

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 September 2021]

p3848a-3893a

Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Mr Terry Healy; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr Vincent Catania; Ms Lara Dalton; Mr Chris Tallentire; Dr Katrina Stratton; Mr Paul Lilburne; Dr Jags Krishnan; Mr David Scaife; Ms Caitlin Collins; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr Matthew Hughes

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**APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2021–22) BILL 2021**  
**APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2021–22) BILL 2021**

*Declaration as Urgent*

On motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer)**, resolved —

That in accordance with standing order 168(2), the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 be considered urgent bills.

*Cognate Debate*

Leave granted for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 to be considered cognately, and for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 to be the principal bill.

*Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from 9 September.

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition)** [3.06 pm]: I rise to speak on the state budget 2021–22. I will not go through what the Treasurer has just outlined! Just as the Premier has delivered his first budget as Treasurer, I am delivering my first response to a budget as Leader of the Opposition. What an extraordinary budget it is. An eye-watering \$5.6 billion surplus has been delivered in the midst of a global pandemic. An eye-watering \$5.6 billion has been tucked into the back pocket of the Premier in the midst of a crisis in our health sector the likes of which we have not seen since Jim McGinty and Eric Ripper presided over the state's health budget. Those who have been playing along for a while will recall that that was the budget when the then health minister called the Royal Flying Doctor Service a special interest group and criticised it for advocating for greater state government support. Not too long after that, the Carpenter government was no longer.

In 2007, under Labor's then Treasurer, Eric Ripper, the state government announced a record surplus of \$2.3 billion. That was for the 2006–07 financial year and it had been debt-free for four consecutive years. It sounds good, does it not? It does until we scratch the surface and delve a little deeper and discover that although Mr Ripper was posting surpluses, the state's health system was going to rack and ruin, the housing waitlist had blown out, not a dollar was being spent in regional WA, schools and government housing for essential workers were crumbling and there was no commitment to taxation reform. An arrogance had crept in. I say this to provide a little perspective for those sitting on the government benches, because we see that arrogance starting to creep into their ranks. Perhaps the community does not yet see it, but members opposite would do well to temper it and counsel their leaders to do the same, because the arrogance and cynicism was part of the undoing of the Carpenter government—that and the failure of the government to attend to the basics. Health and housing were also major factors. The Premier's decision to go to the polls early in 2007, five months before one was due and during the Olympics, was seen as sneaky, and it was just the tip of the iceberg by that stage.

For those who need reminding, Colin Barnett had been returned to the Liberal Party leadership just a day before the election was called and after a number of changes of personnel. Certainly, any objective assessment would be that the Liberal and National Parties had not had the smoothest of times since 2005. During the campaign, instead of focusing on health, housing and the basics, the then government and Premier made a strong play for the green vote, focusing on banning uranium mining and genetically modified crops. The then government also seized an opportunity to reduce regional representation by pushing through one vote, one value legislation, taking advantage of its numbers in the Legislative Council to shift six regional seats to the metropolitan area. These two themes bear a remarkable resemblance to the playbook we see the McGowan Labor government using now. As the 2007 election neared, the then Premier and his merry men—Mr McGinty and Mr Ripper—had no answer to the question asked by the opposition, commentators and the community to name three things the government had done while in office. The electorate saw that the government had failed to address the basics—the failing health and housing systems—and that there was a lack of true economic reform despite the surpluses it was posting off the back of a mining boom. Mr McGinty's razor gang had taken to the state's health budget, with a devastating impact on services across the state. The then government even had a plan to shut down 24-hour accident and emergency departments in 12 towns where there were alternative facilities within 100 kilometres. This plan was leaked before it could be put into play. It never eventuated due to the public outrage and backlash. I found a report from this time that sums up very succinctly what we in opposition were raising in Parliament every day during that time. I quote —

The government has hired seven health experts, who will reportedly be paid around \$3,000 per day, to conduct a review into the public hospital system. Its funding cutbacks come as press reports indicate a deepening crisis in the public health system as a whole. Figures on surgery waiting lists indicate a continuing increase in the number of patients requiring urgent elective surgery.

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At the end of August, Central Wait List Bureau figures revealed that 37 percent of those needing surgery are on the list longer than considered clinically desirable for their condition, up from 33 per cent at the end of July. Those awaiting elective surgery had risen to 9,260, an increase of 79 cases from the previous month and up 266 from the same period last year.

The Emergency Medicine Journal published a study by two senior Royal Perth Hospital ... doctors which described the ambulance bypass system, in which ambulances are diverted to other areas because of lack of places and the overcrowding of emergency departments, as a “disaster, one now occurring daily and deteriorating”.

This is in 2003, not 2021, although one could be mistaken for thinking that history is repeating itself. This was in 2003. There may well be only a few members in this Parliament who can recall these events—maybe the Premier, the Minister for Health, the Speaker, and perhaps on this side of the chamber me, the Leader of the Liberal Party and the member for North West Central. It would bode well for government members, especially the new ones, to go back and review just how the fall of the Carpenter government came about, because pride goes before a fall.

I will recap the hallmarks of the 2001 to 2007 Gallop–Carpenter Labor government. It was marked by a mining boom, a record surplus, electoral reform that ripped regional representatives from the bush, the dogged pursuit of a green agenda at any cost, a health crisis and a housing crisis. Is it starting to sound familiar to members? It should. Add the fact that the Gallop government started with a machinery-of-government reform agenda that folded government departments into mega-departments and delivered us the extraordinarily expensive and offensive Office of Shared Services, which was ultimately abandoned after costing taxpayers millions, and there is no doubt that the McGowan Labor government needs to take heed of its own history. Fast forward to the McGowan Labor government and the budget just delivered by our Premier; Treasurer. There is a record surplus, a crisis in the health sector, major challenges in our housing supply chain, a skills shortage that is not being addressed and for which there is no answer in this budget, the pursuit of a green agenda that polarises and disenfranchises sectors of the community, a lack of true economic reform, electoral reform back on the agenda with plans to cut regional representation once more, and state debt across the forward estimates at levels the Premier labelled as unsustainable when he was in opposition. History and context are everything, are they not? Just remember: pride comes before a fall.

On that note, I was dismayed and disappointed that the Premier felt the need to openly criticise other state governments as he delivered the budget last week. Likewise, it was unbecoming of the New South Wales Treasurer to reflect on our Premier. Truly, it is behaviour like this that increases the public’s cynicism towards politicians. The Premier would do well to remember that the surplus he so proudly boasts of has been delivered by a surge in the iron ore price, GST receipts and an increase in state revenue because the borders are closed and people are spending close to home. The Premier would do well to remember that all is not well in his own backyard. I suggest that less time spent politicking and more time spent addressing the crises we face in health and housing and finding the people we need for key industries would be a better and more prudent use of the Premier’s time.

Let us turn to the key figures in the budget. On the face of it, the government presents a very healthy set of numbers, but what exactly are they based on? When we scratch below the good-news announcements and start to look at some of the assumptions and decisions, should there be cause for concern?

The analysis by Gareth Parker published by WAtoday on 10 September very succinctly covers off the headline figures —

On the spending side, the budget grew an eye-watering 13 per cent, the largest single year increase in modern history, which you should keep in mind when you hear the Premier’s boasts about his prudent financial management.

This is now the highest-taxing government in West Australian history, collecting an extra \$1.1 billion in tax (up 12 per cent) including vehicle licensing duty up 37 per cent and gambling taxes up 20 per cent ...

But mining royalties are the real story. They increased, in a single year, by 43 per cent or \$3.7 billion to \$12.1 billion.

We have record revenue, through taxation and income from royalties and the GST. We have an increase in household fees and charges, whereby the average household is chipping in, paying an additional \$100 a year. We have the highest taxing government in Western Australian history. All this has delivered the Premier; Treasurer an operating surplus that would be the envy of every Treasurer around the nation. But here is the kicker: we also have net debt increasing over the forward estimates. This Labor government suffers a condition that many parents in the chamber will recognise: “Do as I say, not as I do.” The government when in opposition came into this house every week and talked about net debt; it was relentless. It was the issue that then opposition members hung their collective hat on prior to the 2017 state election. According to them, under a Labor government, debt would be repaid much like

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a household mortgage. They were so committed to highlighting what they saw as the fiscal failure of the previous government that they created the debt monster—something I think government members would now prefer to forget. I understand the debt monster was the brainchild of the Premier, the former Treasurer, Hon Ben Wyatt, and the Minister for Transport. It was a person dressed up in a blue Cookie Monster outfit who appeared at various places around the city. Members, I am not going to lie; it was awkward and a bit silly. The response from the public was that it was awkward and a bit silly, and given the figures the government is now reporting across the forward estimates, I suspect the government regrets creating him. The debt monster appeared at projects like Elizabeth Quay and in protest of the spend we were making on Perth Stadium. As an aside, the hypocrisy of members who came into this house every day and attacked Perth Stadium is monumental. Now lauded as one of our premier assets and about to host an AFL grand final, I bet every single member opposite who criticised the project will be at the stadium for that event. I guarantee it!

However, I will return to the main story. Let us look at the actual net debt levels of the previous government and those of this state government over the forward estimates. In 2016–17, actual net debt reached \$31.9 billion. I move to this government's first term. In 2017–18, it was \$36.7 billion; in 2018–19, \$35.4 billion; in 2019–20, \$35.5 billion; in 2020–21, \$33.5 billion; and in 2021–22, \$32.06 billion. Then we move into the forward estimates. In 2022–23, it will be \$34.4 billion; in 2023–24, \$35.2 billion; and in 2024–25, \$36 billion. That shows net debt increasing over this government's forward estimates. Net debt reached \$31.9 billion in the last year of the Liberal–National government. In the forward estimates of our last budget, net debt was forecast to peak at just over \$40 billion. That was in black and white; the government absolutely cannot walk away from it. However, I would remind members that we had neither the royalty income nor the GST receipts this government now has at its disposal. This government has the benefit of them both, yet there is no real action on reducing net debt. We can conclude only that the debt monster and the attacks from the then opposition were nothing more than political rhetoric. This was confirmed further when the Labor Party came to government in 2017 and embarked on its own significant infrastructure spend. Its attitude to debt, now in government, not opposition, was confirmed by then Treasurer Hon Ben Wyatt when he told Parliament that the government was willing to increase net debt to ensure that Metronet got off the ground.

The reality is that this government will not make any meaningful inroads into net debt until Metronet is off the books and who knows when that will be because we have no clear project scope or costings, or the impact of those operational factors across the forward estimates. It would appear that debt is no longer the monster that the Labor Party thought it once was. As an aside, I note the creation of the debt reduction account back in 2017–18. I am somewhat amused by this special purpose account. If ever there was an accounting artifice for political purposes, this would be it. According to the budget papers, a total of \$2.7 billion will flow through the account in 2021–22, a portion of which will head straight back to consolidated revenue fund spending and the remainder to be applied to debt repayment. As we delve into the detail of these budget papers, I have no doubt there will be more of these interesting accounting constructs because, if you are sitting on a monumental surplus with little change in net debt across the forward estimates and a crisis in your health, housing and labour markets, this is what you do—you scramble to find ways to spin your story. Dollars are flowing through this special purpose account and back to consolidated revenue to allow this government to continue to spend.

I now turn to our health system. If the government is not paying down debt, has record revenue and a record surplus, surely it would be right to assume that we have a first-class health system. That would be a safe assumption, except we do not. Here in Western Australia, we have a system that is broken on any measure and by any account. Not even our Minister for Health could say that we have a system that is delivering for the people of Western Australia. Instead, this budget is a desperate game of catch-up from a government that has had all the wrong priorities, as it has done for the last four and a half years. Patients' lives are at risk every day because this government has systematically underinvested in and under-resourced the system.

The opposition acknowledges there is an increase in capital spend. Creating new beds is long overdue but the cuts to the operational budget are perplexing. According to our shadow Minister for Health, the budget papers show an increase of 1.4 per cent in operational expenditure this year and a two per cent cut in 2022–23 against health demand of over three per cent growth each year. The talk of recruiting hundreds of doctors and nurses is welcome, but how exactly does the government propose to pay for them all and keep a lid on the growth and expenses across the forward estimates? Will the staff who have been prioritised to fix the health system be put only on short-term contracts? Even if that is the case, what will happen when they then qualify, under this government's policy, to be transferred to permanent positions? The opposition questions the government's capacity to restrain its expense growth into the out years. I do not and we do not believe this is achievable without impacting frontline health services, and that is exactly how we arrived in this awful mess in the first instance.

I am quite sure that the government was hoping for a glowing review on its headline figures for health. However, the Western Australian division of the Australian Medical Association put paid to that, slicing through the spin of

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pre-budget announcements with its own analysis. The day after the budget, the Western Australian president of the AMA, Dr Mark Duncan-Smith, wrote the following as part of a blog in response to the state budget. I think it is important to read this in as part of the record today to demonstrate how dire the situation is in our health system. This was written by Dr Duncan-Smith —

You may recall that about a month ago the Government started ‘dropping’ information to the media about their plans for health in the Budget, with a \$1.9 billion boost, as well as the funding for the new Women and Babies Hospital to replace King Edward Memorial Hospital, a \$1.8 billion allocation that had been announced last December.

...

The focus on health was certainly welcome, after last year barely raising a mention in Budget discussion, even in the middle of the pandemic...

The State intervention was more timely as the month progressed and it was becoming evident just what a terrible month was evolving for the health system. I had already predicted breaking 6000 hours of ramping before long but I hadn’t really banked on this happening in August. The idea we would finish the month with a jaw-dropping 6500 hours of ramping was well beyond my expectations.

...

Crucially we included a call for a 5–6 per cent budget increase per annum for the next four years, to start getting the system back on a more sustainable footing.

Then at the start of September, a Freedom of Information request from the Opposition indicated 490 code yellows denoting internal emergencies at WA public hospitals last financial year, with 111 of those as a result of capacity issues.

Against this background, expectations were high in the community through the media that a major fix was required and should be reflected in the Budget.

Well, our attitude was we’d believe it when we saw it. Yesterday we saw everything we needed to see about the Government’s priorities. There was no reset in the way we believe is required.

The \$10.37 billion WA Health budget equates to a 1.38 per cent increase on 2020–21 Estimated Actual Spending, which was \$10.23 billion. Including the forecast CPI, this actually amounts to a 0.36 per cent decrease in health funding.

That is from the WA President of the AMA. I will now go to the reaction from the secretary of the Health Services Union of WA, which is much the same. Secretary Naomi McCrae said —

However, there are no short cuts to the significant long-term investment needed to implement the 30 recommendations of the Sustainable Health Review Final Report 2019. Further delay in implementing the broad range of changes identified in the Final Report will only see us move further away from a sustainable health system and without the highly skilled workforce needed to run it.

Our initial observation is that there appears to be a disappointing allocation of money to advance key initiatives recommended under the Final Report, when there is simply no more time to waste, especially when it comes to planning for workforce needs.

The Australian Nursing Federation’s Mark Olsen’s reaction was even blunter, saying the government’s plans were “lacking detail”. I quote —

“The government’s just talking about sometime down the future,” he said.

“That’s great if you’re going to be around in two to four years.

“Will that stop the hospital from descending into further chaos? No, it won’t.”

These are hardly glowing reviews from people who are working on the front line and representing those people in our health services sector.

This government has been forced to spend on health, but, make no mistake, it is spending to fix what it broke, and the sector has serious doubts that it will be enough. This Labor government has destroyed confidence in our health system at a time when it has never been more critical in our history. If the government cannot get it right, then we will absolutely see nurses, doctors, allied health workers and professionals leave the sector and head for the mining sector. We have played this game before. During the up-side of a mining boom when the labour market is tight and the pressure comes on, the pay packets and conditions on offer in the mining sector are sometimes too hard to resist for public servants who feel undervalued and overworked. Given that less than half of staff who work for

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the Department of Health feel valued or supported by the organisation, it is no stretch to think that there could be an exodus that would further exacerbate shortages already in the system.

Back in 2010 when we saw this market overheat and the mining construction boom was underway, police, teachers and nurses swapped out to high-vis, putting the government under an enormous amount of pressure when it came to wages policy. The wages policy that the government has announced as part of this state budget will be a real test for the Premier. Up to this point, it has been a simple “\$1 000 a year, no more”. The unions have been very compliant, up to this point. We ask whether wages policy will be an example of what was said in opposition no longer applying in government. Much like the issue of net debt, wages policy was an area that Labor was, in opposition, highly critical of the former Liberal–National government. The unions, which have been muted and compliant for the first four years of government, are unlikely to continue this way. Negotiations will start posthaste, and for those, particularly on the front line who have been working so hard during the pandemic to keep us safe under what I would say are extraordinarily difficult circumstances, there can be no doubt that the argument for increases will be made forcefully. This, coupled with the overheated labour market in the private sector, will mean a balance will need to be struck to allow the government to maintain even a veneer of its self-professed credentials of good financial management and prevent a mass exodus of staff. To that end, the opposition is disappointed that there is absolutely nothing in the budget to address the skills and labour shortages facing key sectors in the short to medium term. The most recent Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia’s business confidence survey showed that 79 per cent of local businesses were struggling to fill a skilled occupation in the three months to June, which was up from 54 per cent from the previous quarter. This issue is biting every sector and the government has no answer.

The agricultural sector is on the cusp on what has the potential to be the largest harvest ever, yet this state government has simply thrown its hands in the air and walked away from trying to find a solution. This sector is in direct competition with the mining industry, with jobs for truck and train drivers essential for both. The Minister for Agriculture and Food and the Premier have been unwilling to progress with the proposal to utilise Bladin Village in the Northern Territory to quarantine workers who could be brought in from the Northern Hemisphere. With \$5.6 billion in the back pocket, the sector is understandably frustrated beyond belief that this government has refused to act, and not for a lack of information, advocacy or persistent requests from the industry and the opposition. The Nationals WA and the Liberal Party first raised the spectre of worker shortages in the agricultural sector with the government as early as March last year. The Western Australian Farmers Federation started engaging last year and it upped its efforts again in June this year, but it would all seem to no avail.

Deputy Speaker, it seems that politics and nothing more is standing in the way of the successful harvest of potentially 20 million tonnes of grain in WA this year. The Premier, it seems, will bend over backwards to accommodate and move mountains to support the mining sector, and rightly so—we understand its importance—but it does not seem that this courtesy or effort has been made for the agricultural sector, and it is just as important. Representatives from industry, in their own words, say they feel abandoned, and whatever glimmer of hope there may have been in the budget papers that we are now examining has been snuffed out. The Minister for Agriculture and Food has failed to act, and now, unfortunately, it is almost too late when it comes to the grain sector. I urge the Premier to intervene. The cost of activating Bladin Village in the Northern Territory, to which industry will contribute, would be a drop in the ocean when we consider the budget surplus that we are talking about here today. Any further delays in the window of opportunity will be lost and the sector will suffer avoidable losses. These are avoidable if the government acts. If it does not act, I am afraid there will be very dire consequences in our agricultural sector.

With a skills crisis facing not only agriculture, but also other key industries, it seems odd that the government has deferred the Muresk trade workshop as one of the 16 projects that it has delayed, along with the Albany, Armadale, Balga and Joondalup TAFE expansions. This is a time when we should be investing in skills. It seems strange that those projects were on the list of the 16 that were delayed or deferred, and it is something we will be keen to interrogate when we get the chance during estimates.

The opposition would like to place on record once more its anger and disappointment about the government’s decision to end native forestry by 2024. This decision was taken without consultation. This decision has blindsided businesses, workers and communities that rely on this industry. It was heartless and calculated, and it is ideologically motivated. It was made not less than six months after an election, when not a word was uttered by any person in the Labor Party and especially not those candidates who were campaigning to represent those communities in the south west. Do you think, Deputy Speaker, that for one moment the people of the electorate of Warren–Blackwood would have voted the way they did had the Labor candidate gone to them and said that the government was thinking of ending the industry that so many of their community rely on?

**Mr V.A. Catania:** Close down your town!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** “We are going to close down your town.”

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I can tell members that they would have rejected the Labor Party. That is what they will do at the next election. The government cannot rip people's livelihoods away from them and expect a reward. If it is going to do it, find a way to do it in a compassionate and consultative way. It is heartless what this government has done. Beyond the immediate impact, which we saw play out in Manjimup yesterday when hundreds turned out to demonstrate their absolute anger, is the disappointment and anxiety as a result of what this government has done to get a headline in its state budget. I can tell the Premier and his ministers that I have had calls into my electorate office in the Central Wheatbelt from businesses in my electorate from about as far away from the south west as we can get. These businesses will be impacted. That ripple effect will flow across the entire state. The first quote is from a business that would prefer not to be identified, but I can provide the details if anybody would like to know who we are referring to. The comments are —

I'm just writing to you to urgently seek your assistance regarding the shocking decision made by the McGowan government last week to shutdown the Hardwood logging in WA.

We have been relying on Jarrah for the success of our business for a considerable number of years now and this decision will heavily impact our ability to continue to support not only ourselves but the town and employees (all regional) that heavily rely on us.

The shutdown is planned to occur in 2 years but the financial impact and uncertainty starts immediately.”

Another from my electorate, according to my notes, reads —

As an industry we are appalled at the McGowan governments recent hasty and ill informed decision to cease logging in old growth forests by 2024. As we are sure you are aware hardwoods needed in the making of quality furniture cannot be replaced with soft woods and the only alternative to sustain the local industry would be to import timber. The W.A government body the FPC says current hardwood logging in WA meets the strictest environmental standards and is considered by experts to be sustainable. Imported timbers will almost certainly not meet these standards in the countries of origin not to mention the extra carbon footprint of the freight to get it here.

The 400 jobs that McGowan thinks will be lost is only the tip of the iceberg and certainly does not include the furniture manufacturers and retailers that will almost immediately be affected by this extraordinary decision.

These are not the frontline workers that we saw rallying in Manjimup yesterday. These are businesses that will be impacted by this decision nonetheless. Our team spoke on this last week just hours after we learnt of the decision, and pointed out that a poll conducted by the Minister for Climate Action, paid for by the ministerial office, is not a fit and proper way to develop policy. Imagine our concern when the government refused to table the questionnaire or the results. This is neither a transparent or accountable way to conduct itself as a government, and it suggests that there is something to be hidden. This decision has been devastating, and regardless of one's views on native forestry, no industry should be shut down by government without the courtesy of consultation or discussion. It is arrogant and careless, and has caused great anxiety and grief. The promise of a much-expanded softwood estate, which we all know is needed, will do nothing for many involved in the supply chain right now as they face the demise of their business and community. It shows a distinct lack of understanding of the industry that the Premier and the minister believe that these jobs are transferrable and that people will not be forced to leave the industry now.

We also wonder how the government will keep its promise to plan what it has committed. Pine plantations need to be in areas of good rainfall and within a certain distance of the processing facilities that exist. Questions will be forthcoming from the opposition on how the government plans to purchase land, when and where—all these questions—to achieve the goal that it has set out. The headline and the sugar hit will fade, and after that, what exactly will we see? The vast majority of land, in and around the processing facilities already servicing the softwood industry, is not degraded agricultural land seeking alternative land uses. It is prime agricultural land, productive and unlikely to be available for repurposing to plantation timber. The minister and the government have some explaining to do, as do the Labor members who represent the south west. I suspect the giddy high of winning on the coat-tails of the Premier will wear mighty thin for the members for Warren–Blackwood, Albany, Collie–Preston and others who failed to share this bombshell policy with their electorates before the election.

Much has already been said about the housing crisis that we are experiencing. I do not intend to go over old ground. Nonetheless, we need to acknowledge that there is a housing crisis in Western Australia. It has not emerged overnight. It is a result of the government's lack of action—its inaction—over the last four and a half years. The budget outlines a program of investment that will be difficult to achieve given the labour shortages and the overheated market that we are experiencing. As we progress through the budget estimates process, our team will have questions for the Minister for Housing on how the program will be rolled out and how the government will be able to attract and retain the workers who will be required to deliver on its promises. These promises impact people who are homeless

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or without a safe and secure residence right now. Our assessment is that there is little in the budget that will help solve the crisis that is facing the hundreds of homeless and the thousands on the public housing waitlist right now.

Likewise, there is little in the budget for essential workers' accommodation in regional communities experiencing serious housing pressures. The previous Liberal-National government made serious investment into regional workers' accommodation to ensure that affordable options were available. This was particularly critical in the state's north, where rental pressures and housing availability are always more pronounced. We cannot have a normalised community in which there are small businesses and a thriving services sector if the rental and housing markets are beyond the reach of these workers. Our government invested heavily through royalties for regions to address these challenges, along with the development and release of land.

I wish to finish this afternoon by addressing the government's continued attack on the state's only regional development program, royalties for regions. When, if not now, with a \$5.6 billion surplus, is the right time for the McGowan Labor government to restore the integrity of this program? Unfortunately, this government has failed to acknowledge that it has been washing money through the program to free up funds in departmental budgets for spending in areas that royalties for regions was never supposed to be destined for. Having spent four and a half years killing off the royalties for regions program, and pillaging it to underwrite normal government expenditure, the government now has the perfect opportunity to restore the integrity of that program.

As an opposition, the Nationals WA and the Liberal Party are committed to reviving royalties for regions and ensuring that in the future, it is used for what it was designed for—to drive development, to partner with communities and business to drive projects, and to innovate services that will diversify our economy. Royalties for Regions was created to guarantee that regional Western Australians are not forgotten. Nearly 70 per cent of current expenditure under the royalties for regions budget has been used to cover normal government spending. That means that Labor is using only 30 per cent of that funding for its original function of supporting regional development. That depleted amount proves that Labor does not care for the future prosperity of regional communities.

I note that the Water Corporation's country water pricing subsidy totals \$1.3 billion over the forward estimates period. Of this, \$370.5 million will be funded from royalties for regions, and the remainder will come from the consolidated account. It seems that the royalties for regions funding for the country water pricing subsidy has been reduced in this budget to make way for increased funding for the state government's regional election commitments and other initiatives. This only confirms to me what we have been saying for four years—that royalties for regions is nothing but a name and program line through which this government can shunt money. It has manipulated and shoved funding in when it suits, and it has now removed funding to help fund its election commitments.

This is not a long-term, planned and well thought out regional development program. It is nothing more than a special purpose account with a name that used to mean something but that over the last four and a half years has been reduced to absolutely nothing by this government. I suspect that not one of those election commitments will have a business case attached to it. That is further hypocrisy from a government that spent millions on a report to discredit royalties for regions and demanded that business cases be the basis for any dollar spent going forward. When we add the government's attacks on regional representation in this Parliament, the regional education cuts in its first term, the attacks on regional industries, including the rock lobster industry, and forestry, notably by the same minister, to the pillaging of this program, the spin starts to wear thin.

However, at the risk of sounding like there is nothing positive in this budget, I will give some credit where credit is due. The Nationals WA went to the last election with a policy on improving the patient assisted travel scheme. We heard today that the Minister for Health —

**Ms A. Sanderson** interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The Nationals WA went to the last election, and the election before that, actually, with a policy on improving the patient assisted travel scheme. We heard today that the Minister for Health, after four and a half years, has finally done something about a scheme that he campaigned on while he was in opposition to rectify some of the challenges that people accessing that scheme have been experiencing and campaigning for. We also went to the last election with funding for Guide Dogs WA, and we welcome that investment. When we were in government, we also funded a significant regional arts package, and we brought that to the last election. We are very happy to at least see the headline that there is funding for regional arts. Our government also provided funding to address coastal erosion hotspots, which is again something that we took to the election and campaigned on heavily with the then member for Geraldton, the member for North West Central, and our candidate for the seat of Albany and a number of other candidates around the state. I note also that there is funding for Meekatharra Hospital and other health services. These are all things on which we campaigned relentlessly to be addressed.

We have consistently campaigned for the Kalgoorlie rail alignment, and also for a reduction in regional airfares. We welcome the regional road funding in the budget to address blackspots. We will assess the government's priority

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areas for these projects as we delve further into the budget through the estimates process. It would be unfair to say that the budget does not have merit in some areas, but that is exactly how it should be with the significant surplus that this government has amassed. The test will be whether this government can make good on its promises; that remains to be seen.

In closing, I draw members back to my observations on the demise of the previous Carpenter Labor government, and will leave those comments as a salutary lesson for a Premier who is enjoying the warm glow of headlines extolling a massive surplus. A record surplus for the Premier; Treasurer makes for a good headline, but a record surplus when the state's health system is experiencing a crisis of the government's own making is unconscionable. A record surplus when the state's homeless and vulnerable are without a safe and secure place to live is unconscionable. A record surplus with no solution for the skills crisis facing our state right now is a failure. A record surplus with no discernible dent in net debt is a failure. It highlights the hypocrisy of the Premier and his senior cabinet ministers, all of whom have made the debt monster their friend instead of the sworn enemy that they said it was when they were in opposition.

A record surplus with no sign of long-term economic reform, confirmed by the Premier today, and with no relief, or further relief, on payroll tax, and no changes to our government trading enterprises, or other structural changes that should and could be pursued during the good times, lacks vision. These are good times. The government has a \$5.6 billion surplus. All the commentary suggests that this government's budget is in rude health. I have heard the Premier's argument about why he will not address payroll tax, or any of the other levers the government has at its disposal. I simply pose the question: if not now, with the set of numbers we see before us, when? When can the business community expect to see those reforms?

What we have seen is an extraordinary growth in revenue; an increase in taxes, fees and charges; the lack of any economic reform agenda; and an economy that is now more dependent on mining than it was four and a half years ago. The hard work must begin to diversify and grow our state, while immediately addressing the crises of the here and now. Many of those crises are of the government's own making. Beyond the hype and headlines, our state is facing real challenges. The opposition urges the government to put its shoulder to the wheel and fix our health, our housing and our skills crises. Our state depends on that now more than ever as we go into uncertain waters with the global pandemic and the challenges that are emerging right across the nation and further afield.

With that, my closing words to members opposite are: remember, history does repeat itself. This government is showing many of the hallmarks that emerged under the previous Carpenter Labor government. This should be a salutary lesson to the government to look at the mistakes that were made and how they can be avoided so that our state will be able to prosper for many years to come.

**MR S.N. AUBREY (Scarborough)** [3.49 pm]: I rise in support of the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021. I would like to begin by reflecting on early 2020, before I was a member of this house—before the world came to terms with the COVID-19 outbreak and how it would change all our lives. At the time, I was an underground electrical technician working on a goldmine in the East Pilbara. Along with my mining colleagues, I felt fear and confusion as the coronavirus began to kill tens of thousands of people in developed countries across the world, most with modern health systems like ours. We watched with uncertainty at what was happening across the globe and what it would mean for our jobs, our livelihoods, the lives of our families and the future of our state.

The Western Australian resources sector has long been the economic engine room of this country and why Australia has long been one of the more prosperous countries in the world. Indeed, the Western Australian resources sector played a significant role to get this country through the global financial crisis and continues to support us through the COVID-19 pandemic. What is not so often talked about are the sacrifices of the mining workforce and their importance to the continuing success of the sector in both tough and prosperous times. The mining workforce, of which I was a part, is essential to the successful operation of our resources sector. We in that workforce knew that if COVID-19 made it on to any site, it would be through a fly-in fly-out worker and our airports, and it would spread like wildfire. In that event, the mining sector would grind to a halt, and with it revenue, jobs and exports. The damage to Western Australia would have been insurmountable.

I watched this fear grow as our international borders closed, when Australia had its first case in Victoria in late January, and then in March when the *Ruby Princess* was allowed to dock with infected passengers entering the New South Wales community and, as a result, spreading coronavirus across the entire country. The stark reality became even stronger when we watched Brazil's mining industry collapse due to COVID-19 outbreaks onsite, exactly what we feared could happen to us.

When facing a worldwide crisis such as this, it is well known that people look to their governments for decisive and effective action to protect them. I can tell members that the mining workforce looked to the McGowan Labor



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government for strength, stability and decisive action to protect us, our families and our livelihoods, and we did not go wanting. The McGowan Labor government swiftly responded to protect us, putting the health and wellbeing of the people of Western Australia first. From there our fear turned to resolve. We had the assurance that we could continue to work because our state government was stepping up and protecting us from the COVID pandemic. We knew that we were one of the only industries that was operating at full steam and that we were essential workers. We pulled longer shifts to cover for those who were stuck interstate or in lockdown. We endured severe restrictions to our onsite freedoms to limit any potential spread of COVID. We would go from isolation on the worksite to lockdown at home and then back again, but not for long, as the McGowan Labor government swiftly crushed and killed the virus and returned our lives to relative normality.

As we toiled away on site, we felt the weight of the entire nation's expectations on our shoulders as we kept the economic engine room of this nation running in one of its toughest periods of the twenty-first century so far. Many inside and outside this place would argue that the strength of this budget is due only to the thumping iron ore price of the last year that resulted from China's demand for our resources. I can tell them that as a Western Australian whose health was protected by the actions of the McGowan Labor government that they are wrong. I can tell them, as a FIFO worker, having worked in the mining industry for most of my adult life, whose livelihood was protected by the McGowan Labor government that they are wrong. I can tell them as a Scarborough local and surf lifesaver who is dedicated to protecting and saving lives in my community that they are wrong. The McGowan Labor government put the health and wellbeing of Western Australians first and, in return, the people of Western Australia put their faith and trust in the McGowan Labor government to lead and protect them. That strong and stable leadership has resulted in the largest budget surplus in Western Australian history of \$5.6 billion. On every front, we outrank every other state in this nation. We are the best-performing economy in Australia and one of the strongest in the world.

The 2021–22 budget sets up Western Australia's future by continuing this government's record of strong financial management by delivering on our election commitments, creating more local jobs and training Western Australians for the jobs of the future. The budget invests in new industries and jobs to develop more climate-resilient communities and prosperous low-carbon future initiatives to meet the state's 2050 net zero emissions target. The McGowan Labor government will also continue to build strong, safe and fair communities through this budget by significantly investing in education, health, community safety, more police officers, homelessness measures and more community infrastructure across Scarborough and Western Australia. All the while, we continue to pay down debt—the only state in the country to do so.

For the second year in a row, Western Australia is the strongest-performing state when it comes to jobs and employment. Unemployment is at 4.5 per cent, the lowest of any state, and Treasury is predicting a further 34 000 jobs will be created in 2021–22. Underemployment is also at the lowest level since May 2014. This all builds on the 107 000 jobs that have been created by the McGowan Labor government since first being elected. This has all happened during a global pandemic, while Western Australia has been under constant attack from the eastern states trying to take our fair share of the GST and despicable attacks by Clive Palmer and the Liberal Party to open our borders and put the health of Western Australians at risk.

The McGowan Labor government has put the people of Western Australia first on every front. With a \$121.4 million investment in training initiatives, the 2021–22 state budget ensures continued support for the training and skilling of Western Australians so they will be provided access to quality jobs. The McGowan government's investment will deliver on election commitments to ensure TAFE and training continues to be more affordable and accessible, enabling local people to find work in local jobs throughout the state.

The next great challenge on the horizon for Western Australia and the world is climate change. During my inaugural speech I said —

One threat that Scarborough as a coastal electorate faces is from rising sea levels that are resulting from climate change. It is with great pride that I stand here as part of a government that has been taking the threat of climate change seriously. With the appointment of the state's first-ever Minister for Climate Action and Minister for Hydrogen Industry ...

Coastal communities in my electorate like Scarborough, Trigg and North Beach will be some of the hardest hit as climate change continues to impact the world. As sea levels rise, our coastal areas will face significant challenges due to erosion. We have already seen this occur in North Beach at Mettams Pool, where coastal erosion stripped the sand from one of our favourite local beaches. The government's election commitment of \$200 000 towards Mettams Pool sand nourishment will ensure the beach can continue to be accessed and utilised by the local community in the short term. In the long term, the McGowan Labor government is delivering in the budget an additional \$18.5 million, which will take the total funding to \$33.5 million over the next five years to fight coastal erosion along the Western Australian coastline.

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Climate change is not the only threat to our coastlines and oceans. Our reliance on single-use plastics is causing significant damage to the ocean's biodiversity. I was proud to stand alongside the Premier and Minister Sanderson, the Minister for Environment, at Livid Skate Cafe in Scarborough when they announced the McGowan Labor government's fast-tracking of the plan for plastics within four years to protect our oceans. The government will seek to phase out single-use plastics by the end of 2021 and single-use plastic coffee cups and lids by the end of 2022. This builds on the government's track record in which it phased out lightweight plastic bags in 2018 and introduced the incredibly popular Containers for Change program in October 2020.

The McGowan Labor government has a strong record on protecting the Western Australian natural environment. No better example of this is the government's announcement to end native forest logging in Western Australia by 2024. The news of this commitment was strongly welcomed by my community in Scarborough and across the state. Delivering \$350 million as part of the government's \$750 million climate action fund to transition the state's forestry industry to a more sustainable and climate-friendly softwood industry makes sense. Preserving at least 400 000 hectares of karri, jarrah and wandoo forests across our state makes sense. This not only will ensure that this important asset can be enjoyed for its beauty, Aboriginal cultural heritage and ecotourism for years to come, but also is an important step in the fight against climate change.

As an electrician by trade, I am understandably excited about Western Australia's potential to be a world leader in the transition towards hydrogen for energy and transport purposes. By allocating \$50 million towards renewable hydrogen initiatives, we are placing Western Australia on the best footing to utilise our state's vast wind and solar resources to produce clean energy for not only Western Australia, but also the world. There will be sustainable energy, sustainable jobs and a sustainable future under the McGowan Labor government.

I am indeed confident that our state is not only taking the threat of climate change seriously, but also proving that protecting our state from climate change and protecting the environment does not cost jobs. It will take hard work and strong and stable leadership, but we can have our cake and eat it too. This is evident in the government's investment in clean energy in our schools and the establishment of a \$40 million schools clean energy technology fund to help reduce energy costs in public schools and lower carbon emissions. By investing in clean energy technologies that give our schools a better understanding of managing energy use, as well as improving the stability and reliability of the electricity grid, we are helping young Western Australians to embrace science and sustainability as well as providing local jobs in the community.

We are also prioritising STEM in schools to better prepare young Western Australians for the jobs of the future. In my local community, the following schools have already had a classroom converted to a science lab under the McGowan Labor government: Deanmore Primary School, Newborough Primary School and Yuluma Primary School. In this year's budget, Lake Gwelup Primary School will have a room converted to a science lab and Scarborough Primary School will receive science equipment grants. All of this is part of the government's efforts to prepare future generations in Scarborough for a sustainable future.

There is one commitment towards education in my electorate that I am incredibly proud of delivering in this budget, and that is the \$9.7 million to upgrade Scarborough Primary School. This investment will upgrade the school's facilities to replace transportable classrooms. Scarborough Primary School is the third-smallest school by land size in WA. Although it may be small, it plays an important role in supporting our community, as do all our schools.

Under the steady leadership of the principal, Sarah Dawson, and having a strong school community driven by the P&C, Scarborough Primary School is thriving and, as a result, the school's population is booming. The school is in desperate need of space for the new students. It will be one of my proudest achievements to deliver that upgrade for the school and to support the school community.

I am happy to say that multiple smaller local schools have had their funding delivered, including \$100 000 towards an e-board replacement program and new iPads for Lake Gwelup Primary School; \$50 000 to refurbish an existing classroom into a new science and art room at Scarborough Primary School; \$50 000 towards a new nature playground at Newborough Primary School, which has been drawn up thanks to the hard work of the P&C and is expected to be ready for the school and local community to use early next year; and \$50 000 towards a BMX and mountain bike skills trail at Newborough Rainer Reserve next to Deanmore Primary School.

The McGowan Labor government's 2021–22 state budget also continues to build strong, safe and fair communities. Significant investments in community safety, including more police officers, and record funding for social housing and homelessness measures and justice services will enhance community safety and resilience. We will continue to protect vulnerable children, families and individuals through our community services investments, and funding for more initiatives to prevent family and domestic violence.

I will not list all our efforts in this space, otherwise I would be here speaking forever, but I would like to list a few that I think are important to Scarborough and the Western Australian community. In this budget, we are seeing

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a \$1.78 billion investment in the WA Police Force to ensure that our communities are kept safe. We are not only delivering on the 950 new frontline officers over the next four years, but also providing modern equipment, new and upgraded police stations and a huge investment in operational capabilities to support the new and existing police officers who protect and serve our community. We have made massive investments in our health sector, including \$281.8 million towards frontline emergency services, a \$495 million boost to the Mental Health Commission, and so much more, totalling a \$1.9 billion boost to the Western Australian health system.

The McGowan Labor government will invest a record \$2.1 billion over the next four years to substantially fund 3 300 social housing properties and deliver new homelessness initiatives. We have also reintroduced and funded \$12 million for the safety and security rebate for WA Seniors Card members, provided a \$6.2 million investment to increase support payments for grandcarers, and provided \$4 million for Legal Aid Western Australia to establish Elder Rights WA and enable increased legal responses to elder abuse.

The McGowan Labor government is also investing \$45.5 million for a range of family and domestic violence prevention and support measures to build on its significant work to protect vulnerable Western Australians who either are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing violence.

There is a boost of \$136 million for sport and community infrastructure to develop healthy and thriving communities. Scarborough has many sporting clubs that are great contributors to the wider Scarborough community. I am proud to have delivered several election commitments to my local Scarborough community to help our community thrive. The budget has delivered \$200 000 for lighting upgrades at North Beach Soccer Club at Charles Riley Memorial Reserve in North Beach and \$110 000 for new equipment at Scarboro Surf Life Saving Club, including a trailer and equipment for the club's juniors and Starfish Nippers, as well as shade sails for the main club area. Starfish Nippers is a program created and run by Ali Nielsen, a member of Scarboro SLSC. The Starfish Nippers program at the Scarboro Surf Life Saving Club provides children with special needs the opportunity to participate in a specialised one-on-one water safety program that is accommodating to their needs, providing them the opportunity to experience the beach and all that surf lifesaving has to offer. Scarboro SLSC is a welcoming club under the leadership of president Jody Ballard. It is heavily focused on inclusion for the wider community and is also listed as a safe SLSC for members of the LGBTQIA+ community in Western Australia. I am proud to be delivering the funds to help run this important program and I am proud of my community's efforts for greater inclusion in sports for people from all backgrounds.

The government has delivered \$150 000 to upgrade the grandstand and lighting at Gwelup Croatia Soccer Club, which is another great inclusive and essential club located in Gwelup in my electorate; \$50 720 for a clubroom fit-out at Scarborough Tennis Club; \$80 000 for a bicycle skill track in the Doubleview ward to provide the growing number of families an interactive place for kids to learn to ride their bike; \$55 000 for the purchase of sporting equipment and contributions to lighting upgrades at Scarborough Amateur Football Club at Millington Reserve in Karrinyup; \$50 000 to Scarborough Sharks Cricket Club, Northern Districts Touch Association and Wests Scarborough Rugby Club to fit out their clubrooms following the clubhouse rebuild; \$30 000 for new uniforms and equipment at the Scarborough Netball Club; and \$20 000 for equipment and IT for the Good Chat Foundation. All of these commitments have been funded through this year's budget and will ensure our community's health and wellbeing is improved for years to come.

I would like to conclude by expressing how proud I am to be a member of the McGowan Labor government and how proud I am to be a part of a government that delivers a budget that protects Western Australians from the threats we face now and into the future and that puts the people of Western Australia first. That is the Labor way. I commend the bills to the house.

**MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River — Parliamentary Secretary)** [4.05 pm]: I rise to speak in reply to the budget bills—the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021. I am talking to all the eastern staters from the cave of Western Australia where we are all safe and sound, and happy.

First of all, I would like to begin by talking to my electorate about the importance of the very recent announcement, funded in this budget, for the WA seniors security rebate. Residents of Canning Vale, Gosnells, Huntingdale or Southern River who have a WA Seniors Card and who work a certain number of hours will be reimbursed for the cost of either a video doorbell, a home security system, a new door or any of a number of things listed on my website. People can look at those and see what they would like to do. Seniors who have a WA Seniors Card already will be contacted about the details of this. For anyone who is unsure about any of the things they can purchase, which the government can reimburse them for, up to \$400, please do not hesitate to give my office a call or call the WA Seniors Card hotline.

I would like to talk to members about a very important organisation in my community known as Dinner Twist. It is a Canning Vale business that has taken out one of the top WA business sector awards—the Switched on Business

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Award. The family-run meal-box business is based in Canning Vale and was awarded for its dedication to its environmentally friendly practices, striving day in, day out to reduce food waste. Dinner Twist distributes 99 per cent of all stock that is ordered to community members in need. I am very, very happy to announce to the community a voucher for \$50 credit towards Dinner Twist. All people have to do is “like” and share this post to go in the running for that. If people have any questions, they can go to the Dinner Twist website, call my office or go to my webpage, [terryhealy.com.au](http://terryhealy.com.au).

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms K.E. Giddens):** Do you get steak knives with that?

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I am very happy to!

I acknowledge the contribution of Patricia Morris, who was recently nominated as a finalist for the WA Heritage Awards. Pat Morris is a former councillor and Mayor of Gosnells. On behalf of the chamber, I congratulate her for all the work she has done over many years. As a former councillor and Gosnells mayor, Patricia Morris, AM, JP, is the current chair of the City of Gosnells history and heritage advisory group. She maintains records for numerous organisations, including the Thornlie Cricket Club and the Thornlie Brownie Pack. She is involved in cricket, football and other sports across our community. She is an absolute titan of Gosnells. She promotes the preservation of our local heritage and excels in all heritage projects that she is involved in. Along with Chris Tallentire, the member for Thornlie, and Ian Cowie, the CEO of the City of Gosnells, I was very proud to help nominate her. Again, we congratulate Pat and her family for all her service.

I would like to address the chamber today about the very recent announcement on the fantastic initiative regarding the state government black spot program funding. Members are aware that the intersection of Balfour Street and Huntingdale Road has been designated as a black spot for some time. I am very happy to announce to the chamber and our community that \$166 000 has been allocated to install a roundabout at that intersection. Residents of Huntingdale have known for a long time how tricky and complicated that intersection has been since our community has grown. It is a very, very popular area that we are in. After community consultation so far, an announcement has been made about installing a roundabout and improving streetlighting at that intersection. Please, members of my community, feel free to reach out to the council, to me, to my office; give me a call on 9256 4900 or email [terry.healy@mp.wa.gov.au](mailto:terry.healy@mp.wa.gov.au). We would love to know what people think about how we can make that intersection better. I look forward to hearing the community’s thoughts and views as we deliver again on that funding commitment.

I would like to invite my community to my electorate office on Tuesday, 2 November. Members of my community are invited to come and meet Elsa. Last year, we invited *Frozen* entertainers, Anna and Elsa, to come to my electorate office. There was face painting, animal games and drawings. I would like to invite every mum, dad and grandparent in my electorate to please go to my website, [terryhealy.com.au](http://terryhealy.com.au). There is a standing invitation to all the members of my community. We will have an Elsa impersonator again in my electorate office. I encourage them to bring their children and grandchildren dressed up in their best *Frozen* costume. We will have some nibbles and some drinks. It will be an opportunity for them to come and meet Anna or Elsa in my electorate office. All they have to do is go to the website and register and come along and meet those fantastic people.

I would like to talk to members about a very, very strong champion in my electorate—Matt Keogh, the federal member for Burt. In my community, he represents Gosnells, Huntingdale and Southern River. I would like to tell members a couple of things. He is a dad, like me; he is a family man. He works incredibly hard for our area. There are a couple of things about Matt Keogh that I think the community needs to know as we approach the coming federal election. First, he is a good friend of Mark McGowan. The other thing that is important to know is that he has helped stand up for Western Australia. When Scott Morrison, Clive Palmer and other people over east have tried to attack Western Australia, he has always been there to stand up for us. I certainly want it put on the record for my community that if people are unsure about their vote at the next federal election—by the way, Matt Keogh and I will work hard for people regardless, always—and they would like to send a message to Scott Morrison that perhaps they are not happy with the vaccine supply or with threats about taking away our share of the GST or about Clive Palmer trying to attack Western Australia, a vote for Matt Keogh will help reinforce the good work that he is doing.

I would like to briefly talk about a person who was recently nominated from our community and recognise him—a gentleman named Sam Lim. I have an article stating that he received the Western Australia Police Force’s highest honour last year when he was named Officer of the Year at the Nine News Police Excellence Awards in December. Sam Lim is the federal Labor candidate for Tangney. In my electorate, the area of Canning Vale will be covered by the seat of Tangney. I have to tell members that Sam is a great local police officer. Not only is he recognised as one of the hardest working and most proficient officers in working with multicultural groups and organisations across our electorate and at keeping us safer, but also he is good friends with Mark McGowan. He also has experience in standing up to the eastern states. If people would like to send a message to Scott Morrison about not enough vaccines

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 September 2021]

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being ordered or, as I said, the Liberals in the eastern states and Clive Palmer trying to attack Western Australia and tell us what to do and trying to take away our GST share, they should support Sam Lim the way he has supported us. That will be a great way to do that if people are looking to decide their vote at the coming federal election.

I would like to briefly speak about Caladenia Primary School, one of the schools in my electorate. I was recently at Caladenia Primary School, where I have been visiting for the last couple of years, and I attended its student council executive elections. This is a school with an incredible culture of young student councillors standing up and putting themselves forward. Over 60 students put themselves forward for the student executive positions this year, as they did last year. I was very honoured to attend the speeches of the male and female student executive nominees, and they were fantastic. Quite a few people harked back to the skills and promotional events of Mark McGowan. We heard some good one-liners. All these people put up their hand to change their school community and make it better. I would like to read out the name of these people to acknowledge that regardless of whether they are elected, I am impressed that they have all put forward their name. They stood up and said that they would like to be a person of leadership in their community. To their families, to their school, as I said, please do not ever stop putting up your hand. Whether you are elected or not, I am already impressed and proud of the work that you have done.

I would like to now read out the names of the female candidates for our student executive positions. I look forward in a future speech to telling members which of them were successful in the election, but today I will tell members about those who stood up. They are: Aseeskaur Brar, Aditi Pakkath, Eniko Lee, Shravani Bhosale, Keerat Didhra, Olivia Oo, Lola Rivers, Claire Karanja, Tamara Al-Khazraji, Sienna Jimenez, Ridmi Yatagama, Yara Ravjee, Patricia Tan, Sophia Blakemore, Tehzeeb Kuhar, Yelini Kumarage, Clarissa Tampubolon, Adeleine Barr, Tongkai Zhong, Anjanaa Suthakaran, Laila Tabbalo, Ridhita Brahma, Thanvi Bhatt, Mesk Reyad, Mila Gibbs, Charmaine Thoo, Aleena Latif, Emily Sartori, Sierra Louise, Emily Martin, Esme He, Olivia Moya, Deepa Bhandari, Sasha Brown, Sophia Aly and Riddhi Goel.

I would like to inform the chamber of the fantastic male candidates who also stood up to take leadership positions within our school community. I say thank you again to you and your families. They are: Avaneesh Kapse, Adam Ikhlef, Imandiv Semage, Shane Sethi, Benjamin Wojciechowicz, Lachlan Brennan, Bodhi Chopping, Shenal Rathnayaka, Mahavir Suraatmadja, Haavansh Dhillon, Tatum Aw, Taym Milhem, Yonal De Vas, Dihain Abeynayake, Raamis Shazlee, Giovel Augustine, Deng Riakgol Gordon, Ethan Sasidharan, Sai Maroutu, Darsh Gundapaneni, Nicholas Yulianto, Ishaan Sandhu, Desandu Premarath Na, Cooper Abercrombie, Adhvik Praju, Reagan Adhikary, Ijaaz Ramdianee, Henry Sun and Jeremy Chee.

Thank you to all those who stood up and put forward their names to make our community better tomorrow than it is today.

I would like to inform the chamber of the very happy 100<sup>th</sup> birthday just the other day of Stephen Jarvis. Happy birthday, Stephen Jarvis from Gosnells. He is a returned soldier from World War II who served in Borneo and Celebes. He still lives on his own in a retirement village and has resided in our City of Gosnells since 1949. He is a celebrated local football identity who played league football with the Perth Football Club and was an inaugural coach of Graham “Polly” Farmer and Ted “Square” Kilmurray. He is the youngest of nine. Can I please say on behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, on behalf of Mark McGowan, happy birthday and congratulations to you and your family.

I would like to wish happy birthday also to Joan Bagley from Huntingdale, who celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday just the other day. I had a lovely chat with Joan, but I was here at Parliament so I could not attend her birthday; she would like to communicate that her room is like a flower shop. The Brightwater Village, where my granddad used to live, put on a marvellous party, she tells us. Her family was able to attend and be part of it—Dawn and Emilio; her grandson, Craig; Darryl, her son, his wife, Cherry, and their daughter, Monica; Paul, who was away on a rig; and their grandchildren. I want to say congratulations to Joan. On behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia and Mark McGowan, happy birthday.

I would like to inform the chamber and the Parliament of Western Australia of the fiftieth anniversary of the Gosnells and Districts Little Athletics Centre. The Gosnells centre commenced competition on 4 December 1971 at Mills Park in Beckenham. There are 553 athletes registered in six age groups and the clubs were named after schools or suburbs in the Gosnells area, except for the Thornlie Kenwick Harriers, which Bill Tucker, the inaugural chairman, named after the Thames Valley Harriers club in England, where he had competed. In 1971–72, the Gosnells club made its first appearance at the state championships, when under-13 Laurie Holroyd won two gold medals, establishing state records in the 100 metres and the long jump.

We have seen some amazing young people go through the Gosnells and Districts Little Athletics Centre in the last 50 years. Most recently, people would have heard that Peter Bol, a great champion of our area, competed at the Olympics, and there have been many others, but too many to mention. I acknowledge the kids, parents, coaches

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 September 2021]

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Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Mr Terry Healy; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr Vincent Catania; Ms Lara Dalton; Mr Chris Tallentire; Dr Katrina Stratton; Mr Paul Lilburne; Dr Jags Krishnan; Mr David Scaife; Ms Caitlin Collins; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr Matthew Hughes

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and families who have done so much for our organisation for so many years. We all look forward to gathering soon for the official fiftieth anniversary. I look forward to being part of the special fiftieth anniversary dance at its premises later this year.

On behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, I would like to wish Fat Cat a happy fiftieth birthday. Members will know that 50 years ago, Fat Cat first appeared on our screens. Members will also know that Fat Cat is always seven years old; however, for 50 years he has been on our televisions. When I was a child, I said goodnight and kissed him goodnight, and my children do it now as well when Fat Cat says goodbye and goodnight to them each evening. I want to acknowledge the role that Fat Cat has played through Telethon and Channel Seven and all the different great things that he has done. On behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, I say happy birthday, Fat Cat. I believe there is also an opportunity, and some movement building, for Fat Cat to come here to the Parliament of Western Australia and blow out some birthday candles. On behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, I am sure that we all agree that that would be a fantastic event.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I would like to speak to the Parliament of Western Australia about the fantastic science lab grants that were recently announced in all our communities. This is delivering on another promise by the Mark McGowan government and Minister Sue Ellery to build science labs in primary schools across our communities. I would like to mention two in particular. At Book Week recently, I dressed up as a science lab and I spoke to some very excited science teachers. I would like to acknowledge that Bletchley Park Primary School has been successful in receiving a \$40 000 science grant to purchase 3D printers and science materials. At the Book Week assembly, a very excited science teacher was also dressed up as science equipment. I want to say thank you to all the science teachers at Bletchley Park Primary School and all the students and their families, who are very excited about the grant that they are looking forward to using.

I would like to inform Parliament about the science grant that was recently awarded to Southern Grove Primary School. I was at Southern Grove Primary School recently for Book Week, wearing my science lab costume. The very excited science teacher was dressed as Oscar the Grouch. She was very excited to tell me how happy the school is to receive its science grant of \$40 000 for 3D printers, technology and STEM resources, which will change the great work that is already being done at that school and make the STEM facilities in the school modern to provide great opportunities for our young people. To the families and staff at Southern Grove Primary School, congratulations and thank you for all the work you have done. I look forward to seeing the growth that happens at that school.

I would like to acknowledge the recent retirement of Mrs Jenny Hall from Ashburton Drive Primary School. When I was a teacher at Southern River College, Mrs Hall had been a teacher at the neighbouring Ashburton Drive Primary School for much longer than I had been teaching. She has recently retired after 15 wonderful years as the science teacher at Ashburton Drive Primary School and many years working at other schools to the benefit of our community. I would like to acknowledge in the Parliament of Western Australia her retirement. I remember her being excited when we announced the first round of the science lab grants. Ashburton Drive received a \$25 000 science lab three years ago. When we opened that lab, she was incredibly excited about the facilities that were available to her students. I have no power to do such a thing, but I would certainly encourage that that science lab be named in honour of Mrs Jenny Hall for all the great work she has done to inspire an entire generation of young people.

I would like to acknowledge the third birthday of Tribeca & Co, a fantastic cafeteria and coffee shop in the Southern River Shopping Centre in my electorate. Paulo and Harsha, whom I saw today, have one of the best coffee shops. They have recently done some renovations. They have the best coffees and the best meals. It is a wonderful opportunity for families to sit and enjoy a wonderful meal. They have the best staff around. On behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, I would like to say a very happy third birthday to Tribeca & Co.

I would like to acknowledge the 10 years of service by Sue at Brooklands Tavern in my electorate of Southern River. Brooklands Tavern is where I like to go with my dad for a drink on Friday afternoons. It is where the majority of our community loves to go and engage in a relaxing drink after a long week's work. Mark McGowan agrees, because he came to Brooklands Tavern not too long ago. Very recently, Sue clocked up 10 years of service in looking after all the patrons in Southern River. We would like to say thank you to Sue for all her work and service.

I would like to acknowledge Huntingdale Junior Football Club. At the recent youth teams presentation evening, a number of coaches, managers and players achieved notable achievements within the club and I would like to acknowledge them publicly. I say congratulations to our 2021 award winners. The Life Member's Volunteer Award was won by Stacey Mallard; congratulations. The President's Award was won by Cliff Lane; congratulations. The life membership inductees were Nick Drew and Vince Macri; congratulations.

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I would also like to acknowledge the year 7 contingent: fairest and best was Taj Rowe; runner-up was Scott Tido; most consistent was Jamayson Ketchup; most courageous was Malakai Hough; most improved was Jeiyrarn Naidu; and the coach's award went to Hayden Sinclair. In the year 9 contingent, the fairest and best was Rohan Keys; runner-up was Kian Harris; second runner-up was Mitchell Keeley; third runner-up was Thomas Shadforth; best key position was Jai Hewitt; most improved was Angus Gibsone; and the players' choice and most resilient awards were won by Rohan Keys, Mitchell Keeley and Kian Harris. Congratulations on behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia. In the year 7/8 girls contingent, the fairest and best was Giordi Macri; runner-up was Lucy Griffin; second runner-up was Tahnee Hind; most improved was Gypsy Morgan; and the coach's award was won by Maddison Martin. In the year 9/10 girls contingent, the fairest and best was Ella Hackett; runner-up was Breeanna Johnson; most consistent was Mikayla Drage; best team player was Shaelie Duffey; most improved was Katie Campbell; and the coach's award was won by Jasmin Knipe. In year 10, fairest and best was Ezekiel Borsic; runner-up, Jayden Lake; most consistent, John Bull; best team man, Gerome Macri; best utility, Fynn Richardson; most improved, Kaian Williams; and the coach's award went to Ben Dichiera. In years 11 and 12, fairest and best was TJ Tait; runner-up, Cooper Smith; most consistent, Dylan Moffatt; most courageous, Mitchell Curulli; best utility, Cameron Hall; and the coach's award went to Baiden Smith. I congratulate you all and wish you a safe summer. We look forward to seeing you again when play resumes.

I would like to acknowledge that a gym in my electorate was acknowledged as one of the best 10 CrossFit gyms in Perth. Of course we all know that it is the number one CrossFit gym in Perth. I would like to congratulate CrossFit The Shack on Tulloch Way in Canning Vale. The Shack has all the mandatory basics of a good CrossFit box—quality coaching, a large range of equipment and a strong community vibe—but it is its six-week challenge that really distinguishes The Shack from the pack! I encourage members of Parliament who are looking for a CrossFit gym to please look no further than the fantastic The Shack in Canning Vale.

I would like to acknowledge the very, very hard work of Huntingdale Primary School at its recent lapathon. The school raised \$12 500. I would like to note two distinguished achievements at the school. First of all, the PP3 class raised the most money, with \$1 065—congratulations. Congratulations to Jamie Lapworth who raised \$335 for participating in the lapathon. Congratulations to those students and all the families and people who raised money towards the great things that happen at our school. Thank you.

I would like to acknowledge the election of committee members for 2020–21 for the Gosnells Community Men's Shed. This fantastic organisation in Gosnells, of which I am a member, does incredible work. I acknowledge the great work that all our men's sheds do in our community, but in particular I would like to commend the new and continuing leadership of a number of people in our community. I congratulate and thank the executive members for what they will do and what they have done. I congratulate chairman Allen Holloway, vice-chairman Geoff Wiltshire, treasurer Arpad Pratzky, secretary Phillip Measday and non-executive committee members Geoff Bowra, Alan Gordon, Grahame Cooper and Scott Henderson. Again, I thank them for all that they have done and all that they continue to do.

I would like to acknowledge that this week is two years since the Thornlie Spudshed opened in my community. Everyone knows Tony Galati of Spudshed fame. For the last two years, we have had access to a 24-hour Spudshed at Thornlie Square Shopping Centre. I cannot tell members the number of times I have left Parliament and needed to get milk, bread or other things that are not available at a service station. Be it for nappies or food produce, I cannot tell members how important Thornlie Spudshed has been to me. Before it opened, I had access only to the Spudsheds at Jandakot and Kelmscott. I say thank you to Tony Galati and his family and acknowledge the great role Spudshed has had in reinvigorating one of the most important shopping centres in our area. I am sure everyone in Canning Vale, Gosnells, Huntingdale and Southern River agrees with me in wishing Spudshed a very happy second birthday. We look forward to many, many more anniversaries of Spudshed delivering for our area.

I would like to acknowledge one of the students from Southern River College. Year 11 student and Indigenous artist Dyneeka Jones will soon have one of her pieces on the front cover of *OzKids* magazine. She is an incredible artist who does incredible work. I encourage all members to have a look at the great work that she has done. She has not gone with the traditional dot-style painting. Instead, she has opted for a more linear style to create the piece for which she has recently received commendations. She said —

“My work is dedicated to my grandfather who likes all natural lives ...

“I have chosen to work on a turtle because, for me, the turtle represents all creatures living under the ocean.

The artwork is beautiful and incredible. I say to Dyneeka Jones, her family, her teachers and her colleagues: congratulations and well done.

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I would like to acknowledge the great work of Campbell Primary School. Very recently, Campbell Primary School sent me a report, which I have now given to Mark McGowan to look at. The year 6 students at Campbell Primary School recently investigated the issue of local housing in an increasingly populated area. I will write to the entire year 6 group personally to tell them how impressed I was with their report. The project started with a pretend disruptive announcement that 80 per cent of the school oval was being sequestered by the state and local governments. I look forward to presenting the full report to Parliament in due course.

**MRS R.M.J. CLARKE (Murray–Wellington)** [4.35 pm]: I rise today to speak on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 handed down by the Premier; Treasurer, Mark McGowan. The last 18 months have seen unprecedented challenges, with the COVID-19 pandemic changing the scope of the whole world. The McGowan government's health-based response to the pandemic has meant life in Western Australia has gone relatively unchanged and our economy is performing as one of the strongest in not only the country, but also the world. The financial discipline prior to COVID-19 and our crushing of the virus has enabled our economy to remain strong, providing greater capacity for this government to keep our state safe and strong into the future. The health-based response to the pandemic, coupled with careful fiscal management, has seen this budget produce a better-than-expected record surplus of \$5.6 billion in 2020–21, lowering net debt, which will fall for a third consecutive year, to \$321 billion.

As the member for Murray–Wellington, a regional seat in both Peel and south west regions, I was delighted to read this year's budget and see what it means to the constituents of Murray–Wellington. I have directly asked my community, made phone calls, doorknocked, attended community meetings and had coffee catch-ups to ensure I heard what the communities of Murray–Wellington needed. I then worked towards achieving positive outcomes to ensure my constituents had a strong voice in the McGowan government. I listened then and I am now delivering for Murray–Wellington. Over the past term of government, I have advocated for my community, working closely with my shires of Murray, Waroona and Harvey.

The seat of Murray–Wellington is economically and geographically diverse. The economy in Murray–Wellington has agriculture, tourism, construction, mining, manufacturing and government services. The 2020–21 budget invests heavily in all these sectors, meaning more jobs, more development and more opportunity in the electorate for businesses, families, tourism operators and the next generation about to leave high school. The McGowan Labor government is delivering on its plan to keep the Peel and south west regions strong, with the state budget investing billions to create quality local jobs, fund a pipeline of infrastructure and make our communities strong.

I am pleased to see that \$2 billion will be invested in electricity and water subsidies to ensure regional residents pay the same price or similar for these essential services. I know the constituents of Murray–Wellington, with a high number of elderly people, welcomed the announcement of the \$600 electricity credit in the last term, and some inform me that they have not paid a bill since. Over the last 12 months, constituents of Murray–Wellington have raised matters with me and my office regarding school bus services. It is welcoming to see the investment of \$463 million into school bus services announced recently by the Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti. I thank the minister for listening to regional Western Australians about their concerns and working to resolve these issues. A huge \$4.2 billion has been allocated to royalties for regions over the next four years on top of a record \$9.1 billion investment in regional infrastructure. On top of this, this budget invests billions into health, education, police and other key services in regional Western Australia and Murray–Wellington, with \$627 million to deliver regional election commitments.

The plan for Murray–Wellington was announced prior to the March 2021 election, in January, and this budget is delivering on that plan to keep the regional economy growing whilst delivering on our small election commitments for local community, sporting and environmental groups. I will go into more detail on what this budget means specifically for the community members, businesses, tourism operators and everyone else in Murray–Wellington. This budget emphasises strong investment in job-creating projects. Currently, Western Australians now have more jobs than ever, with record employment in July. The unemployment rate fell to its lowest level since 2013 at 4.6 per cent, with high participation levels and over 107 000 jobs created since the McGowan Labor government was elected in March 2017.

One of the job-creating projects for Murray–Wellington in this budget is a \$2.7 million investment to complete the final 18 kilometres of mountain bike trails within the Dwellingup area. This will be another amazing addition to the Dwellingup region, which already boasts a huge tourism attraction to many Western Australians. The town recently won Western Australia's top small tourism town award and it is now in the draw to win Australia's top small tourism town award. The investment will also grow the trails already in the region. The Dwellingup 100, which is on this Saturday, 18 September, draws hundreds from over the state and, in non-pandemic years, from across the country. A further \$2 million will be invested into Peel's regional trails and \$105 000 invested in the Harvey trails and



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adventure precinct. This is another great investment into the tourism industries of the Peel and south west regions, highlighting the beauty of the regions.

Waroona did not see much investment from the previous Liberal–National government and I spent the last four years working with the Shire of Waroona on its vision for Waroona. I want to thank the leadership of shire president, Mike Walmsley, and CEO, Dean Unsworth, for their dedication and hard work to ensure Waroona shines. I was so pleased to ensure that vision becomes a reality with \$1.3 million for the Waroona town centre redevelopment, which will see an aged section of the town centre revitalised into a sprawling hub filled with a skate park, play equipment, barbecues and a nature reserve. I have been told by the shire CEO, Dean Unsworth, and shire president, Mike Walmsley, that works will be starting at the end of the year.

There is \$2 million for the Yalgorup trails and ecotourism development just south of Dawesville. It is another beautiful part of the Murray–Wellington and Dawesville electorates, bordered by both the Indian Ocean and the Peel–Harvey estuary. This is another great ecotourist drawcard to the region. There is \$5 million for the Peel–Harvey estuary protection plan that assists in the protection of the Peel–Harvey estuary, which is the lifeblood of the Peel region. Also, \$12.1 million will go toward regional Aboriginal tourism initiatives, which are highly sought after as tourism attractions.

A very exciting project within the Peel Business Park, adjacent to the wonderful Bushfire Centre of Excellence, is a food technology facility that the McGowan government has committed \$10 million towards. Primary industries are one of the major economic contributors in the Murray–Wellington electorate and the food technology facility will provide new and exciting technologies to improve yield and quality, and improve the industry all round. I would like to congratulate the Shire of Murray president, David Bolt, CEO, Dean Unsworth, the Peel Development Commission and Chris Vas, who is heading the facility, for seeing the need for a food technology facility and working collectively to engage primary producers with key tenants who are ready to move in. Our Western Australian food innovation precinct is coming together nicely, both on the ground and with our core collaborators and tenants. They are the Peel Development Commission, the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development, Spinifex Brewing Co, Murdoch University and GrowHub. Despite some wet-weather delays, we are on track to officially open the precinct mid-2022.

To support our agricultural region, we are investing \$15 million into the agriculture climate resilience fund. There is \$15.1 million to strengthen Western Australia's biosecurity capabilities. This is welcome news for many landowners in the regions, to help tackle our introduced pest and weed problems in the state.

There is \$3 million towards the wine industry export growth partnership. The Peel and south west regions have some of the best wine in the world. This investment will be beneficial in highlighting to the world our great produce.

There is also a \$100 million investment in the attraction and new industries fund. We are keeping our regions supported, activated and strong. We are also investing \$120 million for more than 150 frontline officers to speed up project approvals, \$45 million to expand the Aboriginal Rangers Program, and a \$12.9 million boost to regional arts programs.

We will continue to deliver the successful \$40 million regional economic development grants program that, since 2018, has invested over \$4.6 million in 56 projects in the Peel and south west region, helping to create over 1 220 local jobs. To diversify our economy in the south west to ensure we have jobs and technology for the future, we are investing an additional \$2 million into the development of the South West Advanced Manufacturing and Technology Hub in the Bunbury–Geographe region, on top of the \$485 000 already funded for a feasibility study into the concept. Although it is not in the Murray–Wellington electorate, it will be a welcome addition for workers in the southern half of my electorate.

Training and education is the foundation of any economy and the McGowan government has invested heavily into ensuring our kids have a bright future. This budget will be the kick-starter in revitalising Western Australia's TAFE sector and addressing the skills needed by continuing the Lower Fees, Local Skills program, which has seen an increase of 24 per cent in enrolments in the Peel region and an increase of 20 per cent in enrolments in the south west region.

The new \$16.87 million hospitality and tourism and hair and beauty training facilities at the Mandurah TAFE campus are a huge investment for the Peel region, with students from across the region being able to expand and learn new skills in the industry. This investment builds on the \$25 million to Western Australian TAFEs for new state-of-the-art equipment and the \$37 million towards the employer incentive scheme in regional Western Australia. From speaking to local business owners in the area, I know this incentive has been instrumental in them employing new apprentices and trainees to expand their operations.

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Pleasingly, this budget has seen investment in quality education for young people in Murray–Wellington. Students in the regions do not always have the same access to opportunities to those in the metro areas and I am proud to be part of a government that has tried to deliver the same opportunities to students in the regions. This was highlighted in last year’s budget, which saw the investment of \$10.3 million to build a performing arts centre and sports hall at Pinjarra Senior High School, which will be starting towards the end of this year, with completion in late 2022.

The rollout of STEM classrooms at schools in Murray–Wellington continues with Pinjarra Senior High School receiving \$1.5 million to build a new STEM classroom. Classrooms at Harvey Senior High School and Waroona District High School will be repurposed into science and STEM labs. The investment of \$500 000 to Harvey Senior High School and \$85 000 to Waroona District High School to repurpose these classrooms means that students in Harvey and Waroona will now have a better quality of education. With the latest round of science labs announced recently, this now means every public school in Murray–Wellington will now be able to have high quality science programs. Late last year, the Premier and I visited Harvey Primary School’s science lab. The students had made their own electronic board games using coding. The Premier and I unsuccessfully challenged them at their games. The changes in schooling since I attended primary school—only a couple of years ago!—have been exponential. Maybe we will see some of the students from Murray–Wellington working on projects like the Binar-1 in future years.

During the pandemic, the mental health of everyone around the state and country, and across the globe has been affected. Students across the state suffered tremendously, with year 12s having their final year disrupted, extra exam pressure and the all-important schoolies week being different from usual. It is very welcoming to see a \$104 million investment across WA to support student mental health and wellbeing, and for additional school psychologists. The talk around mental health is becoming more open. Last week we had R U OK? Day and World Suicide Prevention Day, two days that have been instrumental in opening up the conversation on mental health. Again, it is great to be part of a progressive government that invests in mental health.

The pandemic has thrown challenges and curve balls to governments around the world, and the McGowan Labor government’s response, in my eyes, is one of the best in the world. The pandemic highlighted the need for a quality healthcare system, which we have in Western Australia. The budget announcement of a \$1.9 billion additional investment into health and mental health across Western Australia and the pre-election commitment to invest \$152 million into a major redevelopment of Peel Health Campus and to bring it back into public hands have been positively received across the entire Peel region. While doorknocking and phone calling prior to the election, everyone I talked to, regardless of voting preferences, said that these upgrades were well overdue and would be welcome. I spoke to hospital staff about bringing the hospital back into public hands, and that was also a relief for many who received only yearly contracts. Well done to everyone who campaigned hard for this transition. I know many people in the region and across the state believe that bringing hospitals back into public hands is the right thing to do. It is great to see the McGowan government delivering on this commitment and announcing it in the budget. Along with the Peel Health Campus, the \$200.1 million redevelopment of Bunbury Hospital is welcome news to those in the southern end of the Murray–Wellington electorate, particularly those who live in Australind, Leschenault and Binningup.

Along with these upgrades to the two major hospitals in the Peel and south west regions, this budget announced more doctors and nurses in regional WA; \$2.2 million to develop a new Peel women’s health program to connect women with health and support services, and information at both the crisis point and early intervention point; \$8.6 million to expand the Peel region’s community alcohol and other drug integrated services; \$19.7 million to the patient assisted travel scheme to expand the eligibility of patient support escorts to include more patients from vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, as well as maternity patients, and to increase accommodation subsidies from \$60 to \$100 per night; \$9.2 million to extend the Strong Spirit Strong Mind programs; \$10.9 million to the Royal Flying Doctor Service to upgrade aircraft; an additional five paramedics in Bunbury; and \$7.3 million to extend the mental health/police co-response program into regional areas.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** This massive increase of investment in health in Western Australia is much needed and will improve our health system in the regions.

For people living in the regions, driving is a necessity, and safe, quality roads are essential in making sure drivers and passengers arrive at their destination safely. The first budget of the forty-first Parliament continues to build on previous McGowan government’s investment in regional roads. The \$4.5 billion allocated for major, job-creating road projects and safety programs across regional WA will mean not only more jobs for regional workers, but also safer roads for everyone, be it locals driving on them a hundred times a year or tourists visiting the area. One of these major projects comprises the allocation of \$110 million to build a second Mandurah Estuary Bridge. This will be a major job-creating project for Mandurah and the Peel region and will free up traffic, benefiting the electorates of

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my Peel colleagues, the member for Mandurah, David Templeman and the member for Dawesville, Lisa Munday. I know that my constituents in Bouvard, Lake Clifton and Herron are also excited for this project.

Along with this major road project in the Peel, the \$852 million Bunbury Outer Ring Road is continuing in the south west. Starting in the Murray–Wellington electorate, it will be another major job creator for those who live in the Murray–Wellington, Collie–Preston and Bunbury electorates. Roads in Murray–Wellington continue to be improved in this budget, like the \$395 000 project to improve Corio Road in Ravenswood, and widening and sealing shoulders on other major roads in the electorate.

The communities of Binningup, Harvey, Myalup and Preston Beach have welcomed news of \$5 million to deliver the first stage of left acceleration lanes along Forrest Highway to facilitate safer access to the highway. Living in Preston Beach, I personally know how dangerous and long a wait it can be to get onto the highway, especially on weekends and school holidays. Business owners and workers in the Pinjarra light industrial area have welcomed the news of \$2.5 million to build the Munday Avenue extension. The road, named after member for Dawesville Lisa Munday's grandfather-in-law, will create a thoroughfare from the light industrial area to Greenlands Road. I spoke to workers who drive to the area each morning, and they said that this will cut a couple of kilometres and minutes off their daily commute. Business owners said that this will save thousands of dollars on fuel, commuting costs and man hours a year. The current route into the area requires road closures for oversized vehicles and larger routes due to trucks and other freight not being able to drive under overhead powerlines.

This budget, along with investing in quality health care, education, transport and job-creating projects, will invest in keeping our regional communities active, healthy and connected. A project I worked on with the Ravenswood Community Group since I was elected in 2017 was about building a community hall in the town. I am so delighted to say to members of this group that \$750 000 will be delivered to build the new multi-use community centre in Ravenswood. This community centre will now give the community their own sense of identity and facilities, instead of commuting to Pinjarra or South Yunderup.

Also, \$3 million will be used to expand the Leschenault Leisure Centre in Australind to keep up with the population growth in the Australind, Eaton and Leschenault region. There is also \$610 000 for upgrades to the Harvey Senior Citizens Centre, a centre used by over 150 seniors in Harvey. There has also been \$1 million committed to 73 community, sporting and environmental groups in the Murray–Wellington electorate. Small amounts ranging from \$2 000 to \$100 000 are currently being delivered to these groups to help with small projects such as restoring the community library in Cookernup, buying new sporting guernseys and other sporting equipment, or purchasing a kiln so that artists in Waroona can make beautiful sculptures and pottery.

The 2021–22 budget handed down by the Premier; Treasurer, Mark McGowan, has shown the regions of Western Australia that the McGowan Labor government understands that investment in the regions is needed. This is a budget for all Western Australians, but more importantly the massive investment in the regions shows that the McGowan government respects regions. As always, I am proud to represent the seat of Murray–Wellington and the community members who live within the electorate. I commend the 2021–22 budget, with thanks to the Premier; Treasurer and ministers for listening to the constituents of Murray–Wellington.

**MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach)** [4.58 pm]: Before I start my speech, I would like to recognise that over the weekend we commemorated the 9/11 anniversary. My thoughts are with some of our first responders who find remembrance of this time difficult.

I rise in response to the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021. Ladies and gentlemen, members of this house and constituents of my fine electorate of Burns Beach, may I say with pride that the books are good. I will say that again: the books are really good. This is a budget for today's success and tomorrow's projects. In comparison with some of the longstanding members of this house, I have been in this place since breakfast! But this is my fifth budget. I have the privilege to respond and I must say that we have outperformed our fellow states within Australia and possibly the world. The Western Australian economy is the size of a small country and, per head of population, depending on who you ask, we have outperformed them all.

Our economic growth was 4.3 per cent in 2020–21. That was the strongest growth seen in the state of Western Australia in the last 10 years. Our forecasted growth is over three per cent. Business confidence is up. Consumer confidence is up. Household spending is the strongest of any state in Australia. This state's household investment is off the clock, growing at 27 per cent, and this is at the time of a pandemic.

The McGowan government made a commitment to create 50 000 jobs in its first term of government. On reflection, not only did we achieve that, but in the last term of government we created 107 000 jobs. Here is the kicker: we have added 27 000 jobs since the start of the pandemic. The McGowan government—my government, which I am so proud to be a part of—has focused on local manufacturing and production, investing in training for the jobs of the future, and developing and delivering a comprehensive jobs plan. We have been doing a brilliant job. For

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my electorate of Burns Beach, this means jobs, and, more importantly, future employment opportunities for our children, bearing in mind that in certain areas of my electorate, youth unemployment is over 20 per cent. That is not a made-up figure; that is based on the census.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the McGowan government has spent over \$9 billion on its response to this national and international emergency. Unlike the other states in Australia, we have not put it on the credit card. We have done it through good financial management. I commend the Premier; Treasurer for this. As I recall, prior to the pandemic, this state was forecast to be in a better debt position. In order to maintain the state's current position in spending over \$9 billion in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we need to sustain our credibility as a good financial manager. This is not me making it up. Remember that, member for Cottesloe: we are not making this up. This is reflected by Standard and Poor's and other rating agencies. I find comfort in the fact that this state's future income is based on an iron ore price of \$US66 a tonne. That is vastly different from the figure used by the so-called alliance that makes up the opposition. We have based our projected iron ore income on a conservative value—namely, what we are actually receiving—rather than a made-up projected figure that we will never obtain.

The budget projects consumer price index growth at 1.75 per cent. What does this mean for my electorate and my constituents in Burns Beach? Seniors who have a Seniors Card will be able to claim up to \$400 towards the installation of security and safety equipment around their home. That is brilliant. That will put the minds of seniors at rest, whether that be for a better security door, security cameras or better locks on their doors, whatever they want, to the value of \$400. If people have a Seniors Card, happy days. Over \$66 million will be provided for pensioner concessions for local government rates. This is a significant issue. Every assistance that we can give to our pensioners helps. In relation to household fees and charges, a further \$397 million has been committed for the indexation of concession rates. That is also brilliant. From 1 January 2022, this government will cap Transperth fares at the cost of a two-zone ticket. This will save the constituents in my electorate who travel to Perth via bus or train services over \$800 a year. That is nothing to sneeze at.

I note that this government will spend \$24.5 million on the state's first secure extended care unit at Bentley Health Service. Alzheimer's is a horrendous condition. I hope this facility will put at ease the minds of seniors who worry about this issue. I would like to publicly thank the Minister for Health and the Minister for Mental Health for this much-needed facility. I remember from the dying with dignity debate during the last term of this government, and from my time as a police officer, that this is a real issue. This scares our seniors. A number of constituents have come forward and aired their worries in this space. This will be a brilliant and well deserved piece of new infrastructure. This is evidence that this government listens to and really cares for the vulnerable. This is evidence that this McGowan government thinks about our people and our community, and that the vulnerable in my electorate are at the forefront of this government's decision-making processes. Remember: our people, our communities and our vulnerable matter.

There could be no better evidence of this than the \$1.9 billion that this government has committed for a new women's and babies' hospital in Western Australia. There is a lot of love in my community. I would like to give a shout-out to the mums-to-be and the doctors and midwives who are going to help them. COVID-19 has been productive in more ways than we could think!

I always say that it is such a privilege to be a member of Parliament. My electorate is in the northern suburbs and on the coast. I believe it is a little piece of paradise. It is bounded by some beautiful bushland and some great beaches. I must say—do not tell anyone!—that I am a closet conservationist. I am bit of a bird man, to be precise. I have a particular love for the blue wren, also known as the splendid fairy-wren, *Malurus splendens*. I hope I have pronounced that right. I am proud of the fact that we have committed \$2.5 million to the upgrade of Yellagonga Park. I am also proud that we will stop old-growth logging in the south west. We will not do that at the expense of the small local communities. We are developing a new softwood industry. I hope this will mean even more jobs for those communities, and a greater renewable culture in the long term.

Sport is such a big issue in my electorate, and it is still a big part of my life. This year will be my fortieth year in surf lifesaving. This government will spend an additional \$16.5 million on shark mitigation initiatives. That includes \$12 million for extra aerial patrols in the south west and in the Perth metropolitan area. I know from personal experience that having the helicopter overhead when there is a lawyer—I mean shark!—in the water gives me great comfort. I am not saying that drowning a lawyer is a good thing, but just hold that thought. A further \$4.4 million will be spent on upgrading the shark monitoring network and enhancing the tagging regime, making our beaches safer. That is a good thing.

This government will also spend \$58 000 to enable Quinns Mindarie Surf Life Saving Club to purchase new club equipment. I would like to thank Saxon French, the past president, and Nathaniel Lee and Richard Lissett, the current president and the director of lifesaving at the club, for their commitment and leadership at the club.

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This government has also seen the need to provide Joondalup Kinross Cricket Club, the home of the Wolves, with \$80 000 to upgrade the cricket training nets and lighting at Windermere Park in Joondalup. This club provides a great opportunity for the kids, the girls and women, and all the players of grade cricket. I would like to thank Chris Tenni, the senior vice president, for his advice and advocacy in this space.

I would also like to give a shout-out to Peter Ross, president of the Joondalup Kinross Junior Football Club, who played a critical role in securing \$14 000 from the government and for his advocacy of another progressively inclusive group within my community.

I would like to give another shout-out to Mark Nelson, president of the Kingsley Westside Football Club, at Bramston Park, Burns Beach, for securing new equipment for the club. This club gets it. It is inclusive and is made up of a great group of mums and dads who are doing their best for their kids. Mark, thank you for your work.

I must apologise. I have to declare that I am a rugby nut. I have played rugby, and coached and managed all sorts of rugby teams all my life. I am a past member of the board of RugbyWA, so it is with great pleasure that I can acknowledge that this government—my government—has decided to finally write off the interest-free loan that RugbyWA has had since 2009. This will finally allow RugbyWA to get back on its feet after losing the Western Force.

In the current climate, the health system is very topical. The government has committed more than \$200 million for mental health hospital services. That is great. An amount of \$30 million will be set aside to increase the capacity of child and adult community treatment services to reduce wait times and referrals for first appointments. This will mean improvements in response times for our kids. Well done!

I note that the government is expanding chaplaincy services by committing over \$21 million to ensure that every public school has the capacity to provide emotional and social support for students. The government is also committed to increasing the number of school psychiatrists and will spend over \$42 million to increase the number of school psychiatrists. I do not know any school principal in my electorate who has not wanted or advocated for or not twisted my ear to increase funding in this area in schools. I would also like to give a shout-out to the Clarkson child and adolescent mental health service for the fantastic work it is doing now and will be doing in the future.

Let me talk about schools. We all know about the new Burns Beach Primary School—absolutely! It is a cracker of a school. I acknowledge the great work that new principal Trudy Burke is doing. Children with special needs are a big issue in my electorate and there has been a 25 per cent growth in demand in services at the Joondalup Education Support Centre for which this government saw a need. As a result, a new education support centre will join the Burns Beach Primary School, so an inclusive environment can be created for children needing extra support. An extra \$3.5 million will be allocated to locate the new support centre in the primary school. That is fantastic. I would also like to take time to acknowledge Natalie Hatton, principal of the Joondalup Education Support Centre, who I believe was a finalist in Principal of the Year, for the fantastic work that she has been doing over the past couple of years. That centre has grown by 25 per cent in the past 12 months, hence the need for a new education support centre at Burns Beach Primary School.

The government has committed \$50 000 for a new inclusive play area for younger kids at Joondalup Primary School and the Joondalup Education Support Centre. That is brilliant. The government committed a further \$50 000 to build a science sustainability garden at Kinross Primary School, which is really well led by Therese Gorton and her team. The government found \$10 000 for Francis Jordan Catholic School to create a school-wide recycling program and frog bog. I do not know what a frog bog is but I am going to find out!

**Mr P. Lilburne:** It has tadpoles.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** Apparently, it has; thank you, member. It teaches kids about sustainability.

The government committed \$72 000 for a mobile classroom for the Comet—Community Outreach Model of Education and Training—school located in Clarkson. I would like to thank Richard Furber from Youth Futures for his advice and advocacy. This classroom is having a positive impact on children at extreme risk within the education environment who are in my electorate and in the electorates that surround mine.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** The government also found \$14 000 for St Andrew's Catholic Primary School to purchase STEM equipment to enhance its science and technology programs. I would like to recognise Sam Fontaine and the great passion he has for kids at that primary school located in Clarkson.

Not to be left out, Somerly Primary School will receive \$5 000 for its library and \$25 000 for STEM upgrades. This school has one of the newest principals in my electorate, Zoe Stenhouse. I have to say that she is doing an outright brilliant job, and I am comforted that that school will be well led in the future.

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Mindarie Primary School needed my help for the development of a new amphitheatre. On the advice of principal Barbara Bromley, the government provided \$50 000 for shade for an auditorium. This beautiful structure has enhanced the school and has already been used for the school's twenty-first anniversary, which I attended this year.

Currambine Primary School has received \$45 000 for sport and shade equipment. Again, that school is really well led by Geoff Smith and the board, made up of a great bunch of mums and dads who help out, too.

Not to be left out or forgotten, Mindarie Senior College has received \$45 000 for new computers. I thank Jonathan Bromage, the new principal, who is looking after that fine institution.

I would like to talk about Clarkson Community High School, which has also received \$45 000 for IT and software upgrades. The school is currently being led by Kristy Watson. A lot of people outside our community like to criticise Clarkson college, but I can tell them that this is the only education institution in my electorate that has consistently improved literacy levels and has produced a Beazley medallist in the northern corridor over the last 10 years, and it is the school that I would send my children to if they were of school age for one reason only—it cares.

The government is committed to growing stronger communities. The government has committed to deliver more than 950 police officers. Further proof of this commitment is that the government will spend just under \$5 million to purchase and deliver personal protective equipment for our firefighters, equipment that is greatly needed. This new PPE includes safety and training kit for the Quinns Rocks Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade. The government will spend \$50 000 on that brigade alone. I wish that brigade well in the upcoming fire season, and, yes, I will be bringing Chey to the next training session. For those who do not know, Chey is a post-traumatic stress disorder service dog that I am training, and he is the brigade's favourite pet.

**Ms C.M. Rowe:** Of course!

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** Absolutely.

Further to the great work that our bush fire brigades do, I would like to mention the State Emergency Service—our orange angels—and the great work that they do. We saw their great work during the cyclone that hit Kalbarri in the midwest, and thank God they were there. In my electorate is a small SES cadet unit. That unit is ably led by Stephen Faulkner, a gentleman of fine standing and a great local bloke. We were able to find \$50 000 for that unit so it could purchase safety equipment and personal protective equipment for the kids in the cadet unit so that the unit could train more effectively and safely. These kids are the future of our orange angels. All the help we can give them benefits all of us in the future.

Those who know me know that I am a proud veteran. This government has committed over \$4.9 million to the Anzac Day Trust fund, with support and welfare for veterans and ex-service personnel and their dependants. We have committed \$20 000 to Veterans Support Centre Joondalup. I have to say that the group of fellows who have pulled that together has made it, I suggest, the best veterans support centre in the state. We provided support to assist with IT upgrades for the centre. I recognise Rick Green, Bruce McDonald, Ken Bevan and Nev Maw, who run that fine establishment.

This is a good budget. This is a great set of books. It sets up this state for a very positive future for our children, our families, our seniors and the vulnerable. I commend this budget to the house.

**MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central)** [5.21 pm]: I rise in response to the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021. What an opening line from the member for Burns Beach. I do not know whether he read the same budget papers that I read, but clearly it is a case of smoke and mirrors when it comes to the budget for the North West Central region and regional Western Australia. It is clearly lacking. We can look at tourism in this state and see the smoke and mirrors from the government about how wonderful tourism is going. There is uncertainty in the tourism sector. One uncertainty is the inability to find workers and another is the inability to find workers' accommodation and housing in general. That is the case in regional Western Australia and all over the state, whether it is down south, north in Broome or inland at places like Cue, Meekatharra and so forth. Workers cannot be found at the tourism hot spots such as Kalbarri, Coral Bay, Exmouth or Shark Bay, and the problem is even creeping into places like Carnarvon. Even if people can find workers, they definitely cannot find workers' accommodation or meet the housing needs. The government has no plan and no funding to support the Exmouth Chamber of Commerce and Industry or the Kalbarri Visitor Centre. The government promised after cyclone Seroja that it would build workers' accommodation, but that will not happen and there is no funding for it in the budget. The government promised at the 2021 election that it would support and financially assist workers' accommodation in Exmouth, but that is not happening and there is no funding for it in the budget. There is a desperate need for it. People are camping all over the north west in national parks and on the beach. That is causing a real problem. It is an eyesore and it is hurting the environment. People need a home. There is a lack of accommodation and land, and people cannot build houses.

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When there is the uncertainty of not knowing when the border will be open to the east coast, there is an inability for small tourism businesses to get workers from the east coast. The government needs to work out a plan to get workers from the east coast and, in the long term, from overseas. We hear much about the agricultural region. It is important to get workers for our agricultural region, but small businesses and tourism businesses desperately need workers. The lack of workers is causing fatigue for our small business owners and the current workers. We urgently need to find a pathway forward to ensure that we can get workers to come from the east coast. We must make sure that they are essential workers. There is a real need to ensure we can get them for our businesses, particularly in regional WA. Tourism and other businesses in the regions face challenges. Yes, there is a lot of internal tourism going on, but those businesses cannot catch the whole benefit of that.

In Exmouth on Friday, one of the establishments had a sign saying “Sorry if we cannot get your food or drink on time or if we have to close, because there simply are not enough staff”. Those types of signs are in the shop windows everywhere in the north west. The Premier may be going to Exmouth tomorrow. No doubt we are both looking forward to seeing each other there. Hopefully he will see exactly what is going on with the people who are camping illegally around Cape Range National Park at the west end of the gulf because there is nowhere else to stay. The Premier will see the businesses that are under so much pressure they cannot open as regularly as they would like. The outlook for tourism businesses, particularly hotels, in Perth is very different. During the week, the occupancy rate is about 10 per cent. No business can survive that. The government needs to look at ways it can entice regional people to come to the city to stay for a few days or a week. That would help out those businesses that are suffering and do not have the good fortune of having the travelling public like business do in the north west, the south west or the interior where people are travelling. That is causing different problems for those in the city.

Overall, the government needs a tourism plan—not a marketing plan to get people to come to Western Australia, but a marketing plan to get people to work in Western Australia. That would support our businesses and our tourism industry. Perhaps the campaign could entice visitors who would normally go overseas to visit WA for a working holiday. That would be an opportunity for those who are on a gap year from school to take a working holiday throughout Western Australia. That is the type of campaign that the government should be looking at. The government should also consider our seniors. They are travelling around the regions. How can the government advocate to allow them to work for a few extra hours a day while not affecting their pension or retirement? Those seniors have the skills to help out and support our tourism businesses and businesses in general because they are travelling in the regions. Like I said, there is the uncertainty of the borders not being open. The Premier has clearly talked about potentially opening the borders in about the middle of next year. That uncertainty puts a great strain on those businesses that rely on interstate and overseas travel.

The government highlighted regional airfares. It is another smoke-and-mirrors campaign. I think the government is providing \$19 million next year to reduce airfare costs. When we look at some of the places the government says that it will reduce the cost, we can see that the devil is in the detail because the way the government has divided the package, a line seems to have been drawn south of Exmouth, at Carnarvon. The government has promoted \$199 one-way trips to Carnarvon but \$299 one-way trips to Exmouth. Perhaps the government should have done its homework first because people can get cheaper flights to Exmouth without the government intervening and making it \$299. Perhaps that is a free one for the government to look at and it can perhaps include the Exmouth township with the Gascoyne where the government promised that it would reduce the cost of airfares to \$199. As I said, the devil will be in the detail when the criteria are worked out for how many flights will cost \$199 and when will they be available? Will they have to be booked 24 hours beforehand? If so, people cannot plan. We want tourists to be able to plan for a week, a month or months in advance. Also let us help tourism businesses in Perth and allow locals to buy a cheap airfare and come down and support the metropolitan area, particularly Perth and its hotels, which are suffering. There is a lot to talk about in tourism, but we have limited time.

My other portfolio is commerce. We have now seen in this term of government two companies collapse, one being Pindan and the other Jaxon Construction. It is interesting that the government went to the election in 2017—I will repeat this in the house—to introduce legislation to protect subcontractors. At the 2017 election, it said it would do that. It drafted legislation, consulted heavily and commissioned the John Fiocco report—a great report—detailing the need to introduce cascading trusts to protect subcontractors. What did we see? The bill was introduced into this house, but not pursued or made a priority in the other place in the last term of government. The government then accused the then opposition of stifling that legislation. However, that legislation was never going to protect subcontractors and in the last term, the Labor government did not make it a priority. When the opposition asked what was the government’s priority list so that we could make sure we dealt with the legislation, it was never dealt with.

Then we saw the collapse of Pindan, which did a lot of housing maintenance work, school construction and so forth for the government. It collapsed and, clearly, that has cost many small subcontractors hundreds and hundreds of thousands of dollars. On 4 August, we saw the Minister for Housing jump up and say that with the Pindan collapse,

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the subcontractors should receive somewhere between 48¢ and 81¢ in the dollar on the money owed. That commitment was made more than a month ago. I brought that up in Parliament last week in a debate because none of those subcontractors who owed money had heard anything from Programmed or the government. Magically, on Friday, they got an email, but with no detail. We hear all these announcements about how wonderful it is that the government has been able to secure 48¢ and up to 81¢ in the dollar on the work of these subcontractors for the state Labor government. They will get only between 48¢ and 81¢ what a great outcome that is! I say that in the most sarcastic way I can possibly say it. When it is recorded in *Hansard*, we often cannot read that sarcasm. The government has been able to take money for completed maintenance and building works at the cost of subcontractors, and it has gloated that the subcontractors will receive between 41¢ and 81¢ in the dollar. That was announced over a month ago and we are still no clearer on when the subcontractors will get that 41¢ up to 81¢. The government needs to stop announcing without providing the detail beforehand so that it does not create false security, as it has done with the legislation that it said would protect subcontractors. Clearly, the security is not there. Clearly, there is no belief that the government will ensure that subcontractors will get the money they are owed for conducting work and paying for materials for the state government. As I said, we have now seen another company go into receivership. At what point will the government introduce the legislation it said it would to protect subcontractors? We are seeing smoke and mirrors yet again—announcements with no detail. When the detail comes out and we hear about grants during lockdowns and the government picks and chooses who can get \$3 000 if they are classified as a small tourism business, the criteria is awash with a lack of understanding of the hurt that businesses are going through. That seems to be the theme of this government. It is getting away with not having any accountability and none of the rolled-gold behaviour that it presented it would have in 2017. Clearly, it is amiss.

When we talk about being accountable, open and transparent and when we talk about consulting, I refer to the Aboriginal portfolio where there is a great opportunity to walk hand in hand with Aboriginal people to get amendments to the Aboriginal Heritage Act through with the support of Aboriginal people and industry and with bipartisan support in Parliament. However, all we have heard is that there has been no consultation with Aboriginal associations, Aboriginal businesses or Aboriginal people. We saw what happened at Juukan Gorge. How do we know what is happening with the legislation that the government is intent on ramming through? We are now seeing the arrogance of the government when it rams things through, as we saw with the decision last week to get rid of our native timber industry with no consultation, and with changing the voting system to reduce representation in regional WA. We are seeing arrogance creep in. I will say that arrogance will definitely creep in when it comes to the Aboriginal affairs portfolio. There is a great opportunity, as I said, to walk hand in hand with Aboriginal people and to write legislation that will make sure that the Aboriginal Heritage Act can be supported by all. The legislation should not benefit just industry or the Aboriginal heritage side; they should be able to meet in the middle and get good legislation. Clearly, the government does not intend to get good legislation. It wants to ram through legislation and make decisions such as we have seen.

Just quickly, in my electorate, as we heard in question time, the Minister for Health or the Premier mentioned Meekatharra Hospital.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Meekatharra Hospital was built in the 1950s, so it is clearly not equipped to deal with modern-day practices. There was money for it in the budget prior to the 2017 election. Obviously, there was a change of government. The Labor government took out that money and made a commitment at the 2021 election to build a new Meekatharra Hospital. The announcement at the election was for, I think, about \$13 million. Clearly, it is \$35 million short. We can now see in the budget that in 2022–23, there is \$1.1 million; in 2023–24, \$3.9 million; and in 2024–25, \$10.7 million. In the budget papers, it says that there will be \$48.5 million in 2025–26. I do not know members; when I look at the budget, I see only the out years from 2021 to 2025. The Labor government has made a commitment to build a new hospital in Meekatharra in 2025–26, after the next state election. A new hospital at Meekatharra will not be built until after the next state election. Meekatharra Hospital was built in the 1950s and the money allocated to it by the previous Liberal–National government through royalties for regions was taken away by this government when it came to power in 2017. It was promised at the 2021 election and it will now be delivered after the 2025 election. It is smoke and mirrors. The people of Meekatharra are really going to love that!

Members may or may not be aware—I have brought it up a million times in this house—that the fascine waterway to the boat ramp at the yacht club in Carnarvon has been blocked since April 2017. There was an election in March 2017. A weather event blocked the fascine in April 2017. It is now 2021 and still there has been no action in opening the fascine. The Carnarvon Yacht Club spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to buy a dredge to try to dredge the fascine. A group of volunteers in their 70s and 80s, along with a few younger people, got involved and the community fundraised and put in a heap of money to ensure that the fascine could be dredged. They got some way through but, unfortunately, another event, cyclone Seroja, caused the waterway to silt up yet again. The government has put money



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towards the fascine. We heard at election time that \$7 million would be going towards opening up the fascine. Then we found out that there is \$2.438 million in the 2021–22 budget. Do members think that that money is to open up the waterway? Does the member for Moore think it is?

**Mr R.S. Love:** I'm interested to know what you think.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I will tell the member what it is for. It is to build boat pens in the small boat harbour owned by the Department of Transport, which will be in competition with the yacht club. Boat pens will be built in a state-run boat harbour that will be in direct competition with the yacht club, but still the fascine will not be opened. That is why boats are being moved out of the fascine into the small boat harbour; it will allow boats and yachts to go into and out of the small boat harbour rather than into the fascine channel for recreational boating. The yacht club has lost hundreds of thousands of dollars in revenue because people cannot use their boats. The club gets revenue from people who lease the boat pens and from people who come into the fascine due to bad weather or who are touring along the coast. These people spend money in the town. It has cost our economy millions and millions of dollars because of the inaction of this state Labor government. It is making a smoke-and-mirrors promise yet again. When I look at the \$7 million, all I see is \$2.438 million for boat pens in the small boat harbour and no money in 2022–23, 2023–24 or 2024–25. There is no money to dredge and have a permanent solution for the fascine, which the government promised at the start of the 2021 election campaign. I cannot believe that anyone would believe a word that any Labor candidate, the Premier or the Minister for Regional Development would say. The minister was happily having her photo taken. In fact, I was in the photo because it was great news. I support anyone who wants to invest, but when I found out that there is no money and it has disappeared —

**Mr K. Michel** interjected.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Do not let me get started on the member for Pilbara tonight. I am being nice. I will not include him in my comments because I want to get all these things on the record.

There you go; the people of Carnarvon and the Gascoyne were sold a dummy on the opening of the fascine.

Of course, I mentioned tourism earlier. I had a great time with the Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, who is a good friend of mine, at the races in Carnarvon on Saturday. We worked together, but still there is no workers accommodation in Exmouth. When I went to the budget breakfast in Exmouth, I thought that the Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti was going to announce it; I thought it had to be in there somewhere. Everyone was having a meal and saying, “This is fantastic” and they were being nice to the minister. They were waiting and waiting and of course there was nothing. There was no mention of the major issue that is driving what is happening with small businesses and tourism and to protect the environment. There are no funds in the budget for workers accommodation and there will be no land release. The foot is on the hose when it comes to land release in Exmouth, yet rents are going through the roof, there is no land to purchase and people are camping all over the Exmouth gulf. These people need help. The environment needs help. The government talks about helping the environment—I will get onto native forests in a moment—yet the damage caused by people camping in the national park, along the highways and on the beaches is having an effect. Coral Bay is under immense pressure because there is no workers accommodation. There is no housing. It cannot cater for the people who are living in an ad hoc way and putting pressure on the environment.

Pressure is being put on our volunteers—our ambos and fireys. The volunteers in Exmouth generally look after a population of 2 500, but now they have to look after a population of 20 000. The stress and strain it puts on those volunteers is enormous. In Coral Bay, Sandra Lymbery has done an amazing job. When there are 5 000 or 6 000 people, if not more, in Coral Bay on any given day, that puts a huge amount of pressure on our volunteers and it puts lives at risk. Only last week, at a chamber of commerce after-hours business function, Dennis Wade from St John Ambulance in Carnarvon said that for the first time in the history of St John in Carnarvon, it was not able to attend a job. It had no volunteers to do the job because there are no government workers in the regions and there is no housing for new people, whether it be police, teachers or the workers who generally fill other positions. The volunteer services in our regions are under ultimate pressure and are at risk of collapsing.

I am running out of time, but I want to mention the police and community youth centre. The Premier turned up in Carnarvon to open the PCYC. I did not get an invitation; the local member was left out. I know why. It was because in 2017, \$3 million was promised to build a new PCYC building, yet only \$900 000 has been spent. What happened to the \$2.1 million? I will tell members what happened: the government short-changed the people of Carnarvon. The government short-changed all those groups that now do not have a home. Some have moved into the old high school, and they have done a great job of doing it up, but now the police and community youth centre is going to sell the old building. Money from taxpayers and ratepayers and fundraising has been spent to keep the old building going, and it should go back into community hands so that we can plug the \$2 million hole from the government short-changing the people of Carnarvon.

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I will end on crime. In a grievance last week, I asked the Minister for Police whether it is Labor Party policy to reduce Aboriginal incarceration rates by 25 per cent. I did not get an answer. I took that as a yes. I asked the minister whether it was correct that he or his predecessor had directed the Commissioner of Police not to charge any youths under the age of 15 and whether the commissioner had directed his officers to do the same. The minister did not answer that question. I took that as a yes. Crime is getting out of control because of these policy failures. People in my electorate need respite. The criminals—these kids—need respite. They need a break and the only way they will get one is if the government has wraparound services to back up its policies—which it does not have. We need to make sure that we send the community a message and protect people in the community. We need to protect those who are offending and make sure that they are charged and adhere to the magistrate's sentence. People need respite. This government is failing the people of regional Western Australia and it is failing the North West Central electorate because it made promises that are smoke and mirrors.

**MS L. DALTON (Geraldton)** [5.51 pm]: I am very pleased to make a contribution in support of the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 and to highlight some of the wonderful outcomes for my electorate of Geraldton in this budget.

The investment of nearly \$10 million towards renewal in Spalding is a triumph for the McGowan government. This project has been proposed for years and to be able to see funding delivered is simply wonderful. The suburb of Spalding has had some issues with antisocial behaviour and property crime in recent years. Design and urban planning let down the suburb decades ago, but we now have the chance to make substantial change and improve the suburb for all. It is great news that 45 homes will be renovated and put back into Department of Housing stock. New through roads and connectivity plans will see a few homes removed, but this will be a small loss for a much larger gain. I want to recognise and credit the work done by the WA Centre for Rural Health for many years. Lenny Papertalk, Monica Moran, Sandra Thompson and WACRH staff have all made significant contributions to the community consultation process that helped guide the precinct plan. The need for housing in Geraldton is growing. Like many communities, we are feeling the pinch of high demand and a super tight rental market. We know that there is no way to instantly make homes sprout from the ground, but it is exciting to hear that this project is at the front of the queue to be funded and delivered.

I want to recognise and thank the people of Spalding for their patience and perseverance. These people love their homes and their suburb. I am confident that this is the change that they have lobbied and advocated for to help renew the suburb. For years, many have worked towards this goal. It is with much pride, as the new member for Geraldton, that I have been able to advocate on behalf of the Spalding community to help deliver this project. In the last six months, I have attended public meetings, hosted private appointments and spoken with many people caught in the grip of housing insecurity and homelessness. We all deserve the dignity and stability of a place to call home, and housing is a key issue people present in my office every day. One of the main reasons I stood for Parliament is to make a difference—to change the status quo and to advocate for my community. I wish to thank the Minister for Housing, John Carey, who has listened to me and taken the time to understand the housing issues that my electorate faces. I would also like to thank the Premier in his role as Treasurer for allocating this most welcome investment in the budget.

Another very welcome announcement in the budget is the investment in the Oakajee Strategic Industrial Area. In some circles in the midwest, saying the word “Oakajee” may receive an eye roll, and I understand why. However, this government has seen the potential of the land already acquired for the industrial zone. The Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, has championed the cause as Geraldton looks to expand and the existing industrial area reaches its planning capacities. We are not talking about ports at Oakajee; we are talking about the industries of the future, one being green hydrogen. This is a very exciting opportunity for our state. The time to be part of the charge towards a carbon-free society is now. To be activating a place for that to happen and fostering its growth is truly wonderful. The McGowan Labor government pledged to help incentivise development at Oakajee with road funding and planning support. The initial commitment of \$7.5 million to kickstart development as well as \$4 million in additional funding directed towards developing the plan for activation of Oakajee and for additional infrastructure requirements is very much welcomed by the people of Geraldton and the midwest.

To be able to share in this emerging economy is great news for the city of Geraldton. The world is looking for a full-cycle green fuel, and the transport and logistics required to live in a country the size of Australia means that we will always need trucks and trains. If we can make our own fuels that do not produce carbon dioxide when used to power vehicles, we will take a massive step towards having a carbon-neutral economy. The dream of many people around the world has never been closer and the midwest could be part of that going forward. We already have many wind and solar projects in the Geraldton area because we have some of the best conditions in the world for wind and solar electricity generation. To exploit those power sources to make a clean and renewable fuel in the form of hydrogen is the kind of government investment and support that I want to see for the future of WA and the future of my children

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and their children. We have the opportunity to break away from the legacy of oil, gas and coal. We acknowledge that without those fuels WA would not be the powerhouse resource state that it is, but as the world around us changes, we must adapt and ensure that our resources do not become stranded assets. Industry leaders are already moving the focus of giant multinational businesses to green industry—zero-carbon steel and fully renewable fuel supply. If we as a state want to continue to be a resource powerhouse, we will need to ensure that we produce the products the world wants to buy. As part of the McGowan government, if I can help to bring those future industries and careers to the midwest, I will. I thank Minister MacTiernan and the Premier for their support for the activation of the Oakajee industrial estate.

One of the real joys during the election campaign was to be able to announce funding commitments for very worthy community groups in Geraldton. It is very good news that every one of those commitments has been honoured in the budget. Every member in this place has stories to share; mine are of local groups like STAY—Short Term Accommodation for Youth—a not-for-profit group that provides vulnerable young people a safe, secure and stable place to live while they finish school and get themselves established in work and in our society. STAY has been working out of the same building since it was established in 1991. During that time, as a not-for-profit group, it has not been able to fund significant renovations. The McGowan government committed \$200 000 towards the first major refurbishment of STAY's building in 30 years. It has now received the first round of funding. The difference it will make to staff and residents of STAY is immeasurable.

Smaller projects are just as worthy and it is just as wonderful to see them funded and delivered. There is \$24 000 to replace the surface on our much-loved and raced on BMX track at Woorree. A car park at the Geraldton Bowling Club will be resurfaced. It will collect stormwater and direct it back into underground water recharge to feed the water bores that water the club's greens. A new shed will cover the brand new generator that sits outside Marine Rescue Geraldton. There is \$50 000 to establish a playgroup in Wandina. The playgroup is growing so fast that they have to roster the days parents and kids can attend. Soon it will have its own place with storage, an office and space for families to grow and play together.

The McGowan Labor government made these election commitments and we have funded these election commitments. They are not empty promises; this budget delivers. I am humbled to see the response from the volunteers and organisers as they receive their election commitment funding, including Geraldton Rovers Soccer Club, Pollinators, Euphorium, Meedac and Bundiyarra. The Geraldton Hockey Association has been playing hockey on one ageing synthetic turf. It has had another dead turf next to its clubhouse for years. With support from the McGowan Labor government and local government, the association was already working towards renewal, with plans for two brand new synthetic turfs to be fully operational for next year's fixtures. As the member for Geraldton and a local resident for most of my adult life, it is truly one of the most rewarding experiences I have had to see these projects moving forward—to see funding flow and plans move from the drawing board to reality. I am proud to be a member of the McGowan Labor government because we deliver.

In the last term of government, Geraldton residents saw the Hosken Street roundabout built and the Durlacher Street roundabout completed. These roundabouts have changed the way those major thoroughfares operate. In this term, we will see the Barrett Drive intersection completed and the works extended down Brand Highway to ensure that traffic from Tarcoola can exit and enter the highway safely. The project has been funded to the tune of over \$2.7 million. This intersection is notorious. Sadly, lives have been lost at this intersection and although we can never repair that hurt, we can repair the road. I note that there have been unavoidable delays due to weather, but this work will be worth the wait. With additional funding from the black spot program announced, plans are back on track.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm*

**Ms L. DALTON:** I would like to continue my comments on the wonderful funding announcements around the budget. In the last term of government, Geraldton saw the Hosken Street roundabout built and the Durlacher Street roundabout completed, and these have changed the way those major thoroughfares operate. The Barrett Drive project has been funded to the tune of over \$2.7 million. The Barrett Drive intersection is notorious and, sadly, lives have been lost there. Works are still underway, but we are really pleased to see that repair going ahead.

The next project that demands action is the intersection of West Bank Road and Brand Highway. As our peri-urban fringe grows, the amount of traffic now is nothing like what that intersection was designed for. The works are funded and will give drivers on the highway and residents accessing West Bank Road peace of mind and safe access. Roads are a constant topic of conversation. As a regional member, I can say that I have commented on them a few times. That is why the McGowan government's commitment to regional roads is most welcome. This budget contains \$4.5 billion for major job-creating road projects and safety programs across regional WA. The budget has committed over \$70 million through the regional roads safety program to upgrade more than 550 kilometres of midwest–Gascoyne roads with road-safety treatments. There is \$200 million for regional road upgrades in the Agricultural Region, which surrounds my electorate of Geraldton. Indian Ocean Drive, which many of my constituents use to travel to Perth, will

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receive further upgrades north of Jurien Bay to the value of \$55 million. Although these projects are not all in my electorate, the benefits are for all road users. As a frequent driver, I am very happy to see this level of investment.

Cycling is becoming more popular every day, and the fact is that our community was not designed for the bike; it was designed around the car. Part of the 2021 election campaign in Geraldton was the commitment of \$4.3 million to implement the Geraldton cycling network expansion. This is the direct result of community consultation and hard work done by the Mid West Sports Federation, the City of Greater Geraldton, the WA Country Health Service and plenty more. This work culminated in the *Geraldton cycle plan 2020–2030: A strategic framework to create a bike friendly Geraldton*. By growing the linked network of bike paths and shared-use pathways, we are encouraging use of bikes. With overall plans to link pathways all the way from Glenfield and Drummond Cove in the north to Cape Burney in the south, we hope that Geraldton will become a cycling destination. We have a rich mixture of off-road adventure trails, along with structured trails and paths and on-road sights to see.

I have seen tourists take advantage of bike hire in our town and spend the day riding around the accessible spots, like the CBD, the shopping centres and the mall, then riding out to the lighthouse at Point Moore or to enjoy our Beresford Foreshore. I see the development of the Geraldton cycling network as an ingenious decision that will have positive outcomes for tourism and local cyclists and improve health outcomes for our local population. The easier it is to exercise and enjoy the outdoors, the more people will do it. By building an interconnecting cycle network for Geraldton, we are helping offer more choices for community recreation and participation. The Wander Out Yonder campaign is working well and tourists have discovered that there is life and adventure north of Margaret River. The number of tourists who have bikes on racks when they come to town is growing, and building a reputation as a community that embraces cycling and has the infrastructure to support it will only help our city. Once again, election commitments like this are fully funded in the budget, and I thank the McGowan government for its sound economic management that allows us to follow through and deliver what was promised to the electorate of Geraldton.

One of the most popular announcements I have witnessed is Premier McGowan's commitment to renew the Geraldton Amateur Basketball Association stadium. The GABA had plans to expand its membership because it had grown so large that it struggled to fit all the teams and competitions into fixtures. It simply needs more space. This coming season has seen the association put a cap on junior enrolments, which is very disappointing for many families in my electorate. The announcement of \$2 million to help pay for new courts, facilities and storage was massive for our city. The Geraldton Buccaneers Basketball Club uses the office as a change room for home games. The toilets and showers are not fit for purpose anymore and the canteen struggles to serve the crowds that attend the games. Along with a local commitment from my campaign for the installation of solar panels and batteries for the existing stadium, this commitment will deliver an expansion to the stadium with modern facilities and space for the local teams to play and the GABA to grow, which is a great outcome for all the families in Geraldton.

This budget contains a huge investment in health and the health system of Western Australia. The headlines are amazing. An amount of \$3.1 billion has been allocated to expand WA's health system, with \$1.3 billion to improving health infrastructure, major hospital redevelopments and expansions underway across metropolitan and regional Western Australia. There is \$960 million for the WA Health budget and \$487 million for COVID-19 response and preparedness. There is \$100 million for the emergency departments support package, which includes \$35.6 million to bolster the health workforce to help alleviate demand on the health system. There is significant investment to recruit more doctors and nurses and a new recruitment drive.

In Geraldton, we have seen the outcomes of investments into mental health.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms L. DALTON:** The Geraldton step-up, step-down facility has been open since January this year, and its services are in high demand. The budget will continue to invest in regional health outcomes and services. It is very exciting to be part of a government that is building for the future and investing in the most important areas of service delivery. Health and hospitals are a common issue for local members of Parliament in conversation and in constituent matters.

The Geraldton Health Campus redevelopment is taking shape, with the first stages completed and the full project expected to be delivered by 2024. I appreciate that the people of Geraldton would like to see this happen faster, but we must ensure that the redevelopment is the best it can be and that it represents value for money. The finished project will have an all-new emergency department, mental health beds for acute and subacute patients, more beds in the general wards and increased capacity to provide health services in the midwest instead of Perth—not that there is anything wrong with our state capital, it is just that being able to get health care close to home is so much more convenient for everyone.

I would like to now talk about the port of Geraldton as it is the beating heart of our city in so many ways. This budget continues the support and investment funding of \$9.9 million for a world-class firefighting system and \$8 million to upgrade roads within the port. The port master plan is taking shape and the Mid West Ports Authority is striving

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to make ours the best in Western Australia. Although we may never see the volumes of tonnes shipped like at the Pilbara ports, our midwest port's capacity to service mining and agriculture is crucial to regional industries. There is a bumper harvest on the way and, some hope, a record harvest for our state. Millions of tonnes of grain will flow through the Geraldton port in coming months. The investments made and the plans for the future will ensure that Geraldton port remains a crucial export and import facility for generations to come.

This budget contains funding of \$3 million for new STEM classrooms at Champion Bay Senior High School and Geraldton Senior High School. Access to these kinds of facilities can change the course of an education and create the next generation of scientists, engineers and inquiring minds that we need to continue to grow our economy and build our state. Geraldton has already seen investment in primary school STEM facilities and the students love the diversity that STEM classes offer. To take theory and make it physical is always exciting. For students, it can encourage the pursuit of education pathways they had not considered, and that is something we should be very excited about. The technology we enjoy so much today was all dreamt up by somebody. In Australia, we can claim things such as making wi-fi work. Can members imagine life without that now? By bringing STEM into the forefront of education we are enabling our students to become all they can be. The next great inventions could and should come from Western Australia.

This budget will enable the creation of three virtual power plants at Geraldton public schools. As I mentioned earlier, Geraldton and the midwest area is recognised globally as one of the best places in the world for solar and wind energy. As we look to transition away from a fossil fuel-based economy and power grid, this investment really makes sense with so many roofs, so much space and all government-owned property. Why not cover those places in solar panels and create power for the local grid? Imagine a school that has zero electricity bills annually. Imagine a school that could even sell excess electricity to surrounding homes or businesses. These were wild ideas 20 years ago, now they are here and this government has the vision and financial management skills to take advantage of them and start the journey we all need to take to clean up our society and move away from high carbon power supply. What better place to do it and show how it can be done than in our schools?

As a former lecturer at TAFE, I am thankful for the continuing investment and focus on our wonderful TAFE colleges and campuses. I will always welcome more. This budget will continue the Lower Fees, Local Skills program that saw enrolments increase by 32 per cent in the midwest in 2021. This budget will deliver a \$4 million upgrade to the visual arts building at Central Regional TAFE's Geraldton campus, revitalising aged buildings and providing something the visual and creative arts have not had for a long time in Geraldton: dedicated purpose-built facilities to unleash the talents of students and foster their learning and growth. That will diversify our skill sets and job opportunities.

Across the state, this budget will provide \$25 million to WA TAFEs for new state-of-the-art equipment. There is \$29.8 million to provide 8 000 additional vocational education and training places in schools across WA. This is on top of an additional 1 350 VET places introduced in 2021 and a \$19.2 million VET career taster program for year 9 students. Like STEM classes, VET can show pathways that are not always clear to students as they progress through school. Last week, Central Regional TAFE led the way with a five-day quick-start course in hospitality—my past background! This course led to employment straightaway. Within hours of finishing the course, people started new jobs, which is absolutely fantastic to hear, helping to provide staff that hospitality providers need right now. The world we live in is providing more career choice for young people than ever, and TAFE can deliver the training people need for the career they want. If someone is thinking of a change or wants new skills, it is arguable that there has never been a better time to look at what TAFE can provide for them.

I again thank the government for its investment in the TAFE system. This is a vital area of education and training for our state and economy. I could say more but I think I have said enough. I commend the budget to the house.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie)** [7.16 pm]: I am very happy to speak to our wonderful state budget, the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021, and I offer my strongest congratulations for the work and the brilliance that has gone into it. We are at a time in human history when challenges are being faced by us all, and in Western Australia, the McGowan government is leading the way with a budget that is not just balanced, but also provides us with a surplus. That is a remarkable achievement. This is something that is unique in this country and I think almost unique across the western world. While faced with the challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Western Australian government has managed to produce a fiscally responsible and advantageous budget. It really is something that we can all be very proud of and at the same time we can make sure that we acknowledge those who have achieved so much with this state budget. It is a remarkable achievement.

I want to begin by contemplating the beginning of the day for me, and I think for most members, and that is how I got into Parliament today—how I travelled here. I look at the part of the state budget that relates to how we commute, how we get around the state, and acknowledge the magnificent investment in public transport infrastructure, the

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now \$700 million budget for the extension of the train line from Thornlie through to Cockburn, and the many other Metronet projects; that brilliant investment and vision for the future that will give our citizens a mobility as efficient and as effective as possible. I see, of course, the need for huge investment in road infrastructure, with the upgrading and widening of freeways, the addition of lanes, the construction of flyovers and the creation of interchanges. They are very important investments so that people who have to travel by private motor vehicle are enabled to do so, so that all those people who provide goods and services that we depend on—whether it is the tradie who comes to fix the fridge or the person who comes to do the addition to a home—who have to travel by motor vehicle, ute or van, are able to get around on the road network. It is very important.

The investment that I am particularly fond of—this will not come as a surprise to members—is the investment in cycling infrastructure. I really want to commend the government, particularly the Minister for Transport, on the \$265 million in the state budget across the next four years for the upgrading of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure. That is brilliant. As I ride from home along the freeway bike path and look across at the people on the freeway who are travelling fairly slowly because the flashing lights on the Smart Freeway are warning drivers to slow down to 60 kilometres an hour because there is some congestion up ahead, I think about the way those people are travelling. I accept that many people have no other choice but to travel by private motor vehicle, for various reasons, but I also think about the relative inefficiency of that means of transport. If you are travelling by private motor vehicle, you are condemning yourself to sitting for an extended period of time. We have been talking a lot about things like blood clots and the unhealthiness of inactive, sedentary lifestyles. Sitting for an extended period is probably one of the worst things you can do, if maintaining health is one of your preoccupations; you really want to be active.

Another aspect of the private motor vehicle-oriented transit system is that valuable space on the road is being occupied. Each individual vehicle occupies a lot of space; hence we have traffic jams and congestion. Then, when getting to the destination, some pretty expensive real estate is needed just to park the car so it can stay there for eight or 10 hours. It is idle space; it really is not the best use of space. Then there is the cost of the infrastructure that enables cars to commute to and fro. It is very expensive, and we see in the budget big amounts going towards infrastructure to enable cars to get around, and some of the most expensive infrastructure provision relates to private motor vehicles. It is also costly to the individuals who drive them. There is the annual upkeep, maintenance and running costs for the car of the typical motorist who travels 20 000 kilometres or so every year. It is very expensive. It is also time-consuming. People say, “Well, I like to listen to the radio and I make useful phone calls while I’m in the car”, but I think there are better ways for people to use their time.

I am particularly pleased to see that we are investing \$265 million over the next four years for the upgrading of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure, and \$64 million for the principal shared path network. I also want to acknowledge that we have some really top-quality public servants in the Department of Transport. The Minister for Transport has asked me to chair a group known as the bike riding reference group, and through that I have had an opportunity to get to know some public servants who dedicate their working days to determining where the top priorities are for various bike network extensions. I especially want to acknowledge Justin McKirdy, who is executive director, urban mobility, and Michelle Prior, director, active transport and safety, with the Department of Transport. The work they and their teams do is really top quality.

It is inspiring to see some of the initiatives we have and the areas we are now getting into. One that particularly interests me is the use of active transport for youngsters to get to school from their homes. Bearing in mind that a lot of youngsters do not live that far from their school, it just makes so much sense for them to walk, ride or scoot their way to school. That alleviates the problem of congestion around the school and means that these kids are getting a nice, healthy, active start to the day. So many benefits come from it, compared with the alternative of investing in parking bays around schools. I say “investing” with inverted commas; it is really wasting money and space on additional parking bays, at the cost of playing areas and areas where physical and teaching activity could be conducted. That is just not good enough; we have to get out of that mindset. A state policy around encouraging children to get to school under their own steam is so important.

I have seen some statistics on this. Twenty or so years ago, 80 per cent of students made their own way to school, while 20 per cent got there via private transport. That situation is now reversed; today only 20 per cent of kids make their own way to school, while 80 per cent go via private vehicles. That is bad on so many levels, not least of which is the loss of the sense of independence that young people can gain by making their own way to or from school. That in itself is important—learning about road safety and appreciating how road and public transport networks operate. That is stuff that kids can learn going to school. If we allow our mentality to be shaped around the idea that every kid needs to be ferried to and from school by private vehicle, we lose all those benefits, and that is a terrible thing that we do not want to see.

One of the new challenges in active transport is an interesting and exciting one. It is something that the Road Safety Commission describes as e-rideables. This could provide all sorts of opportunities, and, broadly speaking, I am

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very much in favour of all the e-rideable devices. The idea is that people might commute via electric scooter; it is such an efficient way to get around, and it is something to be applauded. But we have to ensure that our road networks and paths are up to scratch and that interactions with pedestrians are taken into account. Whether we are talking about e-skateboards, e-scooters, e-bikes or various other technologies arriving on the market, we have to ensure that there is sharing of the road space. There is a premium attached to the commuting space, and we have to carry out all the due diligence around how the cohabitation of that space might occur. I applaud the work that the Road Safety Commission is doing on that. It has put out a survey through which it is asking the public for its views on this. There are various discussions about limiting the speed at which people might travel on e-rideables, and how they might coexist with other forms of active transport.

One of the areas in which we have been really smart is in making the principal shared path networks four metres wide. That is our standard. It is noticeable that the new principal shared paths alongside some of the freeways are really quite wide—four metres wide; they were previously three metres—and that extra metre seems to make all the difference. We can now allow people to pass one another, and there can be happy coexistence. That is a marvellous thing as well. The various initiatives in this space really show that Western Australians can lead the way on this; we can be so far ahead. People from other states and countries are not visiting Western Australia so much at the moment, but in the past they have admired our incredible cycling infrastructure.

An interesting discussion is going on in some quarters, principally in the western suburbs. I think it is a very worthy discussion. People have noted that cycling is not actually a school sport. There is a view that if we were to make cycling a school sport, it would help turn around the terrible ratio that I just mentioned—that only 20 per cent of kids get to school under active transport means. If cycling were a school sport, kids would perhaps be more inclined to ride their bike to school and have it ready for a race or something. The problem with making cycling a school sport is that parents and carers seem reluctant to sign over their child to a race because of the fear that such a race might be conducted on part of the public road network. There is a view that we should have criterium circuits where no cars are allowed and there is a good safe space for bike racing. That could be a school sport. That is a good subject for discussion. I know there are various projects around to do with criterium circuits. That is a very interesting one for us to look at.

A lot of our transport policy work has veered away from that and gone the other way. We have said that we want to normalise cycling as much as possible and not have it be a “lycra activity”; we want it to be an activity that people can do in their suits. We want people to be able to ride to work while wearing their tweed suits—the Oxford–Cambridge look or something like that. However, I do not think that is possible given the planning legacy we have in Western Australia, where the typical commuting distance is around 20 kilometres. It is just not feasible to wear a suit while riding that distance, but it possibly will be in the future for those on e-rideables; they could provide such an opportunity. This is an evolving space for sure. The most efficient and comfortable way to ride a distance of 20 kilometres is by wearing lycra. That is my recommendation to members—a comfort tip.

There are many, many features of this state budget that I want to touch on, but in the time available to me I want to especially acknowledge the policies around the cessation of logging in native forests. I know that this will cause some consternation in the south west of the state, but I ask the people involved in the timber industry to really look closely at the quality of the regrowth forests. I accept that native forest timbers have been magnificent for us, but I do not know that we have always put that timber to the highest-value use. I think that is one of the reasons the general public is highly supportive of us getting out of native forest logging. If native timber was all going towards the production of beautiful places like this chamber or furniture or used as building industry timber, I think there would be a lot more support for that industry, but an incredible amount seems to be used in other less attractive and low-value ways. I acknowledge that.

I am also very appreciative that the Minister for Environment has implemented a policy for native vegetation. We focus a bit on the forest areas of the state, but native vegetation, which is our most biodiverse vegetation, is often only knee high. It is the kwongan vegetation—the various sandplain scrublands. It does not sound attractive, but in biodiversity terms these areas have more diversity than just about anywhere else on the planet. I commend the minister for working on that policy for native vegetation. That is, indeed, a tremendous initiative and one that will pay great dividends for the state.

The state budget is a great achievement by the McGowan government. We are in a very fortunate situation. I am honoured to be part of a government that has managed the state’s finances so well. I commend the state budget to the house.

**DR K. STRATTON (Nedlands)** [7.34 pm]: I rise tonight in the debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 to share with this chamber what the state budget means for the community of the seat of Nedlands, and particularly the investments in health, public education and animal welfare.

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The Nedlands electorate is a centre of excellence for health care in Western Australia. We are home to three public hospitals, including the only paediatric and women's hospitals in this state. We are also home to two major private hospitals and multiple inpatient mental health providers. Just over seven and a half per cent of the residents of the seat of Nedlands work directly in hospitals, according to the last census. Further, world-leading medical research centres such as the Telethon Kids Institute, the Harry Perkins Institute of Medical Research and the Lions Eye Institute are located in the electorate, as well as peak health bodies such as the Heart Foundation, Arthritis and Osteoporosis WA and the Stroke Foundation. We welcome thousands of health workers to our community every day, who help to make Nedlands a vibrant place in which to live and support the success of small business in the area. This budget recognises the essential role of health in our state and local communities, and provides investment in infrastructure, clinical care and research to ensure that we continue to make the highest-quality care available to all Western Australians.

In particular, I would like to focus on the significant investment in women's health and the commitment to build a new women's and babies' hospital. This brand new state-of-the-art facility will be built in Nedlands, and will be co-located with Perth Children's Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital. We have, of course, heard much mention of Edith Cowan's achievements in this chamber in this the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her historic election. Edith Cowan contributed much to Western Australian society. Indeed, she was instrumental in the campaign for the creation of a women-specific hospital. The Women's Service Guilds of Western Australia, of which Edith Cowan was a founding member, arranged a meeting at the Government House ballroom on 8 November 1909, and it was at that meeting that the establishment of a women's hospital was first raised. King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women opened its doors some nine years later, in 1916, on the site of a converted government industrial school on Barker Road in Subiaco. This building, Harvey House, still makes up part of the grounds and is home to the WA Medical Museum. This museum is run by a dedicated group of eight volunteers, and a recent visit showed me just how far we have come in providing for women's reproductive health. Although we have come a very long way, there is a need for further modernisation and integration of health services for women—a need the McGowan government has recognised and responded to with this significant budget commitment. The King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women advisory board was established the same year the hospital opened, in 1916, with Edith Cowan a founding member of that board. That year, 304 babies were delivered at King Edward. Today, almost 6 000 babies are born at the hospital each year, accounting for about 20 per cent of all births in Western Australia.

Like many Western Australians, I was born at King Edward and it was the only place I ever considered delivering my own two children. Knowing that it was the place that all complicated and high-risk pregnancies were delivered, I considered it the safest option. I am very grateful to that hospital for my positive and safe birth experiences, and particularly the support I received from the amazing midwives to establish a successful breastfeeding relationship with both my babies.

In addition to the thousands of babies who are safely delivered into the world, King Edward cares for more than 5 000 women with gynaecological conditions, including cancer. A further 2 000-plus premature and unwell newborns are cared for every year in the hospital's neonatal unit, the largest in the Southern Hemisphere. KEMH has Australia's only postnatal mental health unit to be located onsite at a women's hospital, rather than at a psychiatric facility. It is also home to the country's first donor human milk bank, which provides more than a thousand litres of breastmilk each year to premature and unwell babies. It is Western Australia's only major referral centre for high-risk pregnancies. It is also home to many specialist clinics and services, including the adolescent clinic, childbirth and mental illness clinic, next birth after caesarean clinic, Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service, menopause clinic and more.

I take a moment to acknowledge my social work colleagues at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, who were instrumental in advocating for the establishment of the adolescent antenatal clinic and the Women and Newborn Drug and Alcohol Service, both of which were considered very controversial at the time and both of which continue to provide a safe and responsive service for some of our most vulnerable pregnant women and their babies. When I worked as a social worker at King Edward hospital, we dealt with complex and challenging issues around very profound grief and loss, family and domestic violence, child protection, complex ethical decision-making and advocacy for women's rights to deliver their babies in ways that were dignified and respectful of their cultural and social context. King Edward hospital has offered our community a proud history of leadership and advocacy on a range of sensitive, complex and challenging women's health issues, advocating for all women's reproductive rights and the right for all babies to be born in a safe environment. It is committed to the promotion of positive health and social outcomes for women, families and newborns. I tell of this history to emphasise that King Edward hospital has played a vital role in the lives of many, if not all, Western Australians. The new women's and babies' hospital is the next crucial step in advancing and modernising that care and leadership even further.

Many of the foundational buildings at King Edward hospital are over a hundred years old, with new technology or further maintenance and expansion simply no longer possible. The facilities were not originally designed to



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accommodate the complex level or type of care that has emerged in this modern era. Recognising this, the McGowan government made an initial investment of \$3.3 million in the 2019–20 state budget to commence preliminary planning of a new world-class women’s and babies’ hospital. It will remain WA’s only tertiary maternity and gynaecological hospital. It will be a centre of excellence in modern and centrally located facilities that will be available to all Western Australian families, with \$1.8 billion locked in to construct this new world-class women’s and babies’ hospital. That funding has been secured through the McGowan government’s budget surplus. An additional \$5.4 million has been allocated in this 2021–22 budget to further support business case development and planning to ensure that the hospital will meet community needs and best care standards. The new build is planned to be constructed adjacent to Sir Charles Gairdner and Perth Children’s Hospitals. This location in itself is part of the modernisation of care, as it means that women in need of intensive care or the emergency department at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital will have ready and timely access to that care, as will babies in need of specialist paediatric care. It also means that babies admitted to Perth Children’s Hospital will have their parents close by, rather than being separated by a suburb.

Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital itself will have a \$19 million upgrade to its emergency department as part of WA’s recovery plan, as well as a new eight-bed behavioural assessment urgent care centre, and \$12.1 million to establish an image-guided operating theatre, which will enable contemporary treatment to be provided to patients with vascular disease. At Perth Children’s Hospital, where we recently opened the Koolangka Bridge, there will be an additional \$4.8 million towards more staff for patient monitoring in waiting areas. That is part of a \$35.6 million commitment to implement new staffing models in all our hospitals. There is also \$3.2 million towards the planning and design of a dedicated children’s hospice, which will be the first in Western Australia. That is a long overdue development to provide children and their families with compassionate and dedicated end-of-life care. It will be a place in which children and their families can have privacy, access to nature and specialist medical and social care.

When work commences on the women’s and babies’ hospital, it will create more than 1 400 jobs for Western Australians. Living close to the hospital precinct, I know that the construction phase will also invigorate the whole area. When PCH was being built, one of our local cafe owners told me that they had to adapt their menu offerings and timings, making sure that bacon and egg rolls and milkshakes were available and ready to go out the door from pre-dawn right through to lunchtime. Then, after work, the local pub became a somewhat unique combination of corporate workers, university students and workers wearing hi-vis clothing. The seat of Nedlands welcomes not only this investment in women’s health, but also the flow-on benefits to our local infrastructure and small businesses.

The seat of Nedlands provides care for all creatures great and small. We are home to two statewide animal shelters that are located in Shenton Park. The Cat Haven and Shenton Dogs’ Refuge Home provide a stable adoption environment for pets and promote responsible pet ownership. Shenton Park Dogs’ Refuge Home is WA’s oldest shelter and remains on the same site in Shenton Park as when it opened in 1935. Many of its existing kennel and pound blocks were built in the 1960s. Although they have undergone extensive maintenance work for many years, they are no longer fit for purpose. Despite the limitations of its facilities, the home still saves more than a thousand dogs in need every year. Some have been badly abused and neglected; others are very loved but can no longer be cared for. Working in consultation with staff and volunteers, the home embarked on the development of a master plan focusing on sustainability, land utilisation and the modernisation of kennels and other facilities. As a result of its strategy and planning and the McGowan government’s active commitment to improving animal welfare, the dogs’ home will receive \$400 000 to demolish and rebuild one of its largest primary kennels. This will mean that it can provide modern, humane care for more dogs.

Just across the road, the Cat Haven provides an important service to home and rehome surrendered kittens and adult cats, as well as shaping policy and practice in the care of cats at community, council and state government levels. With very little funding, the charity is run primarily on donations. It has a core team of essential staff and a large team of dedicated volunteers. To improve the health and wellbeing of the cats in its care and to facilitate a higher rate of successful adoption, the Cat Haven will receive \$150 000 in this budget for facility upgrades, including the fit-out of a dental surgery at its Shenton Park premises. I thank both the Cat Haven and Shenton Dogs’ Refuge Home for their contribution to animal welfare, promoting animal rescue and shaping community and government responses to animal welfare issues, and for their contribution to the Western Australian community.

One of the changing demographics of the seat of Nedlands is the number of young families who move to the area so that their children can access high-quality primary and secondary public education. Shenton College has rapidly expanded in both student numbers and physical size since it was established in 2001. The college has made history as one of Western Australia’s leading and most awarded public schools. The school’s reputation for high-quality education and care, led by its motto, “Much more than marks, learning for life”, has seen many families move to be in its catchment zone. We were one such family, moving there when our kids were one and seven years old so that they could go to Shenton College. My eldest child is in his final year at Shenton College and is sitting his ATAR

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examinations. I take a moment to acknowledge all the staff at Shenton College for the care and teaching support that they have provided during what have been very disrupted senior years for my son and his cohort.

Recognising the need for another public secondary school to serve the communities of the seats of both Nedlands and Churchlands, the McGowan government officially opened Bob Hawke College in 2020. This year's budget includes \$52.9 million dedicated to the stage 2 development of the college. This second stage will see the school become a hub of student creativity and talent, providing spaces for students to rehearse and showcase their talents, including a performing arts centre, dance and visual arts studios, music rooms and media studios, as well as more general classrooms. The design involves a unique roof terrace and outdoor landscaped areas to give students unique ways to engage with their learning and pursue the school's motto of "Extraordinary together".

We are also building STEM infrastructure in our schools around Western Australia. This budget includes funding to convert a classroom into a science laboratory at Hollywood Primary School and funding for science equipment at Dalkeith, Hollywood, Jolimont and Nedlands Primary Schools. There has never been a greater investment in public schooling in the seat of Nedlands, which is so important, as it is a value pursued by many of the parents who live in the electorate. As someone who is proudly public—the product of a quality, holistic public education at Hollywood Senior High School—I applaud this ongoing commitment to public education for our community.

I briefly mention two social investments reflected in this budget that are particularly close to my heart. Grandparent care is the fastest growing form of out-of-home care for vulnerable children in Australia. Many of these arrangements are informal; that is, they are family arrangements put in place to ensure the safety and care of children. Recent research by Wanslea found that over half of informal grandparent carers are living below the poverty line—that is, on less than \$49 000 a year—with 20 per cent living on less than \$19 000 a year, which is just over \$320 a week. Most are single women aged over 65, many of whom were already living in poverty, and taking on the role of carer of their grandchildren exacerbates this poverty, particularly as they are raising families larger than the Western Australian average, with an average 2.4 compared with 1.9 children. Their experiences of poverty often translate to food insecurity, not being able to afford their utilities and forgoing their own healthcare needs in order to afford the day-to-day expenses of caring for their grandchildren, yet grandparent carers derive great satisfaction from their caring role, knowing they are keeping their grandchildren safe and secure in a home filled with love and care. They do this while sacrificing their own health, with Wanslea's research showing that they are worse off in their physical, mental, social and financial health when compared with their same-aged peers. I am delighted, therefore, to see a tripling of the grandcarers support scheme for eligible, informal grandparent carers in this budget. This annual payment is designed to support grandparent carers in their caring role. The increase in this payment will allow grandparent carers an increased range of choices in meeting their grandchildren's essential needs. It is also a recognition of the vital role that they play in our community, including the immediate and long-term savings to the state and the community by keeping children out of the foster care system.

Having worked for nearly 10 years at Wanslea, which is one of the largest not-for-profit providers of out-of-home care in Western Australia, I have borne witness to the challenges of young people when they transition out of care at 18 years of age. This budget provides \$37.2 million to expand the Home Stretch pilot to a permanent statewide program. Home Stretch allows young people to not just transition out of care but to transition to adulthood because it provides an opportunity for an extended care period to develop life skills, such as managing accommodation, budgets, relationships, a household, employment and study. This development reflects research evidence and, more importantly, the voice of the lived experience of young people who have left the care system. It also reflects the Australian trend of children staying at home longer. Across the country, around 85 per cent of 18 year olds still live at home with their parents. If we afford this right to our own children, we should certainly afford it to children who have had a care experience.

Extending universal foster, kinship and residential care to the age of 21 will change the lives of young people in care. Evidence shows that it reduces their risk of homelessness, doubles their chances of getting a job or going on to higher education and reduces the chances of them ending up in the justice system. According to a Deloitte Access Economics report, every dollar invested in extending care is paid back at least twice over in future savings. I am proud to be part of a government that recognises the importance of the care experience, whether that experience be grandparents stepping up to provide care or those in the care system who have the right to a transition to adulthood that most young Australians enjoy, and how it can transform experiences and outcomes for those not only those individuals and families, but also us as a community.

This McGowan Labor government budget will benefit the electorate of Nedlands with core universal services. The investments in health and public education in particular will allow the community of Nedlands to continue to grow and thrive. I commend the budget to the house.

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**MR P. LILBURNE (Carine)** [7.52 pm]: I rise today to support the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021. It is my honour and privilege to be part of the McGowan Labor government of Western Australia, and I wish to congratulate the Premier; the Treasurer, Mr Mark McGowan, on this remarkable set of financial reports.

As the member for Carine, I take financial responsibility and good governance seriously in my daily business activity. During the election campaign, I assured the constituents of Carine of excellent representation and sound financial management. I can prove to my constituents of Carine that the WA Labor government has delivered for our community now and into the future. The Treasurer has produced a plan that allows for the development of the state of Western Australia whilst beginning to repair the diabolical damage done to the state's finances and reputation by the Colin Barnett Liberal conservative government. The Treasurer, Hon Mark McGowan, deserves recognition for his diligence and forward-thinking approach.

WA has the strongest economy in Australia and, as an economist, geographer, teacher and father, I will make particular note of a number of areas that come to mind after going through the budget papers. First, this budget is sensible in its approach; it acts maturely by paying down debt. It comprises sensible spending and low increases to government costs, and it has a good direction for the future of our state. Second, it factually proves that the Mark McGowan Labor government is outstanding in the running of the state's economy. It inherited a debt of more than \$43 billion and we have heard that that debt is coming down considerably for the betterment of our children and grandchildren into the future.

How else do I interpret and assess the WA budget for 2020–21? I see it as a forward-thinking budget in that it allows for the construction of infrastructure, such as a new desalination plant. This will enable us to maintain reasonable growth at 3.25 per cent and, as an economist, I know that if that is done for a period, we will double our gross domestic product. With that continued growth, the desalination plant will support new suburbs, new developments and the betterment of our grandchildren into the future. I also see it as a forward-thinking budget because of its investment in education. It allows for our state to be a clever state—to answer and adapt to the dynamic workplace and employment opportunities that exist now and into the future. I also see it as a forward-thinking budget because of its investment in solar research. Recently, my colleagues and I had the privilege of visiting a solar plant in the northern part of the Pilbara. It is a reflection—excuse the pun!—of the McGowan Labor government's approach to forward-thinking investment.

I also see an overarching theme of care in the budget. In this finely tuned document, the Treasurer approaches the topic of stronger communities with an investment in law and order and the protection of our communities. Care is reflected in the public housing initiatives that are being brought to the table as a priority activity for the state and in the more than \$1.9 million that is being spent in the health portfolio. This budget is an example of a government and a Treasurer who care about their constituents now and into the future.

Lastly, I would like to give an example of how this care is reflected in my electorate of Carine. During the next financial period, Duncraig Fire Station, which is located near Lilburne Road, will be provided with substantial resources to care for my community in various types of emergencies. I also see in this budget a very community-focused directive from the Treasurer, with the continued protection of our society from these unprecedented problems, which we have confronted so successfully as a government. The Treasurer needs to be acknowledged for that.

Lastly, when I look over these budget papers in general, I see that we are building into Western Australia an enhanced resilience. We are providing additional COVID clinics—for example, in the Joondalup shopping centre. I attended the opening of the COVID clinic with the Minister for Health, Hon Roger Cook, and other colleagues. This resilience to future problems is further evidence I can take back to my electorate of Carine to say to my constituents that the Mark McGowan Labor government has delivered its promises and will continue to deliver them in the future—here is the proof.

There are two more points I would like to raise about this overarching view of the budget papers. One of those is that the budget reflects a diversification of the Western Australian economy. It acknowledges in a mature way that particular financial gain has been gleaned from our natural resources, and promotes other businesses and economic and job activity in the future. I detest hearing from the member for Cottesloe the very thought that our Premier and Treasurer has failed our state in diversifying the Western Australia economy. Here is the proof that that is not the case.

Lastly, the Mark McGowan WA Labor government is respected by economic groups that have independence from government such as Standard and Poor's and Moody's Investors Service. As a teacher of year 12 economics throughout the state, I know that these are the corner tools and groups that assess governments' performances around the world. As the Treasurer said earlier in this house today, their assessments of the behaviour, planning and execution of financial plans in the state are beyond repute. They are outstanding. On 30 October 2020, Standard and Poor's Global Ratings rated WA as AA+. I quote from the Western Australian Treasury Corporation, which stated that

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Moody's Investors assessed the Western Australian economic situation as Aa1 and stable for investors into the future. This is a remarkable assessment.

WA's strong economy and WA jobs are a key focus of this budget. At a glance, the Western Australian domestic economy grew by over four per cent in 2021. It was the strongest of all states for the second year in a row, placing Western Australia as one of the top performing economies in the world. Our effort to crush the virus quickly through short, sharp lockdowns has worked, with Western Australia having amongst the lowest number of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the world. This has allowed us to keep our economy more open and underpinned strong consumer and business confidence. These facts cannot be denied. The state's Treasury states that gross state product, which includes net exports, grew at 3.25 per cent in 2020–21, with growth expected to accelerate to 3.5 per cent for 2021–22. That figure is the fastest rate that the Western Australian economy has grown at since 2013–14.

The Treasurer has acknowledged that the growth is expected to be fuelled by strong growth in housing construction and business and government investment. The government has listened to small, medium and large business, and has approached stimulus investment. The terminology being used at the moment is to smooth that over the next two or so years, and so be it. That is outstanding growth for a state.

Looking at exports, the Western Australian economy grew to a record \$223 billion minimum in 2020–21, accounting for more than half the national exports. By protecting those industries performing well at the time, the Mark McGowan Labor government has ensured that we have been able to provide more than half of national exports. That is truly astounding.

We have seen a rapid recovery in our jobs market since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. When it started in approximately May last year, I was still teaching. I saw the fear, I saw the concern, on students' faces, on colleagues' faces, on administration staff's faces and on parents' faces during parent-teacher interviews. I acknowledged that fear, and the Western Australia government, led by Mark McGowan, saw our citizens through—an undeniable fact. Despite the biggest global economic shock in decades, more Western Australians now have a job than ever before, with record employment in July. Over 107 000 jobs have been created since Mark McGowan's government came to office—another undeniable Treasury fact. Treasury estimates that an additional 34 000 Western Australians will gain employment this year. The unemployment rate fell to 4.6 per cent in July 2021—the lowest in almost eight years—and is expected to average just 4.5 per cent from 2022–23.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr P. LILBURNE:** As I used to teach my year 12 students, it is incredibly good to have an unemployment rate of 4.6 per cent. It is just about as good as it gets. I was on the executive of the Economic Teachers' Association of Western Australia.

Interestingly, job ads have risen to their highest level since the last mining investment boom, underpinned by strong economic activity. The budget includes a range of measures to address skill shortages in some sectors. The forward thinking from the Mark McGowan Labor government, focusing on preferencing Western Australians for Western Australian jobs, is an outstanding directive. Supported by industry, this has assisted in creating jobs in regional WA with that multiplier effect—K being five in this case. For every additional \$10 being generated in those regional areas and in the city areas, K being five, an additional \$50 of investment is being produced throughout the economy. The record investment in infrastructure will continue to support local business and create jobs over the next four years and beyond. Despite this, we hear continued negativity from the opposition and bad press. We in the WA Labor government know it is absolutely false.

The state budget includes initiatives that are being delivered and progressed to deliver our election commitments, such as \$100 million for an investment attraction and new industries fund, to support industry assistance, attraction and grants across a range of emerging industries, including battery manufacturing, green steel and cybersecurity; \$15.1 million to strengthen WA's biosecurity capabilities; and \$3 million for the wine industry export growth partnership. The state budget includes the McGowan Labor government's climate action fund, which includes \$350 million to significantly expand the state's softwood plantation estates, creating jobs and increasing sustainability of the industry; and \$206 million for renewable energy initiatives to fuel Western Australia's future, including standalone power stations, clean energy in schools, wind turbine manufacturing, the refurbishment of the Denham power station and \$1 million for research into the viability of a local green steel industry. The budget also includes \$118 million to invest in future climate-related initiatives to respond to climate change and create climate-resilient communities. I can return to my constituents and say, "I've got the proof of what this government is doing for this fantastic state."

Within my electorate, we have had somewhat of a problem with coastal erosion. The Treasurer has announced \$26 million for carbon innovation grants and to help manage coastal erosion. That is fantastic.

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Much media has been focused on the health portfolio, and so it should. We have seen a \$1.9 billion boost to Western Australia's health and mental health services to deliver more staff, more beds and more services, along with a \$256.7 million expansion of Joondalup Health Campus to deliver more mental health treatment, more emergency department beds and inpatient beds, a new theatre, a catheterisation laboratory, a specialised clinic, additional parking and an upgrade to a range of services.

Another topic is education. The McGowan Labor government continues to invest in high-quality infrastructure and facilities at public schools whilst also ensuring support for students' wellbeing. These include Duncraig Senior High School. As a former high school teacher, I understand how important it is to invest in local schools. High-quality schools and keeping training affordable will give Carine Senior High School students the skills they need to take on jobs in high demand. We are investing \$32 million for major upgrades at Carine Senior High School and we have committed \$33.2 million to improve and expand Duncraig Senior High School. I am proud of that because I can return to my constituents and say, "There's the proof." Along with the Premier and the Treasurer, I have delivered \$150 000 for Marmion Primary School to allow it to replace its school court. Local kids deserve modern school facilities in which they can learn and play. This upgrade ensures that kids at Marmion Primary School have a state-of-the-art court for sports. During the state election, I was pleased to commit \$55 000 to Duncraig Primary School to support it in undertaking major upgrades. This will allow the school to install a new junior play area, including new equipment, and to resurface and repurpose the tennis area. These important upgrades will keep local schoolkids engaged and active while at school. One of my personal favourites as a father was the funding I was able to deliver for Karrinyup Primary School. This is true. Over \$20 000 in funding has been given to Karrinyup Primary School for an accessibility playground so it can begin work on its playground upgrades, which will include an accessible swing, ramps, rubber matting and more. These important upgrades will enable students with a disability to play alongside their classmates. I am very proud and very humble to be a member of the Mark McGowan Labor government. I was very pleased to be able to discuss with the principal at Poynter Primary School that I have been able to deliver \$120 000 in funding to upgrade its administration area. The school had been asking for that money for over 10 years. Within three months of my election, I was able to deliver that. I am very humbled, but very proud of that. This new area will be a great addition for school staff, allowing them more space to undertake their important work. I look forward to attending the opening of the new administration area when the works are complete.

Transport is another area that I feel very strongly about. The record investment in major transport projects across WA includes \$5.7 billion in 15 Metronet projects. That is fantastic. There is \$11.7 billion in road projects and upgrades over the next four years. With my example of K equals five, that is an investment of over \$50 billion once that money goes through the economy. The government has allocated \$38 million in the forward estimates to deliver a 700-bay multistorey car park at Greenwood station, which is near my electorate. That is fantastic because I can go back to my constituents and say that the Mark McGowan Labor government is delivering for our area.

Community safety is another topic that I take very seriously. I was very pleased to see that \$83.6 million has been allocated to refurbish and expand police stations. That is fantastic. This will help accommodate some of the additional 950 police officers being employed by the McGowan government. It includes \$1.2 million to extend the operating hours of three police stations, including Warwick Police Station, which is near my electorate.

I want to commend this state budget to the people of Western Australia. It is responsible and mature, and it gives the people of Western Australia confidence that their vote for, and their trust in, this government has been wise. We go forward as a state with great hope, and I commend this budget to the house.

**DR J. KRISHNAN (Riverton)** [8.22 pm]: I rise today to commend the budget to the house. I feel very fortunate to have seen two historic events in six months. I was part of the Mark McGowan team that had the historic election victory in March and now it is delivering a historic budget in September. A \$5.6 billion surplus is definitely a historic moment for not only Western Australia, but also the whole world. Throughout the election campaign, we kept telling voters that we were the team and that we were the ones who would keep WA safe and strong. We promised to keep Western Australia safe from COVID and build a strong economy, and from what we see it is quite clear that has already been delivered. In the last 18 months, almost everyone in the world acknowledges that the biggest priority for everyone is health. An investment of \$1.9 billion in health could not have come at a better time. This government is implementing a really appreciable exercise by investing \$1.9 billion in health. Being a health professional, I can anticipate what will happen post COVID. During COVID, a lot of chronic diseases have been ignored because people have only made short visits to the doctor or tried to get over things and wait for a good time to go. All those chronic diseases will start to surface post COVID. Multiple studies throughout the world clearly indicate that mental health issues have doubled and, in some places, tripled. The demand for those services will increase post COVID. This is the right time to invest in health, and that is what the McGowan Labor government has done by investing \$1.9 billion in the health budget to face those demands. We will spend money on emergency departments and expand mental health, community health and drug and alcohol services and manage the post-COVID effects without any

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problems. Doing something such as this in anticipation and being proactive is typical of the character of the McGowan Labor government.

In my career as a general practitioner in India, I delivered over 400 babies. They are all over 20 years of age now because the last baby I delivered was 20 years back. Now they are big babies! But I worked in very basic conditions, which was very scary and very stressful because if complications went beyond the limit, we were not able to manage with the facilities that we had. I am very fortunate and feel very proud to be part of the McGowan Labor government, which will deliver \$1.8 million for a mother and baby hospital for Western Australians. Of course, I am certain I am too old to have a baby, but that hospital will definitely be utilised by my kids; I am looking forward to my daughter getting married next year. I am sure people in my electorate and the people of Western Australia will look forward to the world-class hospital delivering woman and baby services in Perth.

I refer to education. I have mentioned before that when my colleagues say they have spent some time with medical students, I almost get tempted to ask which school they came from, because every second time I hear that they are from Willetton Senior High School or Rossmoyne Senior High School. I am very proud to be representing Riverton because I believe the people of Riverton have education in their DNA. They move to the electorate to provide the best to their kids. They make Riverton home to create a better future for their kids. I am very pleased that the McGowan Labor government is offering in the budget \$12.5 million for Willetton Senior High School and \$35 million for Rossmoyne Senior High School to take the standards even higher and to build an even stronger future for the kids who go to school in my electorate. For people like me who have moved from one country to another, one of the most important things is that we come here to enjoy the infrastructure, which is to a different standard. When there is a sound financial position, responsible governments invest in infrastructure. This government is doing exactly that by spending \$5.7 billion on 15 Metronet stations and \$11.7 billion on road projects. The McGowan Labor government is about building roads, building bridges, easing traffic congestion, making things better and building the infrastructure of the future for the people of Western Australia, and inviting people from elsewhere to come and enjoy the infrastructure as well.

I refer to social housing. When my son was probably in year 7—he is now in his second year of university—his school had a father-and-son sleep-out in the playgrounds. It was a winter night and it was drizzling. We had to set up our beds and, to have a feeling of homelessness, we were given a small piece of bread and half a cup of pumpkin soup. It was not full, to get the real feeling. Every hour, my son was waking me up inside the tent and saying, “Dad, I can’t sleep.” I said, “That is what you’re here for—to learn how difficult it is to sleep without a house.” This McGowan Labor government will invest \$875 million, taking the total investment to \$2.1 billion and adding 3 300 social houses to ease the pressure of homelessness. It could not have come at a better time, when people are looking at making things better after having fought hard and cooperated with the government, following advice, contributing towards keeping Western Australia safe and building a strong economy for Western Australia.

One of the election commitments was to give seniors a rebate of \$400 for safety and home security. That is a \$12 million investment. It will give seniors peace of mind. It is very important for them to feel secure with the necessary equipment to monitor the houses that they live in. An \$83.6 million investment will go into the refurbishment and expansion of police stations, with an additional 915 police officers. We are able to deliver this commitment because of strong leadership under Premier Mark McGowan, keeping Western Australia safe and strong, creating the capability to deliver things as promised.

In my community, this budget has \$5 million for the Chung Wah Association to build a community centre; \$1.5 million for the Indian Community Centre that is nearing completion now; \$162 000 for the Willetton Football Club to refurbish its clubrooms; \$150 000 for the Rostrata Family and Neighbourhood Centre to build a new playground; and \$90 000 for RAAFA to have three new exhibits. The list of the number of commitments goes on.

I am proud that this McGowan Labor government went to an election with costed promises. Now, they are in the budget and next, the people of Western Australia will see those promises being delivered in a timely and effective fashion. We are investing in the future in sound economic circumstances, with a \$1.4 billion investment in a new desalination plant, and investment in Westport, for a future port without limitations on the size of ships that come in or go out of the port. That is something that this McGowan government will deliver for the people of Western Australia. I congratulate the Premier; Treasurer and his cabinet ministers who worked so hard during COVID to keep Western Australia safe and deliver a strong economy to continue to make Western Australia a better place to be in. We hope to deliver together better budgets in the future. I commend the budget to the house, Mr Deputy Speaker, and I thank you for the opportunity.

**MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn)** [8.33 pm]: This is a great Labor budget. It is a budget that all Labor members of this chamber and the other place should be very, very proud of. That is because the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021 are built on not only strong financial management but also

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the principle that governments should invest in the services that make the greatest difference to Western Australians. We have one of the strongest economies in the world thanks to the excellent leadership of this government and our Premier during the COVID-19 pandemic. This government has taken decisive action on our border policies and quick action in response to outbreaks and it has provided prudent support for businesses throughout our short lockdowns. As a result, this state is reaping the benefits of an economic boom. I am very proud of a government that is taking a strong financial position and making important investments in our health system, our social housing system and also in my electorate of Cockburn.

This government is investing an additional \$1.9 billion in our health system, in our hospitals and in our mental health system. That money is going towards not only COVID preparedness, but also more general and mental health beds in our hospital system, which will no doubt lead to additional beds at Fiona Stanley Hospital and Fremantle Hospital, both of which are used by my constituents. We are also investing that money in dedicated mental health emergency facilities at Armadale and Rockingham hospitals, and recruiting roughly an additional 100 doctors and 500 nurses into our health system. That is a great Labor investment into our health system.

This government is investing \$875 million in our social housing package, which will lead to 3 300 additional homes being available in social housing over the next four years. Inside that package there is innovation in how we are delivering in social housing. For example, \$168.8 million of the budget is for the conversion of about 500 houses that were set aside as affordable housing into social housing, which ensures that even in the tight labour market that we have at the moment, we can get houses into the system and available for public housing tenants and those on the waitlist as quickly as possible. It also includes \$522 million to ensure that there is a pipeline of work to construct new social housing from the 2022–23 financial year.

It is a Labor budget because it focuses on issues that are important to ordinary Western Australians. It is a great Labor budget for the people of my electorate because it delivers on many commitments to Cockburn that will ensure that our area continues to be a thriving and growing community. Cockburn is a growing area. It is a hidden gem of the Perth metropolitan area. It is located close to the beach, the wetlands and industry and it has great schools and great local hospitals. This budget will ensure that Cockburn will continue to be a great place to live, a great place to play and a great place to work. We are doing that by delivering on our commitments for local schools, local community facilities and local jobs. If there is one thing that I am proud of as the member for Cockburn, it is the quality of the local schools on offer in Cockburn.

I want to pause for a moment and say the following: I congratulate Louise O'Donovan, the principal of Beeliar Primary School, for being nominated for WA Primary Principal of the Year. She is one of only four finalists in the entire state. Louise does incredible work at Beeliar Primary School, leading a team of hardworking teachers and support staff. I want to put on the record my congratulations to Louise on her nomination and to the whole team at Beeliar Primary School, because I know that Louise would say that her nomination is evidence of the great team effort at Beeliar Primary School. I want to give members some examples of the great work being done at Beeliar Primary School. Beeliar Primary School has a whole-of-school approach to the explicit teaching of phonics through a program known as PreLit in kindergarten, Initialit in pre-primary to year 2 and spelling mastery and critical reading from years 3 to 6. That explicit instruction has seen great results in literacy at Beeliar Primary School. Louise is also responsible for pushing the concept of visible learning coordination at the school. This means making sure that students can see what they can aspire to and the benefits of learning. That is done through tools and concepts teachers will know such as, “what a good one looks like”. This is where teachers display work and provide examples to students of what a good essay, assignment or project looks like, so that they know what they can aspire to. It also means displaying “bump it up” walls throughout the school, which is a wall that displays learning goals that the students are involved in creating, so that they know exactly what they are striving towards. I also acknowledge Louise’s excellent work in integrating the Noongar language into teaching and learning programs at Beeliar Primary School. Thank you, Louise, for the work you do for our community, congratulations on your nomination, and the best of luck from me for the ceremony in term 4.

There are many initiatives in this budget that will make great local schools like Beeliar Primary School even better. One example is the government’s science boost for primary schools. The science boost for primary schools will see a massive investment into science classrooms and resources throughout our state, and Cockburn will benefit from that investment. The budget includes \$7.7 million for STEM resources and classroom refurbishments in primary schools. There will be a classroom converted into a science lab at Coogee Primary School, and additional grants for science equipment, to the amount of \$40 000, for each of Atwell Primary School, Beeliar Primary School, Jandakot Primary School and South Coogee Primary School. In addition to the classroom conversion at Coogee Primary School, there will also be a grant of \$25 000 for science resources at that school. Our local schools, which are already excellent, will become even better learning environments for our kids, particularly for encouraging kids into science.

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Just two weeks ago I toured the innovation lab at Atwell Primary School with principal Stephen Doherty, and reviewed the amazing set-up they have. Atwell Primary School has access to three 3D printers in its innovation lab, where the students design, make and print models in class. It is truly exceptional stuff, and I want to congratulate Atwell Primary School for the work it is doing. I know the science grant that is going to Atwell Primary School will be put to very good use.

It is not only our primary schools that are great in Cockburn; our high schools are, too. One of our high schools is Lakelands Senior High School. This budget will see massive investment in Lakelands Senior High School. There is \$5.48 million for the construction of a new education support facility and \$3.24 million for other upgrades, including to the performing arts and sport facilities. This school will see significant improvements to its facilities for education support, performing arts and sport. That is because this government is focused on delivering for local schools.

We are also focused on ensuring that our school system gets kids job-ready and makes sure that students get the best start in life and can go into well-paid jobs. We see that in the \$29.8 million boost to provide 8 000 extra vocational and educational training places in schools, and \$25 million for state-of-the-art TAFE equipment, which was an election commitment that I was proud to announce alongside the Premier at the Munster campus of South Metropolitan TAFE during the last election campaign.

There is one particular commitment I would like to single out because it is often overlooked: the commitment, funded through this budget, to place 70 careers practitioners in public secondary schools. I hope the Minister for Education and Training is listening closely to my speech, because today I want to put on the record that I am arguing very strongly for one of those careers practitioners to be based at Atwell College. Atwell College is a high school that services a growing part of my electorate and a growing catchment area, and it is in desperate need of additional resources. I hope the minister will consider this twisting of the arm from me today to say, on behalf of my constituents, that it is essential for one of the 70 careers practitioners being allocated to public secondary schools throughout the state to be allocated to Atwell College.

I said at the outset that this is also a budget that will ensure that Cockburn will continue to be a great place to play, not just a great place to live. Indeed, Cockburn is turning into a destination in the Perth metropolitan area. I would like to highlight the government's announcement on Sunday that it has selected Aventura as the preferred proponent to build the wave park at Jandakot. That is a sensible location for the wave park because it is connected to our transport system and the Thornlie-Cockburn Link, which is coming along, and it will also unlock the tourism potential of the whole Cockburn coastline.

The tourism potential of Cockburn stems a lot from our natural environment, and I am proud that this budget has \$9.69 million for the redevelopment of the Woodman Point Ammo jetty. That jetty is one of the most popular recreational fishing and diving structures in the Perth metropolitan area and it is the only fishing jetty in the southern suburbs that is disability-accessible, but it is more than 80 years old. Although it is a great piece of infrastructure, it requires an upgrade, and this government is stepping up. The new jetty will be constructed at a cost of \$9.69 million, but the below-water structure will be retained so that we maintain the jetty's heritage and environmental values. Consultation on the new jetty closed last week, and I am very excited to see that the final plans will be released next year.

Finally, one of this government's triumphs is the protection of the Beeliar wetlands. I attended the opening of the City of Cockburn's redeveloped Wetlands Centre with the Minister for Environment just a few weeks ago, and it is a fantastic facility. I am so excited that this budget includes \$3 million for the construction of a new boardwalk and viewing platform around the Beeliar wetlands to ensure that we make the most of our local environment.

Cockburn is a great place to work. I am a champion of local jobs and local industries, and this budget is all about jobs, jobs, jobs. It is also about the jobs of the future. It is about ensuring that we have jobs in advanced manufacturing and associated industries going forward. Many of those jobs will be located near my electorate in the Australian Marine Complex. The government is making further investments in the Australian Marine Complex to ensure that we continue to provide the jobs of the future in my local area. Some examples include \$51.1 million from DevelopmentWA as part of its COVID-19 response, of which \$23.6 million will be spent on a superyacht fabrication facility at the AMC. There is also the fast-tracked \$87.6 million of projects at the AMC as part of the WA recovery plan. In fact, construction is already underway on the new vessel transfer path at the AMC as a result of those fast-tracked projects. What I would like to say particularly about the AMC is that the federal government needs to act in the national interest and make a decision on where it will locate full-cycle docking of the Collins-class submarines. When looked at objectively, the AMC is a specialised precinct proximate to Garden Island; it is the obvious location for full-cycle docking. If the federal government is to act in the national interest, it will make a decision to locate full-cycle docking in Cockburn. I know that the federal member for Fremantle, Josh Wilson, is working very hard on this issue as well. He is a great advocate for local jobs and local industry.



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This budget also makes investments in the future of trade by setting aside \$400 million for the development of Westport. Planning and development will take place largely of the road and rail links, linking the Kewdale intermodal terminal through Tonkin Highway and Anketell Road to Westport, as well as strategic land acquisitions to support those links. Westport is critical because it will create thousands of jobs and provide the scale and competitiveness needed for exporters to take the WA economy forward.

This budget is underpinned by strong financial management. That financial management has ensured that this government can make investments in Labor ideals. There are huge benefits to health and social housing. There are huge benefits to the community of Cockburn in terms of local schools, local community facilities and local jobs. I commend the budget to the house.

**MS C.M. COLLINS (Hillarys)** [8.51 pm]: It is my absolute pleasure to speak on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021. I am incredibly proud to be part of the McGowan government, which has delivered one of the strongest budgets of our generation. It is a matter of pride that in the midst of a global pandemic, we have a budget surplus of \$5.6 billion. This is the result of strong financial management over the past four years, which has allowed this state to continue to be a driving force for the entire Australian economy. The McGowan government not only dealt with the debt left by the Barnett government, but also has given our economy breathing space to allow for much-needed practical and pragmatic investment in the social fabric of the entire state. Our Treasurer has continued to defend our share of the goods and services tax revenue. Just recently, the New South Wales Treasurer unkindly compared our Treasurer to Gollum from *The Lord of the Rings*. Well, Mr Perrottet, Western Australia's GST contribution is hard-earned and is most certainly precious to us, and, of course, worth defending.

If I may, I will use my time today to talk and walk through some of the budget allocations that relate specifically to the electorate of Hillarys and will have a measurable impact there. I will also touch on some of the wider commitments that resonate with people in my community. I am not here to make constant reference to the fiscal mismanagement of previous administrations, but it does have to be said that the seat of Hillarys was ignored and neglected by successive Liberal members over the past 28 years.

As a candidate, over a 10-month period I identified issues of concern to residents and worked with the government to find ways to address those concerns. Now, we have seen unprecedented investment in the electorate of Hillarys, which includes the wonderful suburbs of Beldon, Craigie, Hillarys, Kallaroo, Mullaloo and Padbury. Less than a year ago, I was a teacher. Now, I am the member of a government that is making significant investments in education across this state. Without doubt, education has been a key focus of delivery for my electorate. During the campaign, I met with principals, parents and citizens associations, board members and parents, and listened to their concerns. I am excited by three major redevelopments that will directly benefit students in the Hillarys electorate. Works have already begun on the \$18.7 million project to rebuild Hillarys Primary School. This school had been crying out for funding for years, but was ignored by Liberal members. We are also investing \$15 million to rebuild or develop Springfield Primary School, the only local state school in that suburb. High school students in Hillarys and Padbury will benefit from the \$32.3 million extensive redevelopment of Duncraig Senior High School. The McGowan government is also investing in science, technology, engineering and mathematics education across the state, with Duncraig Senior High School and Belridge Secondary College to receive \$1.5 million for new STEM classrooms. This is not simply localised stop-gap infrastructure expenditure; these are focused investments that will be vital to the future of this state. These specialised resources will stimulate and excite a new generation of students to the very real possibilities offered by emerging industries. Belridge Secondary College has also been selected to participate in a pilot project to combine solar power and battery storage technologies to ultimately create a micro-power plant right in the heart of their school. I can think of no better way to demonstrate the dual benefits of investment in educational content and the practical application of those skill sets than to create clean power in the school for the local community.

This state government is proactively working to provide for students across the northern suburbs. I will not go into detail about all the smaller localised school commitments, but I am thrilled that every school and learning centre will receive some form of funding, perhaps for a new science lab, a nature playground, new laptops or interactive whiteboards.

There is no doubt that Western Australia's health system is under unprecedented pressure. The nurses, doctors, midwives, specialists and all multidisciplinary health professionals have our greatest appreciation and support. In this budget, the Treasurer addresses several critical areas of shortage in the statewide health system through focused investment in key sectors. There has been an incredible \$1.9 billion boost to strengthen our health system.

I have had constituents reach out to me to discuss how important Joondalup Health Campus is to their family. They see the demand at the emergency department and they deserve to know our plans to ensure that Joondalup Health

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Campus can continue to provide a world-class service. We are delivering \$256.7 million to Joondalup Health Campus. Works are already underway to deliver new beds, a new theatre, a new mental health building and a new car park.

In my inaugural speech, I spoke about the need to address and invest in mental health support. The COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly had a detrimental impact on mental health. In March this year, more than 100 mental health workers walked off the job to highlight the challenges in resourcing unprecedented youth mental health demand. I am delighted that this budget provides focused support for youth mental health, with a \$129.9 million funding package to increase access to services and initiatives. This is an investment in our young people and our future and is part of a record \$495 million boost to the Mental Health Commission.

The Treasurer said in his budget speech that the Labor government is not just addressing the issues the state faces today, but also investing in WA's future. He said that the biggest global threat over the next century and beyond is climate change, and that we cannot keep waiting for the federal government to catch up. We are acting on this. The \$750 million climate action fund will enhance Western Australia's climate resilience and assist in moving our economy to a low-carbon future. There is \$206 million in this for renewable energy initiatives. On top of this, the McGowan Labor government has announced a \$50 million fund to kickstart our renewable hydrogen industry. This is an exciting emerging high-growth export industry, and we need to give WA a head start to carve out our global share. State government support will reduce the risk for private financial investors who are looking to divest from carbon-based power generation and instead support clean and renewable green options. Under the leadership of the recently appointed Minister for Hydrogen Industry, a number of hydrogen feasibility studies across the state will be able to pinpoint the most exciting and optimal areas for green hydrogen infrastructure for our economy. Since many of the required power sources are in our least populated areas, developments of this emerging industry will be a boost to the economies of our regional communities. Importantly, this investment in an entirely new industrial landscape offers a beacon of hope for young people, who can see a clear example of a government working to support the green option rather than protecting outdated and environmentally damaging ways of doing business.

Some of the most dedicated environmentalists I know live and work in the Hillarys electorate. Volunteers in my electorate are passionate about giving back to the natural world and taking pride in our native coastal bushland to ensure that the next generation can enjoy it. Like the member for Scarborough described his seat earlier today, the seat of Hillarys, also a coastal seat, is at great risk of coastal erosion due to climate change. In this budget, \$26 million has been allocated for carbon innovation grants to manage coastal erosion. The state government is also ensuring that the coastline of Hillarys is well protected with \$125 000 of coastal care grants. This will support the Joondalup Community Coast Care Forum in its restoration activities and education and community-led rehabilitation, including fencing, weed monitoring, mapping and planting of native plants. Local volunteer groups such as the Mullaloo Beach Community Group and Friends of Hillarys and Kallaroo Foreshore play a critical role in the delivery of these programs, and I encourage residents to get involved with their local volunteer group.

Another win for our environment is the extensive funding that has gone into the cycling network. The state government has provided grants to local governments to improve the cycling network across this state, and \$8 million of this will specifically go to upgrading and extending the cycle lanes in my electorate. This will ensure that cyclists get their own space. It will increase safety and reduce competition between pedestrians and motorists. The Hillarys electorate is a very beautiful location for a bike ride, and this project will only increase the number of people leaving the car in the garage and cycling to work or on weekends. I am particularly excited to deliver \$300 000 to the City of Joondalup to go towards an incredible local initiative to build urban mountain bike trails across the electorate. Teenagers are often forgotten about when we look at building activity hubs, which generally cater for the very young or adults. These multiple interconnected mountain bike trails will help reduce the risk profiles of youths aged 10 to 17 years and help build their resilience.

I turn to public transport. Residents of the electorate of Hillarys, particularly those who live in the suburbs of Hillarys and Padbury, will be able to enjoy even greater access to our public transport facilities with the upgrade of Greenwood train station. This project to build a multistorey car park has been allocated \$38 million. It will allow for 700 parking spaces and will hopefully encourage more people to perhaps drive to the train station and then commute to work on the train. An upside for people who live a bit further north of the electorate and perhaps use Whitfords train station is that they will no longer be in zone 3. This government has announced that we have a plan to cap the fare at zone 2. This will equate to an average saving of approximately \$360 a year for Hillarys residents who commute to the city from that train station.

One issue I continue to hear about is the serious matter of dangerous driving, or hooning, in my community. Hooning not only is dangerous but also creates a lot of noise pollution on our streets at night. I am particularly proud of the election commitment of \$150 000 to the City of Joondalup so that it can purchase mobile CCTV hoon cameras that can be utilised as residents see fit, based on their own anecdotal experiences. I have met up with residents from the Harbour Rise Association and the Kallaroo Residents Association, and they have discussed with me the need

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for these cameras and helped me to find appropriate locations. As I said, these cameras can be moved to any of the hotspots that locals choose, and hopefully we will see a decline in these incidents.

This budget delivers for the Hillarys community. The Hillarys electorate is full of young growing families who enjoy the beach and an active coastal lifestyle. The Sorrento Surf Life Saving Club will receive \$8 million of state government support for its redevelopment. The club has more than 1 800 members and needs redevelopment to cater for its large and engaged membership. Families are able to enjoy healthy living habits at clubs like Sorrento and other community hubs, but, of course, the club's main purpose is to keep our beaches safe.

Craigie Leisure Centre is set to receive \$2.9 million, which will double its gym space and grow the studios to allow for more classes and healthier, more thriving communities.

This budget and the performance of the McGowan government over its first term should serve to lay to rest the many age-old clichés that conservative parties both here in Australia and abroad somehow understand business interests better, and that Labor governments are prone to uncontrolled and profligate spending. Over the last four years, this Labor government has healed the deeply wounded economy that it inherited from previous administrations. Using this very healthy surplus created by sound and focused fiscal management policies, this government will be investing in the immediate needs of our local communities, in infrastructure, and in the entire social fabric of Western Australia for everyone. By strategic investment in emerging technologies and energy industries, I believe that this government is investing in the long-term future of this state and the next generations who will live here. I commend the Treasurer for this excellent budget and I commend these bills to the house.

**MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka)** [9.08 pm]: I rise to speak on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021, and I welcome the opportunity to speak about this outstanding budget that we have before us today.

Many others before me, and I do the same as well, have acknowledged the excellent work of the Premier and Treasurer in handing down his first budget as Treasurer for Western Australia. It is, indeed, an historic achievement to deliver a budget like this in the midst of a global pandemic—a budget that is no doubt the envy of the country, and quite possibly many places in the world.

I think that this budget strikes the right balance between fiscal responsibility and supporting our most vulnerable, while building infrastructure and jobs that will futureproof our economy for years to come. Only Labor governments can be relied on to find the right balance in these matters and for proof of that, one only has to review the performance of the last state Liberal–National government. Some members have reflected on that during their contributions in this house. That government racked up historic levels of debt during a once-in-a-generation mining boom when we were enjoying what were, at the time, record iron ore prices. At the end of that boom, the Liberal–National government had not invested in or created jobs and it had not supported industry investment to sustain the Western Australian economy through the inevitable downturn that followed. During her contribution today, the Leader of the Opposition was at great pains to justify and sanitise the financial record of the previous Liberal–National government. She tried to dismiss and waive the fact that it racked up those record levels of debt and had nothing to show for it. She totally lacks credibility on this matter. No-one in this house and very few people in the state of Western Australia would agree with her, except maybe the five members that sit in her corner of the house.

What the Leader of the Opposition failed to reflect on when she made her contribution today was that this budget, this very Labor budget, invests in the future in a way that will decrease inequality and make life better for everyday Western Australians, something that was never achieved under the Liberal–National government of which she was a part. As I said, the Liberal–National government squandered the benefits of the mining boom on things like Elizabeth Quay in the hope that it could create a nice place to have dinner, and maybe it would attract some tourists to the state. But this government is using the benefits of this boom to invest in schools, hospitals and TAFE and build new industries for the future. While Liberal–National government members were thinking about dinner and drinks for the people who were lucky enough to afford it, the McGowan Labor government is getting on with the job of making life better for people, such as those who live in Mirrabooka.

The people in Mirrabooka want decent jobs and a decent safety net of public services and help for the most vulnerable in our community. That, members, is at the very heart of the difference between Labor governments and the governments of members in the corner. Labor understands and always has at the heart of its policies and fiscal choices the question of how we can make our state bigger, better and bolder for everybody. We understand that our place in the world is not just to dig minerals out of the ground and exploit them for the benefit of the privileged few. We understand that we are at our best when we use the wealth of this great state to invest in our people and their future. That is how our economy and society will prosper and grow for not only us, but also the generations of Western Australians who will come after us. The Leader of the Opposition did not provide a plan or a vision for the future. Instead, she criticised and complained and demonstrated, frankly, how unfit the opposition is to hold office.

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This budget will continue the significant repair work that was started in the first term of the McGowan government. It sets about continuing to fix the mess left by the Liberal–National government. As this budget demonstrates, this government understands that budget repair is not just an end in itself; it is about getting our finances under control because that is an essential pre-condition to making our society fairer and more just. We are fixing the budget so that we can build a strong safety net of support for everyday people and help the most vulnerable in our community. That is what good governments do. That is what the McGowan Labor government is doing. It is only ever Labor governments that take into account the needs of everyday people and work to make their lives better so that our society is fairer and our economy stronger for all. I commend the Treasurer, the cabinet ministers and all those who have contributed to this good and important budget. Our economy is strong, business investment is strong, unemployment is at a record low and exports are at a record high.

I will turn my attention to a few things that particularly interest the people of Mirrabooka. The McGowan government is investing a massive \$1.9 billion in health and mental health. This will mean an extra 332 beds in WA hospitals—223 general beds and 109 mental health beds. This government is recruiting more staff for our hospitals—100 new doctors and 500 new nurses. It is also investing \$100 million in an emergency department support package and \$256 million to upgrade Joondalup Health Campus, which is of great importance to the people of Mirrabooka and those in other northern suburbs. As we have already heard in other contributions tonight, there is a historic investment of \$495 million for the Mental Health Commission so that it can expand its services so people can access the appropriate level of care and support they need either in the community or in hospitals. Along with an additional \$87.4 million to address alcohol and other drug commitments, this represents a substantial investment in mental health services in our state. We all know that the pandemic has contributed significantly to mental issues in our community, especially in our young people. This government is addressing those issues with a historic investment into services and support to ensure that people are able to access the help they need.

I am passionate about schools and public education. We have many excellent schools in the electorate of Mirrabooka and, indeed, all around the state. They are doing important work to ensure that our young people get the skills and training they need. I am passionate about our schools being able to deliver education, opportunity and hope to our young people. This is especially true for those students who come from disadvantaged backgrounds or who may have arrived here as refugees or migrants and do not have English as their first language. Our public schools offer the opportunity to transform the lives of young people.

This budget delivers significant investment in the schools in Mirrabooka and it will help to deliver the opportunity for students to find the best pathway from school education into skilled work and a productive place in our workforce. The McGowan government is delivering better resources to strengthen learning in every public school in my electorate of Mirrabooka. This includes \$6.3 million allocated for a performing arts centre and STEM classroom at Balga Senior High School. This project will be a significant boost to Balga high school, which is more than 50 years old. The school's principal, board members, staff and students are very much looking forward to this work being completed. I am happy to know that all around the state, other high school communities will be receiving similar investments to ensure that our students have the best possible opportunities for their education to equip them for the jobs of the future.

Many of Mirrabooka's primary schools will receive a science boost for additional STEM facilities and equipment to equip their students for the jobs of the future. Marangaroo Primary School will receive \$40 000 for a science upgrade; Balga, Rawlinson and Warriapendi Primary Schools will each receive \$25 000 towards STEM equipment and to convert an existing classroom into a STEM lab. Burbridge School, Gladys Newton School and the Roseworth Education Support Centre will also receive \$5 000 for STEM equipment. I recently met with many of the principals, board members and parents and citizens association members and I know there is great excitement about these additional investments that will enhance facilities for learning. In addition, Girrawheen Senior High School recently received \$200 000 for a new fence that will combine with other works being undertaken on the oval and surrounds to ensure that the students have excellent and safe facilities to undertake sport and recreation. Gladys Newton School, which provides education opportunities for children with disability, recently received \$115 000 towards a new all-abilities playground, allowing it to make significant upgrades to its grounds and facilities. All public primary schools in my electorate have received \$12 500 towards technology to assist learning, and this will be used for the purchase of iPads, tablets, electronic white boards and other appropriate classroom resources.

I also add my support to the proposed increase in the number of school psychologists. An allocation of \$42.2 million will be made over the forward estimates to employ an additional 100 school psychologists. This will provide essential support to our vulnerable people, and I applaud this investment. The McGowan government is delivering for schools in Mirrabooka and around the state—better equipment, investment in modern facilities and support for young people who are vulnerable. All of this will equip young people for jobs for the future.

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Vocational training and our TAFE system are cornerstones of how we create employment opportunities for our young people and how we ensure industry has the skilled employees it needs. It has only ever been Labor governments that have understood the powerful link between investing in skills, employment and diversifying our economy. When the Liberal–National government was in power, it increased TAFE fees for students to record levels and left many young people unable to afford the training they needed to get the jobs they wanted. I am excited to see the commitment to training and TAFE is so strong in this budget. We are continuing to make sure that TAFE fees are affordable, as well as offering practical assistance and guidance to young people accessing vocational training.

The government is supporting school-based apprenticeships for students identified as vulnerable and at risk of not completing training by allocating \$1.3 million over the forward estimates. The government is also supporting parents to guide their children’s career considerations by investing \$737 000 on expanding career information events and resources. There will also be a trial of the placement of specialised career practitioners in 70 public schools across the state. In a former life, I worked closely with those in industry to ensure we were doing everything we could to encourage young people to consider vocational training as a pathway to employment. University degrees do not always result in better educational or employment outcomes for young people, and I know that many in industry want to see vocational training and TAFE elevated in the minds of young people when they make career choices. Vocational training provides a key linkage between industry and education and ensures people with the right skills are available to industry.

On several occasions I have been struck by the great variety of career opportunities that vocational education and training can lead to, often careers in highly technical and very well paid jobs. Industry is clear: we need to ensure we are providing professional career advice and clear opportunities for school leavers to access VET training. This will greatly assist our economy to have the high-skilled workforce that will underpin the future of our economic success. The McGowan government understands that meeting the skills needs of the future is not about getting our kids through high school and off to university. Accessing well-equipped TAFE facilities, learning from skilled TAFE lecturers with up-to-date industry knowledge and having the opportunity to apply those skills on the job through an apprenticeship or traineeship is the best way to develop the technical skills that our industries will need in the future.

The budget also provides \$25 million to upgrade and modernise TAFE equipment and facilities, as well as providing incentives for mature-age apprentices, additional VET places for year 11 and 12 students, introducing a VET taster program for Year 9 students, and the ongoing commitment to keep TAFE fees low so they are affordable for everyday people and their families. All of this adds up to a significant investment in training; an investment that will make a substantial difference to our skills and futureproof our economy. I look forward to the commencement of the \$32 million upgrade to Balga TAFE commencing in December of next year. Balga TAFE is over 50 years old and is greatly in need of improvement so it can continue to meet the needs of students and industry. There are a great many students at Balga TAFE completing apprenticeships and pre-apprenticeships who are destined for work in many industries, including the construction industry; a key industry here in WA. As a key piece of infrastructure in Mirrabooka, having the Balga TAFE updated and modernised will not just be good for those who study there; it will also provide an important boost for Balga and surrounding suburbs. Having a strong system for TAFE and vocational training is essential for my constituents; it is essential for the WA economy. Many of my constituents are much more likely to have completed a TAFE qualification than tertiary education, so I think a strong TAFE system is essential not just for them, but the ongoing success of our economy.

My constituents in Mirrabooka also need jobs. It is a fantastic achievement that the McGowan government has created a whopping 107 000 jobs since coming to office, and the unemployment rate is expected to average 4.5 per cent over the forward estimates. This is an excellent achievement, and it has not happened by accident. The McGowan government has been clear that jobs are the number one priority! The Western Australian Jobs Act has been an important step in ensuring our local industries benefit from large-scale investment by government. Requiring large projects to commit to engaging local businesses and hiring apprentices and trainees is making a difference to the employment prospects of Western Australians. This budget delivers important investment to ensure the commitment to jobs and job creation continues.

I believe there is nothing more important than a good job. This government delivers \$100 million to establish a new industries fund to support economic diversification by attracting investment. The fund will support many emerging industries such as green steel, cybersecurity and battery manufacturing. These initiatives will build on significant progress already made in ensuring that Western Australians have jobs. The huge investment in infrastructure projects, including the massive investment in Metronet, will ensure we are creating a pipeline of work opportunities. Transport infrastructure creates employment opportunities today and will ensure access to affordable transport for the future, while also delivering fewer cars on the road and less pollution. It is a significant win–win arrangement and I am proud to be part of a government that builds things—builds infrastructure, builds jobs, builds

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opportunities and builds hope. That is what the people of Mirrabooka care about. Creating jobs and ensuring our people have access to training and opportunities so they can be engaged in the labour market is, and will remain, a key issue.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms M.J. HAMMAT:** I also welcome the announcement of an additional 950 police. Community safety is an issue of concern for many people in my electorate, and additional police will help make a difference. I also welcome the announcement of extending the opening hours of Warwick Police Station, which will particularly assist access for people living in Girrawheen and Marangaroo. I also welcome, as many have before me, the \$400 safety and security rebate for seniors to allow them to purchase and install home security and safety equipment.

I also commend this government for its massive investment to support the most vulnerable people in our community. There are many things, and time prohibits me from mentioning them all, but I wanted to call out the massive and historic investment in social housing. This will make a profound difference to so many people in my electorate who experience housing insecurity. It is a matter that is regularly dealt with in my electorate office, and I welcome the decision to invest an additional \$750 million, bringing the total spend to \$2.1 billion over the forward estimates. I also acknowledge the contributions that will assist those who are most vulnerable, such as the tripling of grandparent support payments, the additional \$37.2 million for the Home Stretch program so children in foster care can remain in care until the age of 21, and an additional \$46 million for a range of matters that will help prevent family and domestic violence and support victims.

Finally, I want to congratulate the government for the inclusion of funding and initiatives that will make our workplaces fairer. Having a job is important, but only Labor governments can be counted on to make sure that workplaces are fair. Wage theft has been a problem in WA and Australia for far too long. The systematic and deliberate underpayment of working people is unfair and should be stopped. The \$2.5 million to create a specialist employment conditions audit and compliance unit will ensure that state government procurement only supports businesses that are meeting their legal obligations to pay people in accordance with awards and agreements. It is a significant way to help stamp out exploitation and underpayment using the power of government procurement. Allocating funds to ensure the smooth implementation of the work health and safety laws is essential to ensure both workers and employers have accurate and up-to-date information about the new laws. This is an essential investment that will help make sure WA workplaces are safe and that we start to decrease the incidence of workplace death and injury.

Funding Circle Green Community Legal for workers for whom English is a second language is a practical way to ensure that some of the most vulnerable in our workforce are not exploited in employment and can access the assistance they need. I also commend the government for bringing forward a review of public sector wages policy to ensure that public sector wages are fair and appropriately recognise the contribution of public sector workers to our community and to the economy.

During her contribution, the Leader of the Opposition made some comments suggesting that public sector unions had somehow been compliant during the first term of the McGowan government. I find that suggestion both offensive and wrong. The Leader of the Opposition might have attended one or two union rallies and she might now have the audacity to consider herself an expert on working people and their unions, but she is not. Public sector unions have been absolutely committed to honestly reflecting the views of their members to this government. They have done that with vigour and honesty. I have no doubt that they will continue to do so.

One of the great achievements of this government is reversing the shocking record of insecure employment in the public sector inherited from the Liberal–National government during its years in office. The Liberal–National government had record levels of casual and temporary employment and redundancy schemes that would have been laughable had they not so seriously affected the security of working people.

The contributions that this budget makes to a number of things, including jobs, are excellent. The budget initiatives that go to workplaces being fair are all about creating good jobs—jobs that support individuals and their families, jobs that help strengthen our economy, jobs that are permanent, and skills that will diversify our economy and drive prosperity beyond the current mining boom and into the future.

This is a budget that delivers for the people of Western Australia. It delivers benefits today and it will build something better for the future. Health, education, training and jobs are key pillars for people to be able to lead good lives. It is what Labor governments do best. We create opportunities and hope for everyday people, we create futures for our kids and we build economies that will be strong today and into the future by supporting emerging industries and diversifying our economies. Labor governments know how to dream, they know how to build, they know how to create a better future and they know how to support those most in need. This is a budget that will deliver significant benefits for the people of Mirrabooka and the people throughout this great state. It will help them get good jobs

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and access the public services they need. I congratulate the Premier; Treasurer for his work on this budget, and all the members of cabinet. I commend the budget to the house.

**MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda)** [9.32 pm]: I, too, stand to make some comments about the Appropriation (Recurrent 2021–22) Bill 2021 and the Appropriation (Capital 2021–22) Bill 2021. I almost feel as though I should just say “ditto all of the above” and then sit down and let everybody go home early, unless the member for Roe has a contribution to make this evening. He has. I have a few things to say directly to him. I think this budget is positive proof that the WA Labor government, under the strong leadership of the Premier, has capably managed the state government’s finances, which is in stark contrast to the reckless debt and deficit approach of the remnant opposition when it sat on the government benches.

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** You’re a hard man.

**Mr M. HUGHES:** The member said that to me when I contributed to the Address-in-Reply to the Governor’s speech. I have watched his performance from the opposition benches over the last few months. He has learnt very little as a result of the election defeat. More is the pity.

I listened with a great deal of interest to the Leader of the Opposition during question time today. I could hardly believe what I was hearing. The Leader of the Opposition had the temerity to attempt to school the Premier; Treasurer on financial responsibility and good budgeting. I just shake my head. I do not know what is going on over there, but opposition members need to sort something out.

This budget has context. The context was made obvious at the beginning of this month by the Australian Bureau of Statistics when it released the national accounts data that showed that Western Australia’s domestic economy grew by 4.3 per cent over 2020–21 as measured by state final demand. That is a fact. The result pointed to the strongest growth of all the states and the highest growth in eight years. The strong results have underpinned Western Australia’s success in crushing COVID-19, with our economy more open, and fewer restrictions than any other state. This has resulted in Western Australia’s businesses and households being consistently amongst the most confident in the nation. I will not go through each element of the state’s final demand. It is a matter of record. We can all look that up if we choose. Since the start of the pandemic, Western Australia’s economy has grown by 5.7 per cent. It is the strongest of the Australian states. It has grown at almost double the rate of the rest of Australia. It is a result of the resolute and capable leadership of the Premier that the government of Western Australia has responded to the need to work hard to crush any outbreak of COVID-19. As a result, by protecting our health against all naysayers and the carping criticism of successive leaders of the Liberal opposition and the Leader of the Nationals WA, now the leader of the opposition alliance, it is true to say that we remain one of the freest and most successful economies in the world.

We can rightly lay claim to effectively being the engine room of the nation. As much as it galls the opposition, including the member for Roe, it is an indisputable fact that Western Australia’s strong economy has supported the commonwealth and other states throughout the pandemic, with billions of dollars flowing to the eastern states through the continued operation of our mining industry. There is not a word of appreciation from the Prime Minister or the New South Wales Liberal Premier and the opposition. The WA Liberal Party and the Nationals WA tend to back in the doubtful methods that the New South Wales Premier has adopted in confronting the epidemic in New South Wales. The free movement between the states cannot extend to accepting the free transmission into our state of the Delta variant of COVID-19; a state that has worked hard to keep it at bay. We cannot let it move throughout our economy with the illnesses and deaths that will inevitably follow, particularly across the more vulnerable members of our communities. The opposition’s headlong push to open our borders prematurely to infected states is fraught with danger.

What is an acceptable level of avoidable illness, hospitalisation or death? That is a question that the Prime Minister, the Premier of New South Wales and the members of the remnant opposition in this place need to answer. Just what is an acceptable level of illness and death when we are yet to have had an adequate level of vaccination? The main concern of the Premier and the Western Australian government has been, is and always will be, the safety of Western Australians. I am comforted, as is the overwhelming majority of my constituents, that as vaccination rates continue to increase, the Western Australian government will cautiously remove border restrictions when it is safe to do so, and not before. I hope that today’s announcement regarding older members of our community being able to access the Pfizer vaccine puts an end to vaccine hesitancy and we see an increase in vaccination rates, not least amongst Indigenous Western Australians, to the level of the rest of the Western Australian population.

The 2021–22 budget sets out WA’s future by building on the Western Australian Labor government’s record of strong financial management to keep the WA economy growing, to create quality local jobs, to invest in key services and to deliver on election commitments for all Western Australians. Continued responsible budget management has delivered strong budget surpluses that provide the McGowan Labor government with a capacity to fund

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Western Australia's future, and I am proud to be part of a government that has created more than 27 000 additional jobs since the start of the pandemic and to see unemployment at its lowest levels in close to eight years. Returning the state's budget to a stable footing took significant effort and discipline by the McGowan Labor government in its first term. I am convinced the government will keep its promise to maintain a healthy budget, to deliver quality services and infrastructure and to keep fees and charges low while ensuring that we have reserve capacity to respond to unforeseen crises across the second term of the McGowan government. By maintaining this steady and strong focus on local manufacturing and production, by creating WA jobs, and by investing in training for the jobs of the future, the McGowan Labor government is delivering on its comprehensive WA jobs plan. Although the fully funded plan is ambitious, it is achievable and affordable and, above all, responsible. It includes a range of initiatives to further diversify the economy in areas such as high-tech manufacturing, agriculture, tourism and defence industries across a range of government activities that members on this side of the house have so ably enumerated during the course of the debate.

Importantly, the 2021–22 budget delivers a record \$30.7 billion infrastructure program that well and truly sets up our state for the long term. Although the Nationals are in evident denial about the McGowan Labor government's commitment to governing for the whole of WA, it is a simple fact that under WA Labor, regional Western Australia will benefit from a record \$9.1 billion of investment in infrastructure in addition to the nearly \$4 billion delivered through the royalties for regions program, and billions of dollars more through the delivery of quality services across the state no matter where Western Australians happen to live. The McGowan Labor government also continues to build strong, safe and fair communities through significant investments in education and training, health and community safety, and more police officers, homelessness measures and community infrastructure across WA—again, as we have heard from the various contributions that members on this side of the house have made this evening.

I would like to comment on a number of specific areas provided for in this budget. I did not think I would live to see it, but the historic move to protect our native forest is warmly embraced by my constituents. My community applauds the government's decision to end logging of our forests from 2024 and to invest a record \$350 million over 10 years to expand Western Australia's sustainable softwood timber plantations by an additional 33 000 hectares to create and support a sustainable Western Australian forestry industry.

**Mr P.J. Rundle** interjected.

**Mr M. HUGHES:** It is particularly pleasing that the government has moved immediately to protect 9 000 hectares of high conservation-value karri forest with other high-value forest areas to be recommended for national park status. The decision to protect our forest builds, as we have heard, on the legacy of the Gallop Labor government's decision to end old-growth logging some 20 years ago. It is a conservation move that should be warmly embraced, member for Roe, by the opposition. Why? It is because the transition of the forestry industry to more sustainable timber products is an investment in Western Australia's future that will support the construction and forestry industries and our regional communities. As the Minister for Environment; Climate Action has observed, the impacts of climate change, the importance of maintaining biodiversity and forest health, the need for carbon capture and storage, declining rainfall and declining timber yields mean that action taken now to protect WA's forest is essential. It is an historic move. It means a move away from a traditional industry and, consequently, the McGowan government will ensure that support is provided to workers, businesses and communities in the south west with links to forestry through the \$50 million Just Transition plan. The plan will provide support to affected workers and businesses, drive further diversification of local economies and assist in identifying and securing sustainable job opportunities by establishing a native forestry transition group for this purpose.

Mention has been made of the \$875 million boost to social housing in Western Australia. I will not go over that again, only to say it is a real game changer and made possible by this government's capable management of the state's finances.

I am particularly pleased with the boost to Western Australia's renewable hydrogen industry through a \$61.5 million allocation announced in this budget. It will supercharge Western Australia's growing renewable hydrogen industry to create what will be sustainable twenty-first century jobs, and move us towards a low-carbon future. It has been welcomed by members of my electorate and that funding also will be used to stimulate local demand for renewable hydrogen in transport and industrial settings and to drive investment into renewable hydrogen.

I made these comments in response to the opposition's tendency to catastrophise; it wants to create crises at every turn, not least in our hospital services. The opposition ignores the fact that we have one of the best hospital services anywhere in the world and although that has been put under pressure because of the consequential effects of the COVID pandemic, in this budget the McGowan government has committed to significant investment in health, mental health and hospital services and initiatives. I am particularly pleased that \$3.1 billion has been allocated to



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expand the health system, with \$1.3 billion going towards improving health infrastructure, and major hospital redevelopments and expansions that will be underway across metropolitan and regional Western Australia.

A number of election commitments were made for my electorate. I am particularly pleased that in the area of schools, the government responded to advocacy that was made by me on behalf of Lesmurdie Primary School. I want to commend the work of the previous principal, Richie Griffiths, who brought to my attention, when I was elected in 2017, the dire straits of that school. As part of this budget, there is close to \$17 million allocated, which will see a complete replacement of that school—in stages, because it is an active and live site—with work due to be completed in 2024. I am also pleased that Kalamunda Senior High School and the co-located secondary education support centre are beneficiaries of \$18.3 million, which will see a major upgrade undertaken of the high school and some state-of-the-art facilities provided for the secondary education support centre. In addition, the budget provides a \$2 million allocation for a STEM upgrade at Lesmurdie Senior High School. There is \$1.7 million for STEM and associated upgrades at Kalamunda Senior High School, which is additional to the \$18.3 million that I have just mentioned. There is a \$730 000 allocation to Gooseberry Hill Primary School for an upgrade to existing classrooms, including an air-conditioning upgrade.

I refer to community infrastructure. Building on the \$5.5 million to complete the community learning centre at Jorgensen Park, which was achieved under the last term of the McGowan government, an additional \$5 million has been allocated for the upgrade of Ray Owen Reserve.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M. HUGHES:** We have allocated \$2 million to provide an upgrade to the Perth hills bike trails at Goat Farm Mountain Bike Park and Kalamunda Circuit, and a further \$1.5 million for John Forrest National Park. In addition to the \$1.5 million for the upgrade of trails, \$8.4 million has been provided to fund enhanced visitor facilities at John Forrest National Park, including a service centre. There is a further \$1 million worth of commitments for a range of smaller projects that have been allocated across my electorate. All the recipients are well aware of what they have received and I do not intend to provide more detail than I provided in my speech in reply to the Governor. I am very happy to reaffirm the government's commitment through this budget of \$1.6 million over the next four years for the Perth Observatory to provide assistance for recurrent operations for STEM educational projects. This is in addition to the close to \$1 million we provided in the first term of the McGowan government for a number of educational initiatives and conservation projects.

Regarding transport, I am pleased that the federal government has provided \$10 million to fund the initial planning for EastLink WA, formally known as the Orange Route. There will be \$1.1 million for the upgrade of lighting and pavement markings on Canning Road between Welshpool Road East and Glenisla Road, and \$740 000 for the installation of a much-needed roundabout at the intersection of Railway Road and Elizabeth Street in Kalamunda.

The member for Cockburn suggested he might twist the arm of the Minister for Education and Training somewhat. If he is going to twist one arm, I might twist the other in relation to schools in my electorate. We are very, very happy with what we have received for Lesmurdie and Kalamunda Senior High Schools, but Glen Forrest Primary School has a great need for an upgrade to its early learning centre. If the minister is listening, I let her know that I will be pressing that particular point assiduously over the next 12 months or so to see how far we can get. I would like to remind the minister that it is the school's 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I am well aware that there is a promise to provide a STEM classroom, but not on the immediate horizon. It would be fantastic if there was some opportunity to see that brought forward by way of a celebration for the school's 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Maybe I am pressing the point a bit too hard, but the minister will forgive me for wanting to advance the needs of the schools in my community.

As I said in my speech in reply to the Governor's address earlier this year, the McGowan Labor government has a solid plan promising a solid future for the people of our state that builds on the achievements of its first term in office. It is a plan that focuses on Western Australia as a modern inclusive society where each Western Australian, no matter where they live—member for Roe—is treated equally and afforded the same access to services and opportunities in health, where patients are put before profit, and in education where teachers are valued, ensuring a focus on literacy, and where there are investments in science in primary schools. Western Australia's Labor government has brought a fresh approach to dealing with the state's transport needs, including the establishment of our fully funded Metronet and the manufacturing and service jobs that will flow from it, particularly in Bellevue, a place that is close to my heart. It bodes well for the future and we can be assured that benefits will accrue to the economy as a whole. Above all, this state deserves WA Labor's achievable plan for jobs, job creation for reducing unemployment and for dealing with the economic challenges facing the state as it responds to climate change, COVID and the need to move towards a clean renewable energy economy. I commend the Premier for his astute steerage of the state, for his capable move into the position of being Treasurer of the state and for delivering for all Western Australians in the 2021–22 budget. I commend it to the house.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 September 2021]

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Mr Mark McGowan; Ms Mia Davies; Mr Stuart Aubrey; Mr Terry Healy; Mrs Robyn Clarke; Mr Mark Folkard;  
Mr Vincent Catania; Ms Lara Dalton; Mr Chris Tallentire; Dr Katrina Stratton; Mr Paul Lilburne; Dr Jags  
Krishnan; Mr David Scaife; Ms Caitlin Collins; Ms Meredith Hammat; Mr Matthew Hughes

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Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.R. Michael**.

*House adjourned at 9.55 pm*

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