I will explain to Hon Samantha Rowe how that group came about. When I first got into my position, an industry forum was called for and run by Racing and Wagering Western Australia. I went to that forum and I said to the 150 people from across the industry who were present that this matter would not go away and that they needed to get together as an industry so that if the TAB was sold, they could get what they wanted out of that sale. I asked them what they would need to ensure the sustainability and life of an industry that is important to regional Western Australia in particular. The racing industry has between 33 000 and 36 000 direct employees and has huge economic benefits for the regions and the people who participate in it. It is an industry with specific and unique skills that are hard to transfer. The industry is important. I set those people a challenge in that forum to find a way to go to government and to speak in a united voice about what they think are the main issues for the industry going forward. After that meeting, the Western Australian Racing Representative Group was established. It is a representative group by name and by nature in my view. Plenty of people are working on the sidelines who are trying to undermine that group's credibility, including RWWA itself. I was absolutely convinced that those groups had to get together. That racing group includes representatives from harness racing, greyhound racing, horse racing and breeders, owners, trainers—the whole lot. I am convinced that the industry is endorsed in the right way to represent the views of the industry.

Also, there are 35 eligible bodies under the RWWA system. I have been to meetings of representatives from all those bodies and it has been unanimously agreed that it is time to test the market to see what a potential sale could deliver to the industry. They are the representative groups of the industry. They are the guys charged with talking with trainers and participants in the industry. I consulted around the state and made sure that I put myself in front of as many industry participants as I could. In the early days I probably did not know what I was bloody talking about—or talking about, I should say—but I learnt pretty quickly to make sure that I was informed. By the time I had been from one extreme to the other, the industry, in my view, really shifted to the view that it had to test the market.

That probably does not answer Hon Samantha Rowe's question, because I do not know what the group did—that is a good question for it—but I am still convinced that it is a representative group of the racing industry and can put forward its views.

Hon Colin Tincknell: The question I ask is: does anyone know what the TAB now returns to the government annually?

Hon COLIN HOLT: It is probably \$42 million in tax.

Hon Colin Tincknell: When you say "test the market", are you talking about a complete or partial sale?

Hon COLIN HOLT: There are a number of segments in the racing industry. The TAB is a funding mechanism for the racing industry, so I am talking about the sale or the giving or the leasing of the licence for the WA TAB itself. There are a lot of figures in the RWWA annual report. I encourage the member to look at that. He would need to interrogate them, and I am happy to help him. However, there is still a return to government from

a wagering income perspective, because it is set on wagering turnovers, but it is diminishing every day. The returns to the industry are being propped up by something known as race field fees—that is, a product fee that the industry gets from putting on a race. For example, if the Bunbury Trotting Club puts on race 5, it will get a return for putting on that event, and the money comes back to the industry. That is not funded by the TAB; it is completely separate. What I am asking for is how to actualise the value of the WA TAB to continue to not only give ongoing returns to the industry, but also get a cash sum that provides the opportunity for the industry to address the infrastructure backlog. There is a lot of pressure on that return through taxes by state government. Western Australia is now the highest taxing state in Australia on wagering, and Racing and Wagering Western Australia will be the first to come knocking on the new government's door to say, "Can you please reduce that so we can remain competitive?" I can guarantee that RWWA has probably already done that; maybe I should ask a question about it. It will need to reduce that to remain competitive because it is losing the fight against the corporate bookies.

There is still some value in the Western Australian TAB because of its exclusivity in Western Australia. Of Western Australian punters, 65 per cent still walk through a TAB and put a bet on, but that percentage is diminishing every day. We need to grasp this opportunity now so we can get the most value out of it for the industry. As I said at the beginning, it is not a government asset, in my view; it is an industry asset. If the industry is saying that it is time to go and see what that asset can do for the industry, we should be doing it. I encourage the government to take that up now to ensure that the opportunity is not lost.

The industry is asking for it. The commentary I have heard lately from the Premier and the Minister for Racing and Gaming is that if the industry comes to them and says it wants to test it, then they will go and do it. Well, the industry has. It has met with the Premier and the minister and it wants to do it, so get on with it.

Hon Samantha Rowe: I'm not convinced that that's the case, if you're happy for me to interject. When we were out campaigning and knocking on doors and phoning people in Ascot, where there are numerous trainers et cetera, they were totally opposed to it, so I'm just not convinced that that's the case.

Hon COLIN HOLT: The member should have come to one of my sessions at which I talk to the industry directly. A lot of those guys do not understand the wagering business. They understand the racing industry, but they do not understand the wagering business and how it works at all. They would not know how much money their industry is investing into the WA TAB to prop it up. They are inventing new systems every day and it is costing them millions to make the TAB competitive. It is only five to seven per cent of the wagering market across Australia and it is getting belted up by the big boys on the block. I am saying to the member that I understand their viewpoint, but they have appointed a racing representative group to investigate and show leadership in the industry. Fred Kersley, Ron Sayers and Kevin Jeavons—all the guys who have been appointed by those industries to take forward their views as an industry—are saying it. I can go to Collie and meet the person in the racing industry who is the most vehemently opposed to the Western Australian TAB; they absolutely are out there, but they are not the leadership of the industry, which is asking to pursue this opportunity.

I understand where the member is coming from, but I say to her that the government has to do something for the industry before it is too late and the WA TAB no longer meets its needs, because it is diminishing now. That is where the leadership comes from, and the government, through the Minister for Racing and Gaming, should show leadership by saying, "This industry is way too important not to go and investigate fully, and to listen to the industry's representative group, which is asking for it." The government absolutely should be showing leadership on this issue. If the member wants to play that role for her constituency, she should make an appointment with the Minister for Racing and Gaming and ask him, "What are we doing about this?" It is absolutely too important for that industry, across the length and breadth of Western Australia, not to have a resolution around this and to ensure its funding mechanism goes on into the future, because at the moment it is under a lot of pressure. I have spoken to the minister and clearly given him my views in a bipartisan way. I stand here today to talk about the WA TAB because I want to see the best outcome for the industry. I am convinced of that; I am not trying to do anything except that, and I am absolutely convinced that it is time to go and test the market for the sake of the industry.

I thank members for their questions and interjections and I am more than happy to talk about it in further detail if anyone wants to. I have a motion on the notice paper coming up for debate, so that will give the government an opportunity to clearly spell out its intentions for a very important industry in Western Australia.

Mr Deputy President, I will conclude my remarks there. I thank you for the opportunity to speak to the Address-in-Reply. I look forward to continuing interesting debates in this house on a number of important issues, especially with regard to regional Western Australia.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [3.54 pm]: I am also very pleased to speak in support of the motion moved by Hon Dr Sally Talbot with respect to the speech delivered by the Governor, Hon Kerry Sanderson, AC, at the opening of Parliament. I think I join all members in this place when I say that

our Governor is an outstanding Governor. In her current role and in other roles she has held, she has provided outstanding service to Western Australia and the people of Western Australia. I also recognise her for her particular expertise and interest across a range of areas. I think it was Hon Peter Collier who mentioned science; I know that is one particular area that is dear to her heart.

As has already been mentioned by other members, she is also the first female Governor appointed in this state, and I think she is a wonderful role model to many young women and girls across our state. I can certainly say that my little daughter, Claire, is particularly fond of Her Excellency the Governor, so if she were to emulate her, I would be delighted.

Hon Peter Collier: What about Harry?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Harry has not met Her Excellency yet, but certainly my daughter has had the pleasure of meeting her on a couple of occasions and she thinks she is wonderful.

Before I commence my response to the motion, I want to acknowledge something that is obviously not happening here in Western Australia; it is many miles away, but I want to reflect on the distressing scenes we have seen in London today, with respect to a huge fire that has engulfed a 27-storey block of flats. I have seen some quite distressing scenes, as I am sure other members have, through the media. It has been indicated that there have been a number of fatalities already, and firefighters are trying to battle the blaze. I am sure all members will agree with me that we put our heartfelt thoughts out to those who are part of this tragedy that continues to unfold in London. The fact that it occurred at 1.00 am when everyone would have been asleep is just terrible in the extreme. We will be watching this very sad news continue to unfold over the coming hours.

Today I want to raise a number of matters of relevance to my electorate and across a range of portfolio areas. This is my first opportunity to speak in the new, fortieth Parliament. As a local member, I of course want to thank the East Metropolitan Region for enabling me to serve in this Parliament for another four years as a representative for this wonderful community. I came into this place in 2005 and 12 years later I am still here, and every day is just a wonderful reminder of the unique and privileged position that I and, indeed, all of us have in serving our respective electorates in this house and hopefully making a difference in each of the regions we represent. I am sure all members share the same perspective and are in agreement.

Before I make some general comments with respect to my electorate and portfolio areas, I want to place on record the contributions made by a number of former members who have departed this house or the other place as a result of the recent election or their retirement. Quite clearly, the election result in the East Metropolitan Region was devastating for the Liberal Party. The fact that I am now the only East Metropolitan Region Liberal member across 14 lower house seats and, indeed, the upper house, clearly demonstrates this. Albeit, I warn the government that although there might be only one state Liberal member across all those seats, I will continue to advocate very strongly on behalf of the East Metropolitan Region, both within the walls of Parliament and outside, and to hold this government to account on all its various election policies—there were a lot—announced throughout the campaign. I can say that, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region, the variety of announcements made by candidates and members of the Labor Party were plentiful in the extreme. Some were about very large projects but many were about very small projects. Some members on the other side have referred to some of them. It will be interesting to see where the money will come from for them. The government does not seem to have detailed that yet. Labor members were handing out grants left right and centre. We will follow that very closely because they made those commitments and they will have to deliver them. If they do not, it will not only be me who will follow them very strongly.

Hon Samantha Rowe interjected.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Members opposite said they could not spend anything, yet there are hundreds of —

Hon Peter Collier: You woke them up.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: They did not like that, did they? Plenty of announcements were made by the Labor Party.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Hon Donna Faragher has the call.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. Many announcements, both large and small, were made by members opposite not only in the electorate of East Metropolitan Region, but right across Western Australia. We will watch very closely even the little ones of \$5 000 here and \$1 000 there to make sure the government delivers them.

I want to record the contributions of some past members.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon Samantha Rowe: He is always interjecting on you. It's rude.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: He is, but he is a good interjector. I always love dealing with Hon Peter Collier's interjections.

Several members interjected.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Have you both finished?

I will go back to what I was saying previously. A number of really hardworking and outstanding members of Parliament who lost their seats have made an enormous contribution to the state, the Parliament and, most importantly, the electorates they represented. In the East Metropolitan Region I particularly recognise Hon John Day, former member for Kalamunda; Hon Tony Simpson, former member for Darling Range; Hon Michael Sutherland, former member for Mount Lawley; Frank Alban, former member for Swan Hills; Nathan Morton, former member for Forrestfield; Glenys Godfrey, former member for Belmont; and Ian Britza, former member for Morley. I also recognise a number of members in this place who are no longer with us. I think Hon Simon O'Brien, Mr Deputy President, correctly said we, certainly on this side of the house, miss them greatly. I acknowledge my former colleagues in the East Metropolitan Region, Hon Alyssa Hayden and Hon Helen Morton. I worked with Hon Alyssa Hayden for eight years and, of course, Hon Helen Morton and I came in together in 2005 and were colleagues for 12 years. I want to put on the record the significant contributions they both made to not only the East Metropolitan Region. Certainly Hon Helen Morton, in her role as a minister in the former government for over four years, drove many initiatives that will have a lasting benefit for the people of Western Australia, particularly in the areas of mental health and disability services. I think members who know Hon Alyssa Hayden would all agree that she was a vibrant and committed member who put the East Metropolitan Region at the forefront of all her work. I record my thanks to them for being such great colleagues. I also recognise Hon Brian Ellis, Hon Mark Lewis and my good friend whom I have known for many years—she might be listening today—Hon Liz Behjat, as well as Hon Phil Edman and Hon Robyn McSweeney. All those members made an enormous contribution in this place. Hon Robyn McSweeney, fondly known as Auntie Robyn to my family, is one member whom I will really miss.

Our former President Hon Barry House, who retired after 30 years of distinguished service in this place, is one who deserves special mention. Hon Barry House was particularly supportive of me when I came into this place 12 years ago. Indeed, I sat with him around where Hon Colin Tincknell now sits, although we sat behind different benches then. I often tell Hon Barry House that he taught me all I know in this place. It is fair to say that he always had a lot of good humour and had very wise words and advice, particularly in the early days when, as a new member, I was trying to find my feet. He was always knowledgeable on all things procedural. Sometimes when I was not quite sure about something, I knew I could always turn to him. Hon George Cash sat on the other side, so if he happened to be out of the chamber on urgent parliamentary business, I had two very good mentors to help me in the early days of opposition. I think we would all agree that Hon Barry House was an outstanding President in this house for eight years and a great ambassador for the Legislative Council. He always held this place in the highest regard and advocated very strongly for this house both within the walls of Parliament and outside.

In a general sense, despite the heavy loss of seats in the East Metropolitan Region, there remains much for the Liberal Party to be proud of. It is the largest of the three upper house regions. I acknowledge and congratulate members on all sides of the house who have been either elected for the first time or re-elected to represent the East Metropolitan Region. I think the other five members of the East Metropolitan Region would probably agree with me that it is the best region.

Hon Samantha Rowe: I totally agree with you.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: There we go; the honourable member totally agrees. It is a very diverse region in many ways. There are the very city-centred parts to it and then there is the semi-rural part, to the rural parts. Some of the issues can be incredibly diverse and some particular issues might attract different perspectives depending on where people live within the region. Prescribed burning is an example. Quite a bit has been said about that in recent weeks. I have to say to the Minister for Environment that although we all recognise that the smoke causes significant concern to some Western Australians, the importance of prescribed burning, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region, cannot be underestimated. We have seen serious fires in our region. I remember when I came into this place in 2005 the terrible Perth hills fires that had occurred a couple of months beforehand. As a local member and when I held the position of environment minister, I did not have to be convinced about the importance of prescribed burning. I say to the minister, thank you for continuing that program; it is vital to not only our community but many others.

As I say, the East Metropolitan Region is a large region and, under our government, there were projects both large and small that really had an enormous benefit to the community within that region. There is always more work to be done—there is obviously no doubt about that—but some of our really large projects were Gateway WA, the Gngangara Road upgrade, and the not so new, but still new, Midland Public Hospital, which of course was the first new hospital in the Swan region for over 60 years. Members in this place would know, because I have said it a couple of times, that I was born at Swan District Hospital—a great hospital, but it had

had its day. Now we have a state-of-the-art hospital right in the centre of Midland providing more services, that is closer to people and has better access to transport—all those sorts of things. That was delivered under our government. We have seen a regeneration of Midland particularly in and around the old Midland railway workshops. It was fantastic work undertaken by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority in concert with the City of Swan. It is fantastic work that is continuing to evolve and develop. We have seen interchanges at incredibly dangerous intersections. It is fair to say that some of the worst intersections have been in the East Metropolitan Region. Indeed, Mr Deputy President, as a former transport minister, knows this all too well, and he was part of a number of very good decisions that saw a number of those fixed—intersections like Malaga Drive–Reid Highway, fixed effectively overnight, and Great Eastern Highway–Roe Highway. I remember talking about that particular section when we were in opposition, because it really was not going anywhere. Anyone who uses that section of road, that link, knows that the work is unbelievably fantastic in improving safety and the flow of traffic, so I want to recognise the Deputy President for his former role in relation to that and many other initiatives.

The former Minister for Education is in this house and, of course, there were schools redeveloped, built and refurbished right across the East Metropolitan Region—from one end to the other. That was a key initiative—I will say a bit more about education in a moment—that was followed through by this government and is part of the ongoing legacy that we will hold in education in this state. As I say, although I have mentioned some initiatives and projects that have been completed, there are still a number under construction that commenced under the former Liberal–National government. I note that already the now government—it has not taken long—is seeking to rewrite history on some of those projects. I will give a couple of examples. First, there is NorthLink WA, and Mr Deputy President is nodding because he knows this project well. It is very pleasing to see that the central section of this massive project is now underway, and that is principally between Morley and Ellenbrook. Once completed, NorthLink WA will provide a new, faster and, importantly, safer road transport link from Morley, but probably, to put it back a step, from the Perth Airport area to Muchea. It is a \$1 billion infrastructure project funded by both the state and commonwealth governments and it commenced under the previous government. Indeed, the initial work started in the middle of last year. Yet in the minister’s press statement from last week, is there any recognition of the former Liberal–National government and its role in getting those works underway? Of course not. Is there any recognition that the \$200 million-plus committed by the state government was an investment by the former Liberal–National government? Of course not. It does not say that in the press release. What about the Forrestfield–Airport Link project? Hon Samantha Rowe would know this one well because her electorate office is in the Belmont area. I think Hon Samantha Rowe would agree with me that it is very pleasing that this landmark \$1.86 billion rail project, again jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments, is continuing to progress and that works are commencing near Perth Airport.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 857.]

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

NATIONAL DISABILITY INSURANCE SCHEME — UPDATE

164. Hon PETER COLLIER to the Minister for Disability Services:

I refer the minister to the ministerial statement that he made today on the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

- (1) What did the minister mean by, and I quote, “without reference to the former state cabinet”?
- (2) Will the minister confirm that service providers will continue to operate under three different models for the foreseeable future?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for the question.

- (1) Certainly the information that has been provided to me since becoming minister is that there was never a final decision made by cabinet in relation to the bilateral agreement that was signed in January.
- (2) Yes.

ABORIGINAL REGIONAL SERVICES REFORM UNIT

165. Hon PETER COLLIER to the Minister for Regional Development:

That was an interesting response. I refer to the establishment of the Aboriginal Regional Services Reform Unit by the previous Liberal–National government.

- (1) Does the minister intend to retain the Aboriginal Regional Services Reform Unit?
- (2) Will the minister provide a list of the staff currently employed within the Aboriginal Regional Services Reform Unit; and, if not, why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1)–(2) This is a very important unit that was set up, as members might remember, after the disastrous attempts by the then Minister for Indigenous Affairs to close scores of Aboriginal communities without consultation with those communities. He was offered a bit of money by Mr Abbott, and, given the parlous state of the budget, he wanted to take that money upfront, no strings attached, and he subsequently announced that various communities would be closed down. However, fortunately, the National Party came in on its white horse with the Regional Services Reform Unit, which was operating out of the Department of Regional Development. We do acknowledge that the work that this unit does has been very, very effective. So it is our intention, of course, to preserve that unit. In fact, we will be going a bit further. Currently, the unit has funding in the budget for next year, and just a very small amount for the year after that. We will increase that level of funding so that the unit has time to complete its very important work. Currently, the unit employs 25 staff under the leadership of Grahame Searle. I do not believe it is appropriate to list the names of all the other staff members.

EDUCATION CENTRAL — SECONDARY SCHOOL — KITCHENER PARK

166. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the minister representing the Minister for Planning:

I refer to the answer given to question without notice 144 asked on 13 June 2017 to the Minister for Education and Training. Can the minister confirm what planning approvals at a state and local government level, including any amendments to local and region planning schemes and/or structure plans, will be required prior to the commencement of any works at Kitchener Park for the proposed new school?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. This information has been provided by the Minister for Planning.

An amendment to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority Regulations 2011 will be required in order to add the area to the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority's Subiaco redevelopment area and to enable the MRA to undertake its functions under part 2 of the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority Act 2011. Following this, subdivision approval will be required to enable subdivision works to commence on site.

RESOURCES SECTOR — SPECIAL LEASE RENTAL FEE

167. Hon JACQUI BOYDELL to the minister representing the Treasurer:

I refer to the advice the Treasurer sought on the cash-out of the 25c special lease rental clause in legacy iron ore state agreements held by BHP and Rio Tinto.

- (1) What is the average annual revenue received by the state from the special lease rental charge on those iron ore mining companies that pay it?
- (2) What was the total dollar figure of benefit to the state for allowing these companies to cash out the clause?
- (3) What was the discount rate applied to the figure?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The following information has been provided by the Treasurer.

- (1) The projected average annual revenue of the iron ore production rental is around \$130 million a year over the forecast period.
- (2) The advice included a number of estimates of the total value to the state of cashing out the iron ore production rental. These estimates were based on the present value of estimated long-term cash flows from the rental and were dependent on the discount rate applied. The net benefit to the state would also have depended on the Commonwealth Grants Commission's treatment of the upfront payment and its impact on WA's goods and services tax grants. Providing specific scenarios and their total dollar figures would impact the state's bargaining position.
- (3) Various discount rate scenarios were used.

WATER MONITORING AND SAMPLING — MURRAY RIVER

168. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the ongoing monitoring and water sampling of the Murray River.

- (1) Is there a protocol for targeting and collecting these samples?
- (2) Where samples are found to be outside "normal", is there a protocol that enacts a specific management action?
- (3) If yes to (2), what is that protocol?
- (4) If no to (2), why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

The Minister for Fisheries has provided the following answer —

- (1)–(2) Yes.
- (3) Where algal test results exceed established triggers for particular species, the Department of Health and local government authorities are notified.
- (4) Not applicable.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COMPENSATION

169. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the seminar held on 19 May 2017 by the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy on compensation for domestic violence, at which Adjunct Professor Robert Guthrie, assessor of criminal injuries compensation, advised that in 2014–15, about 45 per cent of the awards made by the assessors involved family and domestic violence.

- (1) What was the percentage for 2015–16?
- (2) How many full-time assessors are currently appointed?
- (3) How many part-time assessors are currently appointed?
- (4) Further to (2) and (3), what is the term of tenure for each assessor?
- (5) Noting that the number of applications outstanding has now grown to a level incapable of being finalised by the current assessors, is the Attorney General considering increasing the number of assessors, whether permanently or temporarily?
- (6) If no to (5), why not?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

As this question requires detailed research and consideration, the Attorney General kindly requests that the member place this question on notice.

FERAL CAT CONTROL — HISSTORY BAIT TRIAL

170. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to a Department of Parks and Wildlife proposal to undertake trials of a new 1080-based cat bait Hisstory within the Department of Defence and Australian Wildlife Conservancy–managed lands at Yampi Sound training area.

- (1) Why was there a directive from the Department of Defence that no environmental compliance certificate was required for this activity?
- (2) Why is this trial proposed to take place in the Yampi Sound training area and not in a DPaW-managed area and when will it take place?
- (3) Has there been any recent consultation with ranger groups that manage the area; and, if so, when?
- (4) What is the baseline data of quoll populations in the testing area and will the death rates of non-target species during the baiting program be released?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) The requirement to prepare an environmental clearance certificate is a matter for the Department of Defence.
- (2) Extensive investigations of a number of areas in the Kimberley were undertaken in 2016 to determine the most appropriate site for the trial to occur. The Yampi Sound training area is the only available site in the Kimberley that has a suitable northern quoll population that will provide a scientifically valid sample size to determine any impacts on this species from the Hisstory bait. The trial is not expected to have a significant impact on northern quolls based on previous work undertaken by the department in the Pilbara.
- (3) Extensive consultation with relevant Aboriginal ranger groups occurred in 2016 and 2017 and these groups will be involved in trapping and monitoring northern quolls for this project.
- (4) The project includes a component to determine the baseline population of northern quolls in the project area. Any deaths of non-target species will be recorded and project results and outcomes will be published.

POTATO MARKETING CORPORATION — LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

171. Hon COLIN HOLT to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the potato industry and the Premier's comment in the media—Western Australian *Country Hour* online, 30 May—when he was quoted as saying that the legal action could have potentially bankrupted Mr Galati.

- (1) How did the Premier become aware that the legal action could have bankrupted Mr Galati?
- (2) Was the potential for bankruptcy of Mr Galati a factor in the decision to have the state drop the civil case against Mr Galati?
- (3) If no to (2), why did the Premier mention the matter of bankruptcy in the context of dropping the civil action against Mr Galati?
- (4) Is the Premier aware of the potential savings to Mr Galati now that the civil case has been dropped compared with the outcome of a successful prosecution had the matter gone to court?
- (5) What advice has the Premier or his ministers received as to the value of this savings benefit?
- (6) Did Mr Galati or his representatives donate to the Labor Party?

The PRESIDENT: I do not know about answering the last part of that question. You can answer the other parts.

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) It stands to reason that as Mr Galati stated to *The West Australian* in January 2017 that he would be appealing to the public for funds to fight his defence as he could not afford it himself, it follows logically that the action could potentially bankrupt him.
- (2)–(3) As the Premier stated on WA *Country Hour*, his position is that the state should have no role in prosecuting people for growing potatoes.
- (4) No.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) As Madam President has pointed out, donations are a matter for the Labor Party, and as per the standing orders of this place, the Premier is not able to answer the question as it does not relate to actions or decisions as a sworn minister of the Crown.

MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT — ENERGY MADE CLEAN

172. Hon JIM CHOWN to the Minister for Regional Development:

- (1) Over what period was the minister a director of Energy Made Clean?
- (2) Has the minister ever had shares or other financial interests in Energy Made Clean, Carnegie Clean Energy or Carnegie Wave Energy?
- (3) If yes to (2), what was the name or the name of the entity that the shares were held in?
- (4) If yes to (2), what was the value of the shares or financial interests?
- (5) If yes to (2), have all the shares or financial interests been divested, and when?
- (6) Does the minister retain any share or financial interests in Energy Made Clean, Carnegie Clean Energy or Carnegie Wave Energy?
- (7) If yes to (6), what are the remaining financial interests, number of shares and the total current market value?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(7) During the interregnum of my various parliamentary careers, I worked in the private sector and followed my passion for renewable energy. Yes, it is true that from 10 May —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You have asked the question. Let the minister respond.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: It was from May 2011 and I resigned on 4 July 2013. I had some shares in Energy Made Clean that I had acquired instead of remuneration for the work that I did for the company. The shares were held in my name. Immediately after I was offered a ministerial position by Premier McGowan, I donated all my shareholdings to charity and, for the member's information, that charity was Leprosy Mission Australia.

YOUTH JUSTICE INNOVATION FUND

173. Hon ALISON XAMON to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the youth justice innovation fund.

- (1) Will there be another funding round?
- (2) If yes to (1), when will applications open?
- (3) If there is future funding, will it again be available only for new programs?
- (4) What ongoing funding opportunities will be made available for existing programs that have been shown to be successful when the current funding period ends?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. This information has been provided by the Minister for Corrective Services.

- (1) No further funding rounds are anticipated.
- (2)–(3) Not applicable.
- (4) Any further funding decisions will be made following the completion of the evaluation of the existing programs.

POLICE — STAB-PROOF VESTS

174. Hon CHARLES SMITH to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Can the minister advise the reasons for declining the request from the WA Police Union to have frontline staff protected by stab-proof vests?
- (2) If so, can the minister advise further on the unit cost of each vest and the total cost of providing stab-proof vests to frontline staff?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for the question. The following information has been provided by the Minister for Police.

(1)–(2) The Tactical Response Group and other specialist units are equipped with stab-proof vests. Additionally, ballistic vests are currently available for officers to utilise as the operational need arises and are maintained to the highest standard at the station level in alignment with the current deployment policy. The cost of a fully supplied enhanced load bearing vest varies between each individually manufactured size. For the purposes of an estimated costing for the rollout of the ELBV, an average price has been adopted. This price is in the order of \$2 067 each excluding GST. At this stage, the Minister for Police has not received any requests from WA Police for additional stab-proof vests.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES — PAROLEES — RECIDIVISM RATE

175. Hon SIMON O'BRIEN to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

- (1) What is the recidivism rate of former prisoners released on parole in Western Australia?
- (2) How does this compare with other jurisdictions?
- (3) How many prisoners are on parole at the present time?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question.

- (1) In the 2015–16 financial year, 1 080 parole orders were completed, of which 53 or 4.9 per cent were cancelled in that period for reoffending.
- (2) The recidivism rate of former prisoners released on parole is not an indicator that is reported on in national statistics. As such, a national comparison cannot be provided.
- (3) As at 7 June 2017, there were 743 parolees being managed by the department.

MANGLES BAY MARINA

176. Hon DIANE EVERS to the minister representing the Minister for Lands:

I refer to the proposed Mangles Bay marina in Rockingham.

- (1) Is it correct that the marina is proposed to be built during phase 3—in other words, about 10 years after project construction begins?

- (2) In regard to the marina management and maintenance plan, do the sources of revenue that have been identified for the 25-year operating period take into account the fact that the proposed Port Rockingham marina may already be in operation prior to the completion of the Mangles Bay marina?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?
- (4) Can the minister confirm that on 1 February 2017, the Minister for Lands' predecessor, Hon Terry Redman, signed a document or documents that changed ownership of land within the proposed project site to LandCorp?
- (5) If yes to (4), does the minister believe that the former minister's action breached conventions for the caretaker period, which commenced on 30 January 2017; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) No. The marina is planned to be constructed within the first stage of development concurrently with residential lots.
- (2) No.
- (3) The marina management and maintenance plan allows for changes due to economic and other conditions.
- (4) No. Ownership of the land has not changed. Management responsibility for a portion of the land—lots 501 and 2058—within the development area was transferred under delegation from the Department of Sport and Recreation to LandCorp through a management order on 15 December 2016; however, the land ownership remains with the state.
- (5) Not applicable.

BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT

177. Hon KEN BASTON to the minister representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

Will the minister be announcing any changes to bushfire management before next summer?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for the question. As the member will be aware, bushfire management is an incredibly complex area and by nature may change based on the environmental needs and as the situation requires it.

MOBILE PHONE TOWERS — ESPERANCE

178. Hon COLIN DE GRUSSA to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to the 2015 devastating Esperance bushfires that, amongst other things, highlighted the need for adequate and reliable telecommunications coverage in regional Western Australia.

- (1) To ensure adequacy of coverage will the minister commit to delivering the following mobile phone towers committed to by the previous government through royalties for regions in the Esperance region following the fires Alexander Bay, Beaumont, Cape Le Grand, Dalyup, Daniell Siding, Grass Patch East, Merivale, Mount Burdett, Mount Ney, Neridup, Ravensthorpe West and South Cascade.
- (2) To ensure reliability in the event of natural disaster will the minister ensure that any new regional mobile phone tower is fitted with an adequate backup power supply?
- (3) If no to (1) or (2), how does the minister intend to improve telecommunications in the region prior to the bushfire season?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

- (1) All mobile phone towers listed will be funded under the state regional telecommunications project and the commonwealth mobile black spot program. Ten of the 12 base stations will be constructed by Telstra. Alexander Bay and Cape Le Grand are small-cell satellite installations provided by Optus.
- (2) Yes. All locations listed will be fitted with battery backup.
- (3) Not applicable.

PAYROLL TAX

179. Hon AARON STONEHOUSE to the minister representing the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer the minister to a jobs fair that was held in Mandurah last week, where it was reported that thousands of people lined up for a chance of getting one of the 100 jobs that were being offered by local businesses. The government has consistently spoken about its intention to help Western Australians such as these get jobs, but it has ignored removing one of the obstacles that will help them more than anything else—payroll tax. Given the state's woeful budget position and weak jobs market, how does the minister justify this tax on jobs?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question and I understand his concern, but I point out that the McGowan government took to the election a comprehensive “Plan for Jobs” that covers a broad range of policies that are designed to broaden and diversify the state’s economy while delivering greater employment benefits from the existing government spend—notably our local content policies. I note that every state has some form of payroll tax since the federal government devolved the power to the states in the 1970s. Given, unfortunately, as the member notes, the state’s woeful budget position, the abolition of payroll tax is simply not possible at this time.

JOONDALUP RAIL LINE — YANCHEP EXTENSION

180. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the article in BusinessNews Western Australia of 12 June 2017 entitled “Labor resets infrastructure priorities”.

- (1) Can the minister provide the names of the members of the multi-agency team and from which agencies they come to drive the agenda of the government?
- (2) Can the minister advise how many stations are included in the Yanchep rail extension?
- (3) What is the distance in kilometres of the proposed extension?
- (4) How many additional train cars will be required?
- (5) Will additional feeder buses be required?
- (6) If yes to (5), how many?
- (7) Can the minister indicate the component of value in dollar terms of “value capture”?
- (8) Will the minister outline who are the developers along the route of the rail extension, what discussions have been undertaken with them, and what are the outcomes of those discussions?

The PRESIDENT: Before you answer that, minister, I might just say that I appreciate that member is new to the chamber, but that is a very long question and we try to have concise questions.

Hon Tjorn Sibma: I am waiting for an answer.

The PRESIDENT: Yes, I know you are. I am giving you some advice about future drafting of questions.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. This answer has been provided by the Minister for Transport.

- (1) The multi-agency team will be headed by Mr Anthony Kannis.
- (2)–(8) Details of the Yanchep extension are being finalised but, as committed, it will be an approximately 14-kilometre extension and will include three new stations. Further details will be provided as part of ongoing works.

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT REPORT

181. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the Environmental Protection Authority state of the environment reporting process, noting that the last Western Australian state of the environment report was released in 2007.

- (1) Is the EPA currently working on an updated Western Australian state of the environment report?
- (2) Are any other departments, including the Department of Parks and Wildlife, working on an updated Western Australian state of the environment report?
- (3) When will the government release an updated Western Australian state of the environment report?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) No.
- (3) The state government is considering options for the most effective way of informing the public about the state of the Western Australian environment.

SHARK SHIELDS

182. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Fisheries:

- (1) Since the 11 March election, how many Shark Shields have been sold to date?
- (2) Since the 11 March election, how many rebates have been issued for Shark Shields?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

The Minister for Fisheries has provided the following answer.

- (1) I am unable to provide the number of Shark Shields that have been sold since 11 March. This question should be put to the manufacturers of the Shark Shield.
- (2) As of 11.00 am Wednesday, 14 June 2017, the number of rebates issued has been 387.

MARGARET RIVER GOURMET ESCAPE

183. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the minister representing the Minister for Tourism:

I refer to the internationally recognised Margaret River Gourmet Escape.

- (1) As the contract is due to expire in 2017 will it be funded beyond this year; and, if yes, for how long; and, if no, why not?
- (2) If yes to (1), when will the funding agreement be signed?
- (3) Were the organisers advised at any point that the funding agreement would be signed prior to 13 June 2017?
- (4) What is the deadline for a response from the state government to fund this event beyond 2017 to ensure that the Margaret River Gourmet Escape takes place in 2018 and is not lost to another state?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Tourism.

- (1) The proposal for the event sponsorship renewal is still being assessed so the funding position is yet to be finalised.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No.
- (4) The date is 30 November 2017.

CHILDREN'S COURT — LINKS PROGRAM

184. Hon ALISON XAMON to the Leader of the House representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the children's mental health court diversion and support program, Links.

- (1) Given the demonstrated success of the court and clear need in regional areas, will the government commit to expanding this court to regional areas?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) If yes to (1), when?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Not at this time.
- (2) The Links program, operating at Perth Children's Court, is currently funded only until 30 June 2019. Any expansion to regional areas would be considered as part of the future business case to continue the program post-June 2019.
- (3) Not applicable.

HOUSING AUTHORITY — SHIRE OF HARVEY

185. Hon COLIN HOLT to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Can the minister provide an update on the Housing Authority's land and properties within the town of Yarloop?
- (2) Has the Housing Authority met with the Shire of Harvey to discuss Yarloop town site development plans?
- (3) Has the Housing Authority met with any community housing provider to discuss partnerships or potential asset transfer?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and acknowledge his longstanding interest in the housing portfolio. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Housing.

- (1) The Housing Authority had 17 public housing properties, one Government Regional Officers' Housing lease and part ownership of a Keystart shared-equity property. There are currently no applicants for public housing in Yarloop. All of these properties were destroyed or significantly damaged, with the exception of a five-unit complex at 18 McDowell Street. These units were deemed uninhabitable due to the lack of basic infrastructure and concerns surrounding asbestos site contamination. They are currently being readied for sale. The Housing Authority has offered to work with the Shire of Harvey to facilitate land swaps and align any public housing replacement with the shire's preferred urban development footprint in the town. It has also offered to help facilitate affordable homeownership opportunities if demand exists.
- (2) Yes, and the Housing Authority has offered to work with the shire's town planning consultants when they are ready. The shire indicated it would contact the Housing Authority in due course.
- (3) Not at this stage. However, it remains an option that could be explored in the future.

HOSPITALS — MISCARRIAGES AND CREMATIONS

186. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the practice at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women for the cremation of miscarried babies up to 28 weeks gestation.

- (1) Is this standard practice across all hospitals in Western Australia?
- (2) If so, is this practice documented in the form of guidelines or other?
- (3) Will the minister table a copy of these practice guidelines?
- (4) If yes to (3), when?
- (5) If no to (3), why not?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I am informed that the information requested is unable to be provided in the time allocated. However, I will attempt to have this answer provided to the member as soon as possible.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

187. Hon PETER COLLIER to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) What exact date did the minister become aware of the dead leg water pipe issue in the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre precinct?
- (2) How did the minister become aware of the issue associated with the dead leg in the QEII precinct?

Hon ALANNA CLOHESY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I am advised —

- (1)–(2) As the shadow Minister for Health, he was informally made aware of the issue concerning the dead leg. Upon becoming the Minister for Health, he requested and was provided with a briefing from the department on the issue.

PUBLIC SECTOR COMMISSION — INTERNAL VALUES AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

188. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the Public Sector Commissioner's meetings this year to discuss the new lived values.

- (1) Has this new values statement been finalised or is it still subject to consultation?
- (2) Will the minister table the latest version of these new lived values?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?
- (4) If yes to (2), when?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Public Sector Commission advises —

- (1) The PSC has developed and finalised its internal values and strategic priorities as its current strategy expires on 30 June 2017.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The PSC will table the final document on 3 July 2017, when it comes into effect within the organisation.

HYDRAULIC FRACTURING — WHICHER RANGE

189. Hon DIANE EVERS to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

- (1) How many litres of diesel does the Department of Mines and Petroleum estimate remain in the Whicher Range following a 2004 exercise in which 1.2 million litres of diesel was injected?
- (2) What action has the department taken to check whether the remaining diesel has remained confined to the petroleum reservoir?
- (3) Have any of the water monitoring wells in EP408 provided an indication of diesel or other introduced chemicals?
- (4) Does the minister acknowledge that tight gas such as that found in the Whicher Range sandstone is an unconventional gas?
- (5) Does the minister agree that activities associated with unconventional gas extraction can pose contamination risks to water supply when conducted in a drinking water catchment area, even if hydraulic fracturing is not used; and, if not, why not?

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

- (1) According to the Department of Mines and Petroleum's records, 636 500 litres of diesel remain confined to the petroleum reservoir at Whicher Range 5 at a depth of below 4 000 metres.
- (2) The Whicher Range 5 well was decommissioned in 2005; however, DMP is currently working with the permittee to monitor other well sites within the field.
- (3) DMP advises that no water monitoring wells in EP408 have provided any indication of diesel or other introduced chemicals.
- (4) No. The reservoir permeability at the Whicher Range does not meet the criteria prescribed under the Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Resources Act 1967.
- (5) DMP is not aware of any reports of groundwater contamination attributable to fracking over the past 50 years in Western Australia. Further, DMP will not approve petroleum operations—conventional or unconventional—in public drinking water source areas if the risks cannot be managed.

DRUG TRAFFICKING CONVICTIONS*Question without Notice 156 — Answer Advice*

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [5.06 pm]: Yesterday Hon Charles Smith asked me a question that I did not appear to have in my file. To place on the record, the question he was referring to was lodged on notice, so it will be answered in due course. However, we would be happy to take any questions from him, with some notice given, at any time.

FLORENCE HUMMERSTON KIOSK — RELOCATION NEGOTIATIONS*Question without Notice 149 — Supplementary Information*

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [5.07 pm]: On behalf of the Minister for Planning, I would like to provide further information to Hon Alison Xamon's question without notice 149 asked yesterday, which I seek leave to have incorporated into *Hansard*. Essentially, the member asked about compensation settlement amounts. The compensation amount was \$14.8 million, plus \$3 million in legal costs, together with \$4 million for the cost of the relocation.

Leave granted.

The following material was incorporated —

-
- (1) The confidentiality clause within the Deed provides exceptions to the obligations of confidence which includes the disclosure of its contents to satisfy the requirements of parliamentary accountability.
 - (2) Yes.
 - (a) State Solicitor's Office.
 - (b) Not Applicable.
 - (3) The Minister for Planning advised of the settlement amount in response to a question in the lower house earlier this afternoon. The compensation amount was \$14.8 million, plus \$3 million in legal costs, together with \$4 million for the cost of the relocation.
-

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [5.07 pm]: Prior to question time I had been speaking about a couple of projects that are currently underway in the East Metropolitan Region. Prior to the break I was specifically referring to the Forrestfield–Airport Link project and indicating that this landmark \$1.86 billion rail project, which is jointly funded by the state and commonwealth governments, is continuing to progress and that works are now commencing near Perth Airport. I was out that way just last week and there is certainly plenty of movement out there, which is fantastic. This significant rail project was a key initiative of the former Liberal–National state government and once completed will dramatically improve public transport options in the East Metropolitan Region. The project, for those members who are not aware, will create an 8.5 kilometre rail line from the spur on the Midland line east of Bayswater station to Forrestfield. Preliminary works began last year at the Forrestfield end of the project and a construction site has now been established to create the airport central station. When it is completed, this station will provide direct access to terminals T1 and T2, and is one of three being built along the length of the railway line—the others, of course, being at Belmont and Forrestfield.

With all that in mind, members will not be surprised to learn that I was somewhat bemused to read a joint media statement by the Premier and the Minister for Transport dated 28 May 2017. I will quote from a couple of elements of that statement. It states —

The Forrestfield–Airport Link is a step closer to reality with a construction site now established and work underway at the Airport Central Station.

It goes on to refer to the construction site and the tunnel boring machine, which we used to hear a lot about from the former Minister for Transport of the Liberal persuasion, and explains that the works will coincide with works and redevelopment plans for Perth Airport. What was of interest to me were some comments attributed to the Premier —

“This important rail link was the number one priority of the METRONET vision.

“With work now underway, this project will deliver a significant jobs boost for Western Australians and help improve connectivity across our suburbs.”

I support the Premier’s second comment, but the last time I checked, it was the Liberal–National government that funded and started building this project, yet it was apparently the Labor Party’s number one priority of its Metronet vision. The last time I checked, the Labor Party was not in government when this project was approved, announced and got underway. Was there any mention of the commitment the former Liberal–National government made, the investment it put in and the fact that construction commenced under the former government? Of course not because, apparently, it is all about Metronet and it was the Labor Party’s number one priority. It must have only started on 11 March 2017. It is just ridiculous, but I suppose I can expect to see many, many more media statements from this government talking about these wonderful initiatives that are underway in the East Metropolitan Region. I will support many of them, absolutely, because many of them actually started and had huge investments made under our government. I will continue to follow with interest the various statements made by this government about initiatives that were actually Liberal Party initiatives.

Of course, it does not end with the East Metropolitan Region. I think everyone would agree that our city, over a number of years, has been absolutely transformed. One element currently under construction is the new Western Australian Museum. Again, I read with interest a press release dated 22 May titled “Groundbreaking new museum to create jobs, boost economy” and again I quote some comments attributed to Premier Mark McGowan —

“The McGowan Labor Government recognises the important role played by the cultural industries sector in supporting WA’s economy by creating jobs, attracting tourists and promoting a vibrant and cohesive community.

“The development of a world-class destination that provides excellent visitor experiences and learning opportunities for children and adults will be a great resource for all Western Australians, particularly families.

“Importantly it is expected to create 3,300 jobs during the construction phase, 1,800 being in the construction sector.”

Again, I support the Premier’s comments but I remind the house that time and again when we were in government and the Labor Party was in opposition, the opposition would have a crack at the government about our priorities, particularly the new WA Museum. Indeed, the Premier, who is now saying how important and fantastic it is and how it is going to create all these jobs and be wonderful said in 2012 that it was a misguided priority. Now that he is in government and can go out and get a shovel and it is all very exciting, and he can put out press releases as Premier, all of a sudden it is really important. Yes, it is really important, and we knew it was really important, and that is why we funded it and got it underway.

In discussing the city, I also want to pick up on some of the comments that were made by Hon Martin Pritchard in his speech on the Address-in-Reply. I do not mean to single out Hon Martin Pritchard, but it gives me an opportunity to discuss the issue that I will now raise.

Hon Peter Collier: He's a pretty good bloke!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Yes.

Hon Peter Collier: The kiss of death!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: It is always a worry when that happens!

During his speech, I noted in particular some of his comments about the value of Elizabeth Quay, whether it was really warranted and all those sorts of things. I have to say, we heard a lot from the Labor Party in opposition about the value or otherwise of Elizabeth Quay and even now the Labor Party still carries on about Elizabeth Quay in not the most positive sense.

Hon Simon O'Brien: They're not going to move it, are they?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That is one thing the government cannot move! Hon Simon O'Brien is digressing from the topic!

Hon Martin Pritchard talked about the cost of Elizabeth Quay and whether it was warranted. I want to indicate to the house that I think Elizabeth Quay has not only proved to be an enormous success as a landmark destination for locals and visitors, both interstate and overseas alike, but also become a destination point for events pretty much every weekend, 52 weeks a year. At the time of the original decision by the former government, it was projected that the state would receive around \$170 million in revenue from land sales, which would be set against the government's commitment to investment in the project of \$440 million.

When we left government, the projections for revenue from land sales actually exceeded all expectations. I am not aware of whether the final block has been sold, but expressions of interest had certainly gone out while I was still minister. We were seeing well over \$300 million in land sales, obviously offset against the initial investment by the government of \$440 million. We exceeded expectations in that regard.

It is not just the money received from land sales; sitting alongside that are the other economic and tourism benefits. Last year an independent report by Deloitte Access Economics was released that forecast that Elizabeth Quay would have a direct economic impact in excess of \$2.9 billion in private construction and tourism expenditure and would create hundreds of jobs each year. It was predicted in the report that Elizabeth Quay would create an average of 543 jobs across Western Australia each year, and that would reach a peak of 962 jobs in 2022–23. It was also estimated that Elizabeth Quay would contribute a cumulative \$637 million to gross state product by 2025–26. Modelling estimated that Elizabeth Quay could boost tourism expenditure in Western Australia by a total of \$348 million by 2025–26.

I just put those figures out there because often it is easy to criticise the former government and talk about Elizabeth Quay and say that it was a waste of time and all that sort of thing, albeit if one talks to anyone who goes there, they think it is absolutely fantastic. However, it involves much more than the land sales, albeit they have exceeded expectations. It is about the visitor experience and it now being truly a destination point for local, interstate and international visitors. As I say, the events held every week are fantastic. I have been to a number of them and I have been to many family events and the number who attended has exceeded expectations, and it will only get better. I look forward to seeing Elizabeth Quay continue to develop and grow over the coming years.

There is a range of other initiatives that I point to in the context of my former role, albeit a short role as Minister for Planning, and that I look forward to seeing progress. Yagan Square will be absolutely fantastic when it is open to the public. Significant progress had been made prior to the election and I think that will be a key destination for people as they arrive in the city. The events and activities that will centre around Yagan Square will be held in what will become the new meeting place for people when they come into the city. There is also the Scarborough Beach redevelopment, something the former government in partnership with the City of Stirling has always been a very strong supporter of. I note that the government has decided to abandon the plans for the roads. I will be interested to see how it addresses traffic issues in Scarborough, because it is a key issue. I am pleased the government supports the redevelopment there because it is an important redevelopment. Scarborough is a wonderful part of Western Australia and I think it needs to meet its full potential, and certainly the work being undertaken by the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority is fantastic and I look forward to seeing it completed early next year. There is of course a range of other projects within the planning portfolio and the Department of Planning. I take this opportunity to thank the director general, her senior staff and all the officers who briefed me on initiatives across a range of areas within the Department of Planning. I also thank the staff who were in my office from both the MRA and the Department of Planning. They taught me many things, such as plot ratios and all that we need to learn as a planning minister. There is a level of complexity around regional

planning schemes and the like, and I want to place on record very much my thanks to each and every one of them and the officers within the Department of Planning, and the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority in particular, for their support and advice during my time as minister.

I turn now briefly to a topical issue at the moment that relates to one of my former portfolios; namely, Disability Services, particularly the National Disability Insurance Scheme. The minister has made a ministerial statement in this place about the state of play.

Hon Peter Collier: What is it?

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: That is a good question, Leader of the Opposition. The state of play is interesting. A lot has been said, particularly by those who have been opposed to the position taken by the former Liberal government about decisions. I will not go through all of that, but I will say that there has been criticism that an announcement was made just before we went into caretaker mode. Yes, a bilateral agreement was signed just before the caretaker period. But I want to place on record in this place that when I became Minister for Disability Services at the end of March last year, one of the key issues raised with me across the disability services sector was the need for certainty and for, I suppose, a decision on whether we would move with a WA NDIS—called My Way—trial, if I can put it that way, or the commonwealth scheme. I took over the portfolio at the end of March and a decision was made to extend the trials with the commonwealth. I remember quite clearly making that announcement with the federal minister, Christian Porter. We said that we would work towards a decision about what model we would go with. I think September–October was the time frame. We were very clear that that was what we were working towards because that is what people wanted. We worked incredibly hard to get agreement with the commonwealth. An announcement was made at a major event by National Disability Service WA in the lead-up to the International Day of People with Disability. Hon Stephen Dawson, the then shadow minister, was there. I made the announcement in November, that an in-principle agreement had been made with the commonwealth that we would adopt the WA NDIS in this state. It was subject to us meeting 11 clear conditions set by the commonwealth, which we released publicly. Everyone knew where we were heading and we said that we wanted the agreement to be in place so that the rollout could commence on 1 July. We gave absolute certainty way back in November that that was what we were seeking to do and we needed to just finalise the arrangement and meet those commitments. Once that had been done, the agreement was to be signed and people would have certainty that the full rollout—we would move beyond the trials—was to commence on 1 July. The rhetoric from members opposite that there was no consultation is absolutely incorrect; ask the Ministerial Advisory Council on Disability and the Disability Services Commission. It is incorrect to say that. I have always held and still hold the very strong view that disability services is far too important to be partisan. It is an area in which we need to make sure we work together for people with disability, their families and carers. I have held that view since I came into this place and when I was lucky to be the shadow Minister for Disability Services when in opposition and I continue to hold it. I think it is important to reflect in the house today that it was not a decision made by the former government at the last minute. I still hold, quite sincerely, that the WA NDIS is the best model to deliver the NDIS in this state. I say that quite sincerely based on all the information presented to me from my discussions with many people in both metropolitan and regional WA. Indeed, part of the minister's statement reads —

These considerations include the specific challenges for people living in rural and remote parts of Western Australia; ensuring scheme design meets the needs of people who require exceptionally high support; the importance of localised decision-making contact points and genuine choice and control; and the need to safeguard and develop WA's disability sector workforce.

With that, I say that is why the WA NDIS, which is the NDIS just delivered locally, is better suited to our vast state—and ours is a vast state. I will always take the view that decisions should be made locally and that people with disability and their families and carers should have local support and be able to call local people who are close to them on the ground, particularly in rural areas. That was raised with me by a number of families in rural areas. Often, the local coordinators are a key part of their communities. That in itself is one of the key reasons that the WA National Disability Insurance Scheme remains, in my view, the best option. I appreciate the government has wanted to look at this again. I am disappointed that the government will not be able to come to a decision prior to 1 July, and I say that with great sincerity, because I think the delay in the rollout will continue to cause concern. This also affects the service providers, many of which have to work under three different models—the current model provided under the Disability Services Commission and also the models provided under the trial sites. I see from the minister's statement that the trial sites will effectively still continue, so there are the commonwealth National Disability Insurance Agency trial sites and the WA NDIS trial sites. I sincerely hope that the minister will make a decision soon one way or the other. People with disability, their families, their carers, service providers and everyone who has an interest in this issue want to know one way or the other what scheme will be put in place in this state and they want the certainty that comes with that. I say that with a great deal of genuineness. I really hope that the minister will make a decision very, very soon for the sake of everyone who is impacted by the NDIS. Disability services is too important a portfolio for us to leave hanging.

When the current minister was the shadow minister and I was the minister, he knew that in my view disability services was an incredibly important portfolio. I was incredibly proud to be the minister. I said this often at disability services events and I am sure that the current minister would agree with me if he was not out on urgent parliamentary business. When I was named the minister and became Minister for Planning; Disability Services, people would sometimes refer to me only as the Minister for Planning; they would not refer to me as the Minister for Disability Services. In a public sense, it was perhaps seen as a much smaller portfolio and perhaps not one that was as important as planning. Planning is obviously a very large portfolio, but both those portfolios were equally important to me for different reasons. I can see Hon Alanna Clohesy nodding and I think she would agree with me that we are dealing with incredibly vulnerable people who are under really difficult circumstances—not only the person with disability themselves, but also their families and carers. As a collective, we all need to always provide as much support and care to them as we can. I just wanted to say a few words about the NDIS.

Within the short time I have remaining, I want to talk about my role as shadow Minister for Education and Training. Hon Peter Collier has passed the baton to me. He was an outstanding Minister for Education and left a wonderful education system in this state. I think his legacy will live on for years to come. I am delighted to be shadow Minister for Education and Training. Those who have been in this house with me for the past 12 years know that I have often talked about issues in the education and training space, particularly education as it relates to the early years of childhood, the importance of early intervention and ensuring that children are given all the resources they need to develop to their fullest potential. We need to make particularly sure that students who might be struggling or having some challenges get those supports early on, because, as we all know, when supports are provided early, it can make an enormous difference to the outcomes of that child as they progress through primary school into secondary school and beyond. Things might have changed now, but I think the maxim was that for every dollar invested in the early years, there is a return of \$9 as those children head into the senior years. It is an area I am particularly passionate about. Over the last three months, I have had the opportunity to meet with many organisations and groups across the three portfolios I look after. Although the minister is out on urgent parliamentary business, I want to thank her for enabling me to have a number of briefings from the respective departments. I want to acknowledge and thank her for that. I know that she had a good relationship with the former minister and she has certainly continued that with me. At times we have our differences in this place, but I think all of us collectively want to make sure that we have a strong education system. I will agree with the minister when good decisions are made and, as I say, her providing the briefings thus far has been very good.

I will not say much more today about Perth Modern School and the Education Central policy. There was debate about that in this place that was finalised today. I want to place on the record the thanks of the Liberal opposition that good sense has finally prevailed with the Education Central policy and Perth Modern students can go back to doing what they do best, which is being exceptional students and future leaders, no doubt across a range of areas in the state and beyond. By saying this, I also want to particularly recognise the parents, students, the Perth Modernian Society and the many others who worked tirelessly to ensure that the Education Central policy was disbanded, if I can put it that way. I did not reflect enough on that in my closing remarks to the motion today, but I want to recognise their efforts, and they were relentless. Every day letters were published in *The West Australian*, and there was the rally held outside Parliament House and the petition signed by over 8 000 people right across the length and breadth of Western Australia. Such was the depth of concern from all those people that they need to be commended for really putting forward in a very constructive way those deep concerns about that proposal, so I acknowledge their significant role in ensuring that the policy was overturned. As I said, we as a Liberal opposition will continue to focus very strongly on the government's decision to now move the school to Subiaco, most particularly the decision about Kitchener Park as opposed to the former government's position on the western suburbs schooling strategy. From the perspective of the former Liberal government—I know Hon Peter Collier raised this in his contribution—I think that the former government and, indeed, the former minister can be very proud of a number of key initiatives, such as the independent public schools initiative, which has been a fantastic success and really led the way, and is now being taken up by other states across Australia. There is the wonderful chaplaincy program, and the other day I met with YouthCARE, which is a wonderful and important program in our schools. It provides important pastoral care. It also provides mentorship and other important services for not only students who are in need, but also, increasingly, teachers and principals. That is the value of an organisation such as YouthCARE and the services it provides across many schools in our state.

Some issues have been raised with me—the minister would well know these—about the proposed merger of the various departments, particularly the protocols that need to be put in place for data storage, privacy of information and the like. I am fast running out of time so I will say more about that at another time.

I am also the shadow Minister for Women's Interests, which is another important area. As a woman who came into this place at the age of 29, I believe it is incredibly important that we provide opportunities for young women to excel in whatever field they have an interest. We need to ensure that women know from a very young

age that they can do whatever they want to do so long as they put their mind to it. Sometimes there will be challenges along the way that may prove difficult. No matter whether we are male or female, there will always be challenges that are put in our way. I grew up in a family in which my parents said to me, “Donna, provided you put forward your best and you work hard, you will succeed.” It was the same thing at my school. I went to an all-girls school in my latter years, and it was instilled in all of us that there is no reason why we as young women should not be able to succeed in any area in which we have an interest.

Just today, I met with the Chamber of Minerals and Energy and heard about its Inspiring Girls project. I am very pleased that the CME has embarked on that project, which has been in place for a few years. That project is run in tandem with its Women in Resources Awards. The objectives of those projects are to increase students’ awareness of the range of diverse and existing career pathways; promote the benefits of and opportunities for females working in the resources sector; dispel the myths about the industry image and its employees; and build networks and mutually beneficial partnerships between industry and school communities.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: It sounds like that would be useful for the Liberal Party—it would be very useful!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I appreciate Hon Alannah MacTiernan’s contribution. I am trying to have a useful discussion here. I appreciate that the minister started here, she has gone all the way around, and now she has come back into this house again—a house that she actually wanted to have abolished. But it is great to see her back here.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I know it really grates on you that I have had experience in somewhere other than this place. I know you find it really a bad thing.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: It really does not bother me. If the minister wants to have a crack at the Liberal Party, I am a Liberal, I am a woman, and I am standing up right now.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: You’re the only one! You’re on your own! We’re trying to help you!

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I stand tall, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, so the minister should let it go, go back to whatever she was doing, and let me finish my speech.

I will go back to what the CME is doing. I have to say from what I heard today that it is having good success, not only in the initiatives that it has underway and the various seminars that it holds for young students, which obviously has a benefit from an education perspective, but also in providing advice and information to career advisers and others. The people who are working in this space are very important, because students can be very strongly influenced by career advisers, teachers and parents in the choices they make in their future lives. Therefore, it is important that we make sure that people are equipped with all the knowledge that they require.

I am fast running out of time. I indicate that I am looking forward to the next four years and to holding this government to account, particularly for the various policies and initiatives that it has announced for the East Metropolitan Region. I again thank the people of the East Metropolitan Region for putting their trust in me to represent them in this place as a member of the Liberal Party. I recognise those members on both sides of the house, and members from other parties, who were not returned to this house. The Legislative Council is a small house. We can have our banter, but when we go outside this place, we can often have a good chat. I particularly think of people like Hon Lynn MacLaren, who was a great person to have in this place. In the ebb and flow of this house, people will come and people will go. However, we all seek to come into this place to make a difference. We are the lucky ones who are sitting in this place for the next four years. I will certainly use my time as a member to continue to advocate very strongly, both in this house and outside this house, for the people of the East Metropolitan Region.

HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral) [5.46 pm]: Can I once again congratulate you, Madam President, on your role as the first female President of this chamber. I want to follow on from the motion moved by Hon Dr Sally Talbot and commend the work of Her Excellency, Hon Kerry Sanderson, as the Governor of Western Australia. Hon Kerry Sanderson is an excellent Governor. When I was the Minister for Agriculture and Food, she took a keen interest right across the Mining and Pastoral Region in particular and in what it represents. We all recognise that the Mining and Pastoral region has been a powerhouse for Western Australia, and Australia for that matter, for a long time.

I now wish to make some comments about my electorate. The previous few years has been a time of great challenges for the Mining and Pastoral Region. This is nothing new in this part of the world. As the Governor pointed out in her speech, the people of Western Australia have proved more than capable of meeting these challenges. In many cases, some of which I will outline today, people have not only withstood these challenges but in many cases thrived in their wake. Resilience is a character trait essential to life in Western Australia’s regional areas. Huge distances, an unforgiving climate and an increasingly volatile economy based on global demand for our resources are just some of the challenges that towns and communities in the Mining and Pastoral Region need to overcome in their efforts to grow healthy families and prosperous businesses. The Mining and Pastoral Region is a hugely diverse region with many different industries. However, one thing each community

has in common is a desire for good services and opportunities for the people who live there. In order for this to happen, communities require affordable housing, access to health care and education, and, above all, job opportunities. I welcome the new government's focus on job creation and its commitment to the continuation of royalties for regions. This commitment will be closely scrutinised by the opposition to ensure regional communities continue to benefit from the transformation policy. The previous government worked hard to soften the blow of the economic downturn by helping to incubate new industries, investing in new infrastructure, supplying land for residential and commercial development, and encouraging private investment in the regions. Diversification is absolutely the key to creating resilient communities that are able to withstand constantly shifting conditions. Anyone who has spent time living in a small town or even one of our vibrant regional centres will understand the difficult decisions people have to make when their personal circumstances change. It might be losing their job, facing a health scare, or even a happy occasion in welcoming another child into the family. Often circumstances will dictate that a person must leave their town to ensure that they receive the support needed to cope with the changes. I believe that the government's role is not to insulate people from challenges, but to help ensure our communities are structured to allow people to move through them in various stages without having to retreat to the metropolitan area, as is often the case. I have to say that from travelling through the Mining and Pastoral Region, I note that the main reason people are leaving that area is education. Of course, health follows closely behind, particularly in smaller towns such as Denham, which has a population of only 600. Interestingly, Denham has been in a time warp for some time. I do not say that in a derogatory manner. When Shark Bay was World Heritage listed in the early 1980s, the community was made a list of promises that never came to fruition and it has battled ever since. The community continues to have World Heritage listing and to be restricted.

Over the previous few years I have seen regional Western Australia cope with the end of the construction phase of a number of major projects. The effect of this was felt particularly hard in places such as Port Hedland and Karratha, which have experienced huge growth in population and housing and rental prices. The difference in price between when people first purchased their homes and now is enormous. There are now stories of people writing off millions of dollars and walking away and handing the keys to the bank. Efforts by the previous government to invest in these centres with infrastructure and new housing opportunities will go a long way towards absorbing some of this decline and ensuring these centres are ready for the inevitable upturn, which will happen. Although it could be argued that there have been some deficiencies in rolling out the royalties for regions program, no-one could deny that this program has made huge improvements to lives in many regional towns.

Numerous LandCorp developments and revitalisation projects have given new life to towns such as Port Hedland and Karratha and provided countless families with the opportunity to build their own homes. During a time of unprecedented population growth, the previous government worked hard to address housing throughout the state. Developments such as Broome North, Baynton West in Karratha and Pretty Pool in Port Hedland have allowed hundreds of families to invest in their future and create homes for themselves. The affordable housing strategy delivered over 25 000 housing opportunities across the state with Keystart loans, shared equity homes, discounted private rentals and 6 200 social housing properties. It is my hope that the incoming government will continue to invest wisely in our regions by continuing the previous government's legacy of encouraging sustainable regional communities. Broome and Derby both been buffeted by economic conditions that are largely out of their control. Although undoubtedly controversial, the James Price Point project would have delivered a strong basis for the Kimberley economy and provided countless opportunities. It would be fair to say that the loss of this project took many by surprise and it has been very interesting to see how the town is bouncing back.

The recent Master Builders Association of Western Australia awards held in Broome showcased the depth of talent, ambition and skills in the construction industry. Locally owned businesses took out most of the awards. The building works that were nominated and recognised in these awards demonstrated that there is a growing confidence in the region and that families and private businesses are still keen to invest their money in the area. In fact, the Royal Flying Doctor Service engaged a Broome-based company to build its new hanger at Jandakot Airport. That is the opposite of what usually happens; companies are coming and building here, which is fantastic. It is a testament to the capabilities and competitiveness that can be found in our regional businesses.

There also has been a more focused approach on encouraging tourism in Broome and getting in touch with the town's unique heritage. The annual Shinju Matsuri Festival has been going from strength to strength and there has been a huge effort from the ground up to encourage cruise ship visits and a better visitor experience overall. It is important to have the infrastructure for when the cruise ships arrive and berth to allow the passengers off. Exmouth is another case that comes to mind with regard to tourism. I was there only recently and it is also looking at cruise ships. At present, they have to anchor offshore and then ferry in people on small craft. Most of them are whale boats, I think. Of course, when the sea is rough, people cannot get off the ships. That is a problem for that side of tourism but it is very important. These cruise liners are carrying in the order of 2 500 people and the logistics of bussing the visitors from the end of the Broome jetty into town are difficult. By the time they have been offloaded, they have to start getting back on again.

Heading north, Derby is a great town with a tight-knit community. The shire president is a fierce advocate for the people of her town and surrounding communities. I am sure that many people in this place have met Elsa Archer, OAM. Hon Simon O'Brien mentioned in his speech earlier that he had met Elsa Archer, OAM, and consumed some of her famous sausage rolls, which she always supplied at every council meeting. She was relentless at knocking on doors in the pursuit of opportunities in service for West Kimberley and, of course, Derby in particular. I take this opportunity today to recognise her contribution to West Kimberley and congratulate her on being awarded a much-deserved Order of Australia in 2016. I am pleased that Derby and Broome will both benefit from an up and coming mineral sands resource project of Sheffield Resources. This project will be one of the first major mining projects on the Dampier Peninsula and will utilise facilities in both towns. The Thunderbird mineral sands project is located about 60 kilometres west of Derby, 25 kilometres north of the sealed Great Northern Highway and approximately halfway between Derby and Broome. The Thunderbird deposit is the first major mineral sands deposit to be discovered in the Canning Basin and one of the largest mineral sands deposits to be discovered in the last 30 years. The deposit is understood to contain zircon, high titanium and ilmenite. It is expected the project will deliver globally sufficient levels of production over its 40-year mine life. To have that mine is a fantastic link and everyone is quite excited about it. Sheffield has indicated that its preference is for a drive in, drive out workforce based in Broome and Derby for the operational phase of the mine. This will mean approximately 140 long-term permanent jobs in the region.

Further south is Ashburton Salt. That project is inching closer to reality. It is undergoing environmental assessment and, if approved, a final investment decision will be made by the proponent K+S Salt. If the project goes ahead, it will create 200 jobs during the construction phase and up to 75 permanent jobs once in production. By the way, K+S Salt is a German company that has some 125 years' experience in handling salt. Its credentials are very good, I am told. It is vitally important that the government makes good on the promise of promoting jobs by facilitating long-term and sustainable projects, such as the Ashburton Salt project, wherever possible. That is not trying to get the government to push on with it, but I think red tape can get in the way at times. An example of such facilitation is the creation of the Kimberley aquaculture development zone. This zone was developed to create a streamlined assessment and regulation process for potential aquaculture businesses by significantly reducing the amount of time and resources required to seek environmental approvals. The Cone Bay barramundi farm run by Marine Produce Australia is located in the Kimberley aquaculture zone. For those members who have not been there, I highly recommend they visit. This zone allows for the production of up to 20 000 tonnes of finfish a year. The advantage in the Kimberley, of course, for aquaculture is that it has a huge tide variance, with up to 10-metre tides. That is the top of the range and is certainly a very big tide, thus, all the cages are flushed and cleaned daily by the tides. A couple of years ago, I visited the Huon salmon farms in Tasmania, which are an enormous success and will give members an idea of what we can do in the Kimberley with aquaculture. Huon Aquaculture's production is worth something like \$287 million a year and is still run by the family that started the business, even though it has been listed on the stock exchange. Its original aim was to produce salmon for the export market, but the domestic market consumes its total production and it does not have to export.

Landline produced a program on Cone Bay and, interestingly enough, as I was flying out of there I realised that we should not be producing 20 000 tonnes of finfish a year; we should be producing 200 000 tonnes a year. One of the major Japanese trading companies saw the program and came to me and said that it would be interested in 200 000 tonnes. When I looked out of the aeroplane over the area that was producing those 20 000 tonnes, it was a pinhead in the water. It may surprise many members to know that Australia imports 70 per cent of the seafood we consume. Cone Bay barramundi farms produce very high quality fish aimed at the top end of the market. Cone Bay is 106 kilometres north of Derby. The barramundi is harvested directly from sea cages into the harvest port, where the fish are packed and transported fresh to markets around Australia. They are packed in ice and sent to Sydney and Darwin, which are the two main directions, and of course to Perth.

I will go back on land. I hope there will be continued focus on the Tanami Road. It is not the first time I have mentioned this road and it will certainly not be the last time. It is nothing short of a nation-building project, stretching between Alice Springs and Halls Creek. The Tanami Road is impassable during the wet season, but when it is passable it can shorten the journey from northern Western Australia to the south eastern states of Victoria and South Australia by 1 000 kilometres. Also, by taking the Tanami Road, the travelling distance to Kununurra is shortened by 270 kilometres. Sealing the Tanami Road will increase the viability of mining projects, make it easier to transport fresh food from the Ord River region to southern states, and open the area to more tourism and resource exploration. From talking to exploration companies and associations, it is clear that where there are good roads, there will be more exploration and more minerals found, creating more wealth for Western Australia. Sealing the Tanami Road will also improve our nation's northern defence capabilities. Sealing the Tanami Road and ensuring it is an all-weather road will open up numerous opportunities for some of the most isolated and impoverished communities in the country. I do not know whether members have been out to Balgo, Billiluna and places like that, which are nearly 400 kilometres from Halls Creek, but they would be great beneficiaries of this road. The Shire of Halls Creek should be commended for its strong advocacy for upgrading the Tanami Road. I will continue to push for greater recognition of the project and its potential to transform northern Australia.

The Gascoyne region has faced a number of natural disasters in the last decade—bushfires, flooding and cyclones have been very testing. However, the region continues to push forward to produce an outstanding array of fresh fruit and vegetables. A less spectacular, yet devastating threat to the Carnarvon region is the Mediterranean fruit fly. This pest can have a devastating effect on a range of crops and orchards in horticulture, but Carnarvon's isolation has allowed it to get assistance from the Department of Agriculture and Food. I hope the minister will continue with this. Royalties for regions funding has implemented a number of measures and pilot programs designed to eliminate this pest.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Good program!

Hon KEN BASTON: I am pleased to hear the minister say that. From memory, something like \$2.5 million went into that program and, as a result, Carnarvon can export its produce. One of the problems in Carnarvon is that it has been a supplier of fruit and vegetables only to the domestic market. To enter the export market, the fruit fly level has to come down to an acceptable level. With three roads into that town—from the north, south and east—it would be easy to set up roadblocks and get totally serious about it. It is a good program and I look forward to the minister continuing to support it. This is an example of a small, carefully planned investment by government gaining a significant return. Eliminating those pests will encourage more investment and provide greater certainty for producers, who need to build on their economy of scale. It will also create a bigger economy for the town, which will attract investors into the town because of its closeness to Perth.

The Carnarvon region has faced more than its share of natural disasters in recent times, most recently Cyclone Olwyn in 2015. The cyclone decimated many crops, with banana growers hit particularly hard. I have to say that one of the advantages for Carnarvon growers is their trust fund, which is one of the very few that I know of that covers fruit affected by a disaster. Of course, it does not pick up their total loss—only the current loss and not the next couple of years. It takes about two years before they get back into production, but they are fortunate in that sense.

I have long advocated that the Western Australia Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements funding should allow local governments to use their own resources to repair damage. I am pleased that the incoming government has made a temporary exemption for the local governments of Lake Grace and Ravensthorpe, which were affected by flooding in January and February this year. I know that federal funding is involved in that as well, and I could never understand why local government virtually had to swap labour from one business to the next business so it could say it had been contracted, even though it was doing their work and they were doing its work. The shires were not allowed to do it and had to bring in contractors. It is important that this provision is included in any new policies developed around disaster recovery. It is a measure that will help local government develop skills and resources and better cope with natural disasters and hasten recovery from these events. Very few people would disagree that local knowledge is vitally important in overcoming any natural disaster, especially bushfires. People who have lived their lives in a particular area have a deep understanding of local conditions; they know all the backroads and trails and in many cases have faced catastrophic events previously. I actually experienced one of these events back in 2015 when a bushfire was burning in the west Gascoyne. It had started in the Kennedy Ranges and came right down and threatened the plantation areas. It certainly burnt the Gascoyne. After a bit of help I was able to get hold of a helicopter to look at where these fires were. I met the incident manager and attended some of his briefings. He came from Manjimup to fight a fire in the Gascoyne. That fire had been burning for two weeks. I suggested he come with me in the chopper. When he got up in that chopper with me, he looked out the window and asked, "What are they?" He was referring to gigantic claypans. He had never seen a claypan before. He did not even recognise the vegetation.

The vehicles used to chase the fire included bulldozers, graders and small water trucks. They all had GPS and they were all measured, but every time a tongue of fire went out, it would be chased like a dog would chase a rabbit! Once the incident manager got up in the helicopter, he said, "This is easy. There is a line down here, back-burn it and it will all be over." That is exactly what happened. Because so many people had come to help from the south west, which was very much appreciated, it was foreign country for them to fight that fire. Local people understand local conditions. One of the most important things is to make sure that we are able to use that local knowledge.

This is why I support the recommendations of both the Waroona special inquiry and the Esperance fire review. It is important to inquire into implementing an independent rural fire service that can work alongside the State Emergency Service. The new government is now in the driver's seat and it must make difficult spending decisions, but it cannot disregard the recommendations of at least two reports and numerous submissions by local governments by refusing to implement a rural fire service.

Local knowledge and know-how is never more important than during a time of crisis and emergency. Tactics that work in one location could be ineffective in another. For this reason I would like to lend my support to local governments that are requesting ongoing funding for bushfire risk planning coordinators. There has been no guarantee from this government that these roles will receive ongoing funding, despite the valuable work they do in mitigating risk to lives and property.

I quote from the concluding remarks of the “Report of the Special Inquiry into the January 2016 Waroona Fire”. Page 263 in volume 1 states —

At the centre of all this is the community. If individual citizens, families, neighbourhoods and interest groups strive for understanding, self-reliance and empowerment, then they will develop social capacity and cohesion to cope better by themselves.

That probably sums it up very well. Although these remarks in their context relate to the ability of a community to respond to an emergency situation, I believe they can also be seen as guiding principles for building more resilient regional communities.

Western Australia is a remarkable state. Many governments have come and gone. Its vast size and isolation, though challenging, has not stopped Western Australians from developing great communities and producing exceptional commodities that are in high demand around the world. It is essential that government policy supports the innovators and private enterprises that are willing to take risks and overcome the many natural barriers to success that exist in a state of this size. Governments should ensure that they do not implement unnecessary artificial barriers such as excessive red tape, bureaucracy and regulation. It is important to see successful Western Australians as the drivers of employment and prosperity rather than a resource to be tapped for revenue whenever the government sees fit. The new government may have inherited some debt—no-one will deny that—but it has also inherited a state that is ready for the future.

I will now make a few comments about tourism. Singapore Airlines announced the other day that at the end of this year its subsidiary SilkAir will fly to Karratha. Broome is trying to link up with that as well. It is important for the development of the north to have better air carriers to bring people from Singapore to Broome and Karratha and maybe on to Sydney and Perth. That linkage is really important for the development of tourism in this state.

I also mention the berthing facilities for cruise boats in Exmouth and Broome. Broome is looking at a safe boat harbour with floating pontoons so that ships can easily access the wharf. There has been demand in Broome for a small boat harbour. When the former government was first elected, it promised to build that. It was going to cost \$5 million. At the time I thought \$5 million was far too much. It quickly rose to \$15 million; it very quickly rose to \$50 million; and then it very quickly rose to up to \$70 million before we decided it was absolutely crazy. It was only going to be a recreational boat ramp. It would have been nothing like the one that was built at Coral Bay, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. I visited that the other day. It is still looking very solid. Anyone from Broome would be jealous of that one. I cannot remember the cost of that, but I think it was in the order of \$9.8 million.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: I cannot recall. It was somewhere around there.

Hon KEN BASTON: It was reasonably cheap in comparison. Costs are very high in Broome because rocks have to be carted to it. There are no rocks around town. People virtually have to travel to Derby before any rocks can be picked up. That is the first thing. The second thing is that when the piles are driven down, there is no base. The pile just keeps going down. There are some logistical problems. Rather than a loch for a small boat harbour, such as in Darwin, I think there is an opportunity for some dredging into the deep, because Broome is fortunate enough to have a natural channel that is about 100 metres deep; therefore, a pretty hefty ship can be sailed in. It is just a matter of getting it to the wharf. There are some fairly advanced drawings of that. I am hopeful that that will be successful.

I would like to raise one of my other favourite topics, coming from the rangelands of Western Australia. I think at one stage I might even have served on a committee with the Minister for Regional Development. I think it was the finance committee of the Gascoyne–Murchison rangelands. Gascoyne muster was its name.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Yes.

Hon KEN BASTON: I remember that we had a very big night.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Those pastoralists like to party!

Hon KEN BASTON: I was actually referring to the minister!

Several members interjected.

Hon KEN BASTON: Anyway, it was a very fruitful two-day workshop. I guess we have moved on a bit since then but not as much as we would have liked to to ensure that those rangelands assets can be productive.

At present there is a bit of a dog fence being put around the lower Murchison. There is about 370 kilometres to go. About \$3.5 million is required to finish that. That dog fence is imperative if we want to do anything with that small stock area. It is only small stock country; it is not cattle country. I have been out to Rawlinna and seen the results they have achieved with properties being dog-fenced since the late 1960s. That is a property that runs 60 000 sheep, cuts 1 760 bales of wool and turns off a whole heap of —

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Is that a cell fence?

Hon KEN BASTON: No, that is a total boundary fence.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Your mate Barnaby says that cell fencing's the way to go.

Hon KEN BASTON: Well, it depends how big one wants to make the cells, I guess.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

MARC NEWHOUSE — FATALITY

Statement

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [6.20 pm]: I rise tonight to acknowledge the life and the passing of one of Western Australia's unsung heroes, Marc Newhouse. Many members will have known or met Marc, and I know that some members also worked with him over the decades. A passionate anti-racism and human rights campaigner, Marc was taken from us far too early and his remarkable life ended in February this year after a battle with cancer. I want to acknowledge the presence in the public gallery tonight of Marc's friends and family, and also members of the Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, who worked so closely with Marc for so long. Some in this Parliament knew Marc Newhouse in particular for his tireless work as chair of the Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, and the work he did in trying to bring justice for Mr Ward and Ms Dhu, two Aboriginal people who died in custody. But those were just the most recent of his works.

Marc Newhouse was born in Rhodesia, now Zimbabwe, in 1958 and his family moved to apartheid South Africa where, from a young age, he became aware of the injustices of racism and the importance of human rights, and a lifelong interest in ways of effectively organising for progressive social change was sparked.

Marc came to Australia at around age 19 and his first job was as a jackaroo in Clare, South Australia. It was there that he was kicked in the face by a horse, crushing his face and causing him to lose an eye. But as he so often did, he demonstrated his irrepressible good nature and humour, treating the three months in hospital as an opportunity to master the Australian accent, and he did that pretty well.

After his recovery, he was drawn back to South Africa and got a job as an apprentice farm manager, where he again witnessed intense racism in the form of gratuitous beatings and slave wages for African farm workers. In response—the significance of this for the time cannot be understated—Marc suggested they down tools to protest against the oppression. That was unheard of—a young white South African, with the trappings of privilege that apartheid South Africa brought him, leading a black workers' strike. For his efforts, he was subjected to a severe beating by the white farm owner in whose eyes he was a “verayer”, meaning a traitor—a “Kaffir lover”. Although he was severely beaten, he was unapologetic and he went to the police. He later said that he knew it was not wise, but he nevertheless went to the law. Unfortunately, the law was waiting for him. When he got to the police station, the farm owner was there, with the police. He was detained in police cells for days, accused of being a communist.

He came back to Australia and here he established the first youth drop-in centre in the Pilbara, in Port Hedland. There he dealt at the coalface with Aboriginal youth, and was exposed first-hand to the lives of those left on the margins. He also became very involved in anti-apartheid campaigns here in WA, including the African National Congress support group. Marc was acutely aware of so many of the similarities in the struggles of what he saw in South Africa and Aboriginal people here in Australia. Marc was also a regular at the old Swan Brewery protests and during these times he formed strong relationships with Aboriginal activists that lasted for the rest of his life.

Between 1992 and 1995, Marc returned several times to South Africa to participate in the democratisation process there, leading Australian work brigades working with grassroots South African community organisations. He was active in West Australian Solidarity with South Africa and, later on, West Australians for Racial Equality. Also during this time, back in Western Australia, Marc began employment with the WA Equal Opportunity Commission and became a key face of the commission for the many community organisations he worked with. Marc was a key energetic force for the EOC in many major endeavours, including the biggest inquiry ever taken into systemic discrimination in public housing, and the development of guidelines for schools relating to gender diversity and sexual identity.

But perhaps the most important part of his work since the late 1990s was his campaign for justice for Aboriginal people, particularly in the criminal justice system—an effort from which he never rested. The Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, now the First Nations Deaths in Custody Watch Committee, was his great passion. Marc worked seven days a week, and was available 24/7. He did not stop, not for holidays, not on weekends or at any other time. His family knew and accepted that he was effectively on call for the cause.

Marc's work on the issue of deaths in custody within WA has been transformative. It has shone a powerful light on some of the greatest injustices within our state and, importantly, Marc worked tirelessly to empower Aboriginal leadership in this important space.

Despite being a very political person who was not shy about his political beliefs, Marc remained fiercely independent in the pursuit of human rights for the organisations he represented, never joining an Australian political party. As a result, Marc was unfettered by direct political allegiance in the pursuit of goals for the organisations and families he assisted. Marc's independence in his dealings with politicians meant that no matter what political party someone was from, if they made a progressive move in favour of the cause, they were given credit for it, but regressive moves or actions, such as a death in custody, would result in immediate action on behalf of families, including long-term campaigns. This approach proved very effective in his campaigning.

But despite the absolute seriousness of the work Marc undertook, I have to mention what a genuinely warm and funny man Marc was. Irreverent, self-deprecating and intensely kind, Marc had a unique power to influence and persuade those in power, and he was just a lovely person to work with and to be around. Marc lived life to its fullest and he brought love and compassion to this world, and it was with love, compassion and humour that Marc practiced his activism and chose to live his life.

Marc's funeral included a packed—really packed!—and diverse audience, starting with an Aboriginal smoking ceremony, and welcome to country by long-time friend and collaborator, Yued elder Uncle Ben Taylor Cuiermara. He paid testament to Marc's reach across a wide range of organisations, issues and causes, with the common theme of human rights and justice, particularly for those who are most vulnerable in our communities, including Aboriginal people, particularly within the criminal justice system, but also with respect to housing and land rights; the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, intersex, queer communities; refugees; and others who are impoverished or marginalised in this state.

I want to acknowledge the enormity of the loss of Marc to those members of his family who are feeling his passing so keenly: Marc's much-loved wife, Liz; his adored eldest daughter, Jai; his youngest daughter, Yelena, of whom he was so proud; his gorgeous granddaughters, Natalyia, Mailelani and Avei; and, of course, his mother, Maureen.

Marc's passing has left a huge hole in people's lives, just as his life had a huge impact on so many people. Marc was one of my dearest friends and I know that those of us who were closest to him have also been left with broken hearts. Marc brought people together and we miss him terribly.

The world is a better place because Marc Newhouse was in it, and he lived as a shining example of what we all should be. We should all aspire to be such a person.

[Applause.]

[Interruption from the gallery.]

The PRESIDENT: Order! You are very welcome to stay in the gallery and listen, but please take your seats.

MARC NEWHOUSE — FATALITY

Statement by President

THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust): Before we move on I, too, would like to offer my condolences to the family of Marc Newhouse. In my dealings with him, he was always a very lovely fellow to engage with and was very passionate about his work.

WORLD ELDER ABUSE AWARENESS DAY

Statement

HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan) [6.29 pm]: I rise to advise members that tomorrow is World Elder Abuse Awareness Day. The relevant United Nations General Assembly resolution reads —

Decides to designate 15 June as the World Elder Abuse Awareness Day and invites all Member States, organizations of the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and individuals, to observe it in an appropriate manner;

This resolution was part of a broader document to implement a range of initiatives to address the abuse of elders in member states. Members of this place will be aware that on 23 May I gave notice of a motion to establish a select committee to inquire into elder abuse and I am hopeful that members will unanimously support this inquiry. I was pleased that the notice of motion attracted the interest of the mainstream media even prior to the house having an opportunity to debate the motion. Raising general awareness of elder abuse is one of the significant roles we can play as elected members. I was pleased also that Advocare, which operates an elder abuse hotline, was able to provide public comment and promote its agency. The World Health Organization has adopted this definition of elder abuse —

...“a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust which causes harm or distress to an older person”.

Types of elder abuse include neglect and financial, psychological, sexual, physical and social abuse. It is distressing to me that around 70 per cent of abusers are said to be family members, most likely adult children, and that the main form of elder abuse is financial. What is also distressing is that this is why many cases of elder abuse are not reported. By reporting the abuse, the victim risks harming the relationship with their family member and thus their only avenue of family support. Financial abuse often occurs because of what has become known as “inheritance impatience”, a term I use frequently when addressing the issue of elder abuse. A report by Alzheimer’s Australia describes this as a situation in which —

... family members deliberately or recklessly prematurely acquire their ageing relatives’ assets that they believe will, or should, be theirs one day.

A study of 7 000 Australians over the age of 50 provides some explanation for the existence of inheritance impatience in that it discovered that the concept of a strong and supporting family structure was eroding and that self-interest was far more prevalent than self-sacrifice in the attitudes of adult children. In a culture of rising self-interest and inheritance impatience, it is important that we acknowledge the rising risk of financial abuse to elders.

As for the prevalence of elder abuse, I note that it is estimated that by 2040, 21 per cent of Australia’s population will be over the age of 65 and by 2050, five per cent will be over the age of 85. The Crime and Research Centre at the University of Western Australia used a range of international prevalence and incidents estimates for elder abuse victimisation in 2011 to calculate an average prevalence rate for WA of 4.6 per cent. This translates to approximately 12 500 victims of some form of elder abuse in Western Australia. With the increased ageing of the population, if the prevalence of elder abuse is not reduced there could be around 24 000 victims of elder abuse annually by 2031.

Advocare is the leading agency in Western Australia that services victims of elder abuse, mainly through its Elder Abuse Helpline. It provides a vital service to older Western Australians. In 2016, the then Liberal–National government invested \$135 000, supporting the continuation of this helpline until December 2017. In the 2015–16 financial year, Advocare had a total of 2 717 advocacy cases and 12 993 information calls. The calls it receives for information has more than tripled since 2013–14. Since 2013, it has held 3 639 information sessions with 82 583 attendees. People who attend these sessions report feeling more empowered, able to recognise and respond to elder abuse and resourced with enough information to become an elder abuse champion.

A case study in an annual report of Advocare puts a human face to this issue. It tells the true story of an 84-year-old Vietnamese woman named Bao, who has limited English language skills. According my notes, the annual report states —

Bao moved to Perth from another state to live with one of her sons. Bao and her son jointly co-owned the property in which they were residing (two other children contributed funds to their mother in order for her to own an equal share in the house). The son remarried and this subsequently resulted in conflict and abuse towards Bao from both her son and daughter-in-law. This included attempts to force Bao to sign an Enduring Power of Attorney (effective immediately), documents stating that she owes her son significant sums of money and immigration documents stating that her daughter-in-law is providing her with care and support (Bao is independent). She was also threatened verbally and the matters escalated to pushing and slapping. Bao was assisted to contact an advocate through a social worker whilst in hospital. Bao was referred for legal advice through a community legal service and was also linked to a Vietnamese speaking solicitor who assisted her with correspondence to her son demanding return of personal property. The advocate provided Bao with information about her rights and options to address the situation. She also received support from the advocate to explore alternative housing options upon the sale of the jointly owned property as she was unable to purchase another property on her own.

This story provides an example of the most common form of elder abuse: an adult child financially abusing his elderly parent. It also included physical abuse by the daughter-in-law. Advocare had the skills and resources to be able to connect Bao to avenues of support and without this help I doubt that Bao would have had the comprehensive assistance that she needed. It is important that Western Australian government departments, agencies and advocacy groups take advantage of World Elder Abuse Awareness Day tomorrow to draw attention and bring focus to this important issue and to advocate for vulnerable people like Bao, who otherwise would face a dismal final chapter of life. By working to eliminate elder abuse we show our value of the elderly and honour the life they have lived. I end with a quote from Pearl S. Buck who won a Nobel Prize in Literature in 1938, which states —

Our society must make it right and possible for old people not to fear the young or be deserted by them, for the test of a civilization is the way that it cares for its helpless members.

House adjourned at 6.38 pm
