

GREENHOUSE EMISSIONS — WESTERN AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

Motion

HON ROBIN CHAPPLE (Mining and Pastoral) [10.41 am]: I move —

That this Council calls on the state government to —

- (a) detail current annual greenhouse emissions from all sources in Western Australia;
- (b) detail the projected level of annual greenhouse emissions from all sources in Western Australia until 2020, including currently approved new proposals; and
- (c) explain the state government's strategies, if any, to attempt to constrain or reduce these projected levels of emissions.

In moving this motion on behalf of the Greens (WA), I wish to provide the house with some fundamental data that I hope the minister will respond to in her response to our motion.

In 1990, Western Australia's gross carbon dioxide equivalent emissions were approximately 54 million tonnes per annum. By 2007, these had reached 82.8 million tonnes per annum, an increase of 42.3 per cent. Since 2007, with the advent of Woodside train 5, Bluewaters power station and other fossil-based developments such as the reconnected Muja power stations, Western Australia's emissions would now be in the region of 85 million to 90 million tonnes per annum. If we tabulate the projected emissions from the Pluto project, the Woodside Browse Basin gas project, the Dyno Nobel explosives plant, the Gorgon development, the Yarra Holdings explosives plant, the Apache Reindeer proposal and the BHP Scarborough gas development, the tabulation would indicate that Western Australia's emissions would lift to more than 100 million tonnes per annum by 2015. That would mean that we would be getting very close to a 100 per cent increase in our CO₂ emissions.

At this very same time when the global economy and other countries in the world are striving to reduce emissions, we seem to be paying absolutely scant regard to the direction the rest of the world is taking. We are truly living in isolation from the rest of the world, not just in our geography but also in our avoidance of global realities. The effect of dangerous climate change is already beginning to affect our lives, if only in a creeping fashion. A particularly devastating bushfire, a river system that will not recover and vicious storms, such as the hailstorm that shocked Perth, are events that are dangerous, and costly judging by the impact of the hailstorm on the insurance sector alone. They can even be deadly. They are only a taste of what we face if the climate really gets out of control.

We should be clear that climate change is not a doomsday process in the traditional sense. We are not all going to drop dead from heatstroke in 2050—although I note that in 2003 Europeans found out to their cost how deadly an unprecedented heatwave can be—or be consumed by tidal surges. These are the scenarios that climate deniers love to attribute to us precisely because they are implausible. The effects of runaway climate change and the inevitable results of runaway emissions will not cause the extinguishment of life, at least not human life. But they will make our relationships with the weather and the land more unpredictable, costlier and, indeed, life threatening in some cases.

The frequency of deadly events, such as the Victorian bushfires and the incredibly costly storm in Perth, will increase, as will their severity. Our ability to produce food will diminish as the extremely finite water supply diminishes and our land in some cases is rendered useless for agriculture. This will collide with the demands of a dramatically increasing population at home and globally.

Hon Norman Moore: Can I ask what you are quoting from?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: I am quoting from my handwritten notes.

We really do not know the result of this collision, but humanity's reaction to scarcity throughout history is extremely patchy. It is clear that we require better leadership from the people in this building—leadership that is not chained to the coal mafia and to outdated thinking on resources and energy.

Hon Donna Faragher: Do you want to become a minister?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Absolutely! I would love to! A great job!

Hon Donna Faragher: That would be an interesting day!

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Then we would maybe start getting somewhere. At the moment we are just going backwards at a million miles an hour.

Several members interjected.

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Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: It takes great self-awareness, courage and patience for an individual to recognise an unhealthy physiological trait, and to take steps to manage and eliminate it. I would think that the Minister for Environment should have great self-awareness, courage and patience. Quite clearly she does not.

Several members interjected.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Likewise, it is difficult for the community to look inwards to identify practices that are damaging to the community, to identify long-term prospects and to make changes to mitigate those prospects.

Hon Norman Moore: Are you still quoting yourself?

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Yes, I am.

Hon Norman Moore: It sounds to me like you are reading your speech.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: No, I am not reading a speech. These are notes and I am actually going to move on.

We recently have been asking a number of questions of the ministers opposite. I will quote from a question that we asked the Office of Energy about whether the Office of Energy keeps a record of its emissions from individual power sources. The answer from the minister was that facilities and corporations that meet or exceed the reporting thresholds under the commonwealth National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Act 2007 are required to report their energy consumption and production of their emissions to the commonwealth government. We actually heard similar comments from the Leader of the House, the Minister for Mines and Petroleum, when he referred us back to the federal government's national energy reporting requirements. When we look at those reports, we find that, indeed, even the federal government does not know because at the federal government level, industry sector corporations report net emissions from an Australian base; therefore, we cannot articulate in any of those reports what is happening in Western Australia. For example, BHP Billiton produces various amounts of carbon dioxide emissions in its industry across Australia, but we cannot break that down to find out what is coming from Western Australia. That is the same with other industries. Interestingly enough, when we look at the greenhouse gas emissions data for Chevron Australia Holdings, it is unclear whether there is double dipping; is that data included in the Woodside figures or is it retained separately? Again, it is difficult to ascertain where those total figures arise from. Therefore, we cannot attribute these figures to any particular state or jurisdiction; but we can say that Rio Tinto, for example, is creating a certain degree of emissions across the nation.

The minister seemed to be a little concerned about expanding rates of carbon dioxide emissions. However, it is interesting to note that in the Environmental Protection Authority's report "Collie Urea Project Shotts Industrial Park, Shire of Collie and Port of Bunbury", the department went a degree further than the minister when it identified that indeed the situation was not as it should be. The EPA report states —

As a party to the Kyoto Protocol, Australia is obliged to limit its —

Greenhouse gas —

... emissions to no more than 108% of 1990 levels (around 600 Mtpa) up to 2012, and Australia is on track to achieve this.

The Commonwealth Government's long term goal is to achieve a reduction of 60% from 2000 levels by 2050. This would limit Australia to 221 Mtpa in 2050. Based on WA's percentage of Australian emissions in 2007, this target would equate to around 28 Mtpa in 2050 for WA.

The latest data from 2007 (Australian Government 2007) shows WA's emission to be 76.3 Mtpa. Projects with existing environmental approval (but not yet included in the emissions inventory) could add more than 20 Mtpa to this amount. Additionally, there are currently proposals in the EPA assessment process, which if approved and constructed, would emit a further 36 Mtpa.

Therefore, the EPA seems to have a bit of a handle on what is going on and, indeed, identifies that we are possibly going to have something similar to the projection, which I just articulated, of about an 80 to 100 per cent increase in our CO₂ emissions by 2020. The EPA report continues —

Given potential total emissions of the order of 133 Mtpa, the task of reducing WA's emissions to 28 Mtpa within four decades becomes daunting ...

I love the expression "becomes daunting". I would really love to know from the minister how we are going to get down from 133 million tonnes per annum to 28 million tonnes per annum within four decades. Is there a plan? Is there a strategy? Are we going to ensure that flaring does not occur? Will we do things like stopping the

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development of coal-fired power stations? Are we actually going to introduce proper renewable energy? The EPA is obviously seriously concerned.

Hon Donna Faragher: Hon Peter Collier is doing just that.

Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE: Then maybe we will hear from the honourable energy minister as well.

Let us look at some of the things that can be done. These issues have faced many, many governments around the world—Norway, Germany and others. As of, I think, a couple of days ago, Canada declared that it will now phase out all its coal-fired power stations. That is a really strategic move. The United Kingdom, under a Conservative government, has said that energy provided to all government departments must be reduced by 10 per cent by the end of this year.

I note that the Auditor General yesterday came out with a pretty scathing report that examined the Energy Smart Government program. Energy smart government—that is an oxymoron, is it not? The Energy Smart Government program was established in 2002 and was designed to achieve a 12 per cent reduction in the government's energy consumption by 2006–07. The Auditor General's report noted that this was a fairly ambitious target and that the government had actually reduced its consumption by a staggering 0.1 per cent. I do not think that is anywhere near 12 per cent—well done for trying, but I think trying a bit harder would be better. I note, though, that by 2004 when I asked in estimates in this place of the then Coordinator of Energy at the Office of Energy, Anne Nolan, why there had been a reduction in 2004 of about two per cent, in fact, greenhouse gas emissions during that same period had actually gone up relative to the amount that was being saved. If by any chance we are now down to a 0.1 per cent reduction over that entire period, there must have been massive regression since 2004 when we had actually achieved a two per cent saving. Therefore, since 2004 things have obviously gone completely belly up.

Let us get on to the issues of carbon dioxide emissions in this state. I can actually give the minister some indication of where we are going because as a consultant, prior to getting into this place, I conducted some research into proposed CO₂ emissions in this state. I will quote a few points from that research. Western Australian CO₂ emissions at the time of writing the report were in the range of 70 million tonnes per annum. The report stated —

... 10 Mtpa currently coming from the onshore LNG facilities and downstream processing in the area of the Burrup.

The North West Joint Venture LNG facility currently produces 8Mtpa CO₂e, with Burrup Fertilisers producing 1.8 ...

I note that Burrup Fertilisers' production of 1.8 million tonnes per annum is incorrectly reported in the federal emissions inventory because that says that it is producing only about 0.8 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum.

The research noted that the expansion proposals for the Gorgon project will contribute a further 62.7 million tonnes per annum of which some will be geosequestered, if that process works. Inpex, which is now no longer in the area, was going to produce about 30 million tonnes per annum. Woodside Pluto would produce about 4.1 million tonnes of CO₂ per annum and, if it goes to four trains, as was announced on the Australian Stock Exchange, would take its emissions to 8.2 million tonnes per annum. Apache Ranger's proposal for Devil Creek would produce about 100 million cubic feet of CO₂ a day. I will not move on with that because I cannot find my paperwork and I am running out of time.

In the North Sea, projects involving the process of flaring have been stopped. Bjørkhaug and Hope are the two engineers who achieved that on behalf of a Norwegian North Sea continental shelf corporation employed to stop flaring. Flaring is one of the most significant CO₂ emitters in Western Australia. If we introduce to industry some controls on the way that we deal with the production of oil and gas in light of what has been done in the rest of the world, we could go a long way to curbing the expanding and burgeoning flaring activities that are associated with the oil and gas industry. I note also a report last week by the United States Government Accountability Office, which is starting to look at controlling flaring right across the industry spectrum. On that basis, I conclude my comments.

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan — Minister for Environment) [11.01 am]: I want to make a few comments on the motion before the house this morning. I say at the outset that the Western Australian government supports national action to reduce Australia's greenhouse gas emissions. In saying that, the government recognises that primary responsibility for emissions reduction policies and instruments rests with the commonwealth government and the Australian Parliament, but the state government will play its part and it is already doing so. In a moment I will go through some of the initiatives that the state government is involved in at both a national and state level. Before doing that I indicate that Western Australia is firmly of the view that the decisions on the design, implementation and timing of a carbon price mechanism are matters for the

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commonwealth government and the federal Parliament. As we know, our former Prime Minister Kevin Rudd announced that the carbon pollution reduction scheme would not be introduced until at least 2013. I do not know whether that is the same position that will now be put by the current Prime Minister —

Hon Sally Talbot: Yes, you do. She made it very clear.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: She has made some comments.

Hon Sally Talbot: Did you not read her statement? That is how little interest you take in it.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: We are yet to see whether those comments will turn into action.

WA very much supports continued discussion and action on the CPRS. We are mindful, however, to make sure that it does not impact negatively, particularly on Western Australian jobs. I think all members in this house would agree with that.

Despite the decision that was made by the federal government under the previous Prime Minister, the WA government has supported recent major national initiatives developed through the Council of Australian Governments, such as the national strategy for energy efficiency and the 20 per cent national renewable energy target. We also participated in some significant work undertaken last year through the Office of Climate Change in my department as part of the Council of Australian Governments complementary measures review, which involved both an internal and external review of Western Australia's measures, policies and laws in this area. The government has also undertaken, and is continuing to undertake, a number of initiatives, which I will get to in a moment. That relates to paragraph (c) of the motion before the house.

I now turn briefly to the specific issues that have been raised by Hon Robin Chapple's motion. With regard to paragraph (a), I can advise the house that according to the state and territory greenhouse gas inventory 2008 that was produced by the commonwealth government's Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency in May 2010—so it is very recent—WA's net greenhouse gas emissions total 72.8 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2008. These are 2008 figures, which have recently been released. All states have agreed through COAG to harmonise data collection reporting through the national greenhouse and energy reporting scheme, and more accurate information is being compiled through the development of that scheme.

With regard to paragraph (b), as Hon Robin Chapple has previously been advised, these projected levels are currently not available. However, the strategic energy initiative currently being developed by the Office of Energy is expected to develop projections for greenhouse emissions. The Minister for Energy will be able to advise the member on that aspect.

With regard to paragraph (c), in addition to the initiatives that I have already mentioned that relate primarily to national collaboration through COAG, the state government is currently developing a climate change adaptation and mitigation strategy that will assist the state to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions as well as to adapt to the impact of climate change. That work is currently being undertaken by the Office of Climate Change.

Other current government-funded initiatives assisting in the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions include investment in the Indian Ocean climate initiative, an initiative that commenced under the previous Court government—so we are going back some years—under Hon Hendy Cowan, who has maintained a longstanding interest in this initiative, and is still involved. There is investment in the Western Australian Geothermal Centre of Excellence, which I understand is taking Western Australia a step closer to an energy-secure future. This centre is based at the University of Western Australia and aims to improve understanding of and the ability to harness WA's geothermal fields. Many members in this house would be aware that UWA is very much a supporter of geothermal energy, and, indeed, it has a plant that assists with its air conditioning. I think it is at the end of the playing field that I used to cross to go to the psychology department every day! I have spoken to UWA on a number of occasions, and it is very strong in this area. We also have the low emissions energy development fund. Funding has gone to two projects. One is the oil mallee harvester prototype that was developed by Future Farm Industries CRC, which Hon Peter Collier and I had the opportunity to launch a couple of months ago. In addition, we have allocated \$12.5 million in funding for the development of a five megawatt demonstration wave power station near Garden Island. That has been developed through Carnegie Wave Energy, which has installed a mooring off Garden Island for a prototype CETO wave energy converter unit. This technology is capable of converting wave energy into zero-emission electricity and also powering the desalination of water. That is a very exciting initiative.

In addition, Hon Peter Collier and I have announced the third round of funding under the LEED—low emissions energy development—program, which is \$10 million. I understand that we have received 27 applications, so it is a highly sought after program. We will be making an announcement on the successful applicant or applicants later this year; obviously, it goes through a high level of due process and consideration. We also have a number

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of education and awareness programs, such as the TravelSmart program, the state Solar Schools program and rebates for solar hot-water heaters. We have an electric vehicle trial that was announced by the Minister for Transport a couple of months ago. We are exploring clean, green transport alternatives. Ten electric cars are being trialled in a partnership at a government and private level; it involves local government authorities, state government departments and private sector organisations. The Department of Environment and Conservation has an electric vehicle and the City of Swan has taken one on board as well.

The Office of Climate Change is also working on a range of collaborative initiatives, including the recently released climate change in local government project, which aims to build the capacity of local governments to respond and adapt to climate change. It consists of two sub-projects that are being developed concurrently. The first is a web-based climate change adaptation online toolkit that will provide templates, tools and policy to assist local government officers to address climate change adaptation issues. The Western Australian Local Government Association, which has worked very closely with the Office of Climate Change on this, will have operational control over that website once it is launched. The second project is a local government planning guidelines project that includes a review of current decision-making frameworks, model policy development and guidelines for local government planners that will eventually be incorporated into the toolkit.

Also very soon I will launch Operation Climate Change, an online education program that aims to provide an integrated learning experience for school students, primarily in years 5 to 10, to explore issues associated with global warming and to learn how to reduce their carbon footprint in their family home. That is very important because, at the end of the day, if we really want change, we get young children to push it. Often—I will soon find out!—when children get an idea in their heads that they want to pursue, they push their parents until they are allowed to do it. That is one of the reasons for this program.

We are also investing in areas such as the water sector to develop and implement measures to adapt to a drying climate. We are also undertaking reviews through the Department of Planning as part of the state coastal planning policy, which involve sea-level rise projections. If there is time, Hon Peter Collier has more things to say from a renewable energy perspective in response to the comments Hon Robin Chapple made when he spoke to the motion.

With that in mind—other speakers would like to speak on this motion—I can say that this government is taking practical action on climate change. I noted in his comments that Hon Robin Chapple indicated that we are not doing that. I appreciate that Hon Robin Chapple probably wants us all to live in a tent, hold hands and sing *Kumbaya*, but the reality is —

Hon Robin Chapple: I've never done that; and never will.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: If he would like to do that, I would be happy for him to do so. Having said that, there is a certain reality —

Hon Ken Travers interjected.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: We could all go and hold hands. That would be a nice way to end this parliamentary session. Having said that, it would not be entirely practical. That is why we are focused on practical actions that involve both supporting and being part of national initiatives such as the energy initiatives to which I referred—Hon Peter Collier will also make some comments on them—and those practical initiatives that we can take at the state level. They go to supporting renewable energy projects such as the wave project by Carnegie, the oil mallee harvester and initiatives such as helping young people have a real and true understanding of how they can do their bit to improve the situation we find ourselves in. We are focused on taking practical action, and I reject any suggestion that we are not doing that.

HON PHILIP GARDINER (Agricultural) [11.13 am]: I am very fortunate to be given the floor. I will speak about the issue of global warming from a perspective different from that suggested by Hon Robin Chapple in his motion. I heard the minister talk about the initiatives that the Western Australian government is taking. My view is that the fundamental point in all this is the intensity with which we are taking action. Whether we have any intensity in acting on global warming is dependent on how we, especially in chambers such as this, believe the science. Global warming is not all because of us. We all know that huge natural forces are influencing climate change; it is about how the earth's orbit around the sun alters and the amount of wobble in the earth's axis—it is about a whole lot of different external issues, too.

However, what we are talking about here today is the anthropogenic influence. In our own National Party group we have just begun to focus on this. There is a wide discrepancy of views about the significance of the influence that mankind is having on our climate. Until we agree as a group and until we as a chamber of representatives of our electorate can better understand the science, we will not apply the intensity to what we might have to do if we are going to stop ourselves from running like lemmings towards a possible cliff, because we are contributing

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so strongly to the changes in our climate. I am not saying that we are totally contributing to climate change, but I want us to understand the science first.

The molecule CO₂ is complex. How many of us in this chamber really understand that? I certainly did not until my youngest son said, “Dad, it must be pretty easy to prove whether a molecule of CO₂ will increase the temperature; why don’t you get a tent and pump it full of carbon dioxide and see what happens to the temperature?” I thought, “Well, why don’t we find out what CO₂ is doing to increase the temperature of our atmosphere?” What we do know is that CO₂ is about 0.4 per cent of the atmosphere, and it is a molecule that attracts radiative heat. The heat comes in from the sun in short wavelengths and reflects off the earth in a longer wavelength, which the CO₂ molecule absorbs. It absorbs it at a rate that causes the earth at ground level to warm. Since the mid-1940s the concentration of CO₂ in the atmosphere has increased from about 270 parts per million to about 378 parts per million today. That is about a 30 to 40 per cent increase, and an increase in the temperature by about one watt per square metre. That is how the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change measures it. It is worthwhile reading the IPCC report or parts of it. I have read Plimer, the biggest sceptic, and I have heard Monckton, another sceptic. The rhetoric is cumulative, but until we start getting away from the rhetoric and start looking at some basic foundation truths, how will we ever determine a policy with the intensity we may need to? We will not have any intensity unless we believe with some passion that the facts we hear outside the rhetoric are valid.

One extra watt of heat per square metre is being generated as a result of the increase in CO₂ from about 270 to 378 parts per million. What happens with that heat? It causes water to evaporate. Water becomes another greenhouse gas because it evaporates—in the same way steam evaporates from a kettle—and releases heat into the atmosphere. That is another four watts per square metre. With five watts per square metre occurring across the whole world, it takes a simple mathematical calculation to demonstrate that it will increase the world’s temperature by one degree Celsius. It is the radiated heat that comes from the sun hitting the earth in short wavelengths that are then reflected back in longer wavelengths that causes that temperature increase when it is captured by CO₂. As it goes up higher, that gets reflected back to the earth again, and so there are feedback loops in this complex meteorological scientific environment, the dynamic of which mankind has been attempting to understand for the first time in the past 20, 30 or 40 years. We as decision makers in this place need to understand that and read widely enough—I emphasise the term “widely enough”; we need to read both sides, the sceptics and the so-called alarmists—so that we can sift through the science to convince ourselves where we stand. That is why I think that former Prime Minister Mr Rudd failed with this carbon pollution reduction scheme. He assumed that we all must have thought that global warming was true. He failed to assume that there is a lot of scepticism, and there was no effort to educate us. I like what the state minister is saying about schools: schoolchildren should be taught about the science of global warming. That will be a start to get at the base level, because this is a bottom-up show. We have to believe it at the ground level to get the movement to make decisions to improve things.

In terms of Hon Robin Chapple’s motion about carbon footprints, I believe that that is the way we have to go at the end of the day. Every business and every household should be legislated for, as they are for tax returns, so that they fill in a carbon footprint form every year. Then there should be a cap. I believe in the emissions trading scheme strategy to get a carbon price, because that is the only free-market way that allows us the freedom of choice to make a decision about what to do if we all believe that we have to reduce carbon emissions. If we do not care about that, we are lost. We have to understand the science so that we have the belief that carbon is increasing our temperature, damaging our living environment and creating a real risk for our children in the future. We must have that passion before we start thinking about what we are going to do to change it. The emissions trading scheme has a strategy that gives us the choice. It may not have been constructed in the right way by the former Prime Minister—I have a different view about how we should construct it—but it is the direction we have to take at some time if we believe the science.

HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [11.22 am]: Thank you, Mr Deputy President. I have been trying to get the call on a couple of occasions in this debate. I know that it is said of some people on the right of the political spectrum that they are so right wing that they do not have a left arm or a left leg. You clearly have eyes only for those on that side of the house, Mr Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Max Trenorden): We will have to have a debate about that, member.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Thank you for giving me the call now, Mr Deputy President.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Member, there have been four speakers—one Greens, one Liberal, one National and one Labor, and I think that might be reasonably fair.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Thank you, Mr Deputy President.

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I am very pleased to be given the call to support this excellent motion moved by Hon Robin Chapple. I will not take up very much time because, as was indicated by interjection earlier in the debate, the Minister for Energy also wishes to contribute to the debate. I think it is very important that his views are put on the record as well.

I will take a couple of moments to say that I thought the most interesting point made by Hon Robin Chapple was that we desperately need better leadership in this area. Indeed, I would venture to suggest to honourable members that any leadership at all would be better than the complete lack of leadership that we are getting from the Minister for Environment in the state government at the moment. Of course, she does have a lot to contend with. She has a couple of colleagues sitting around the cabinet table with her who have put their views on the record that they think that climate change is due to something other than the causes that have now been very accurately pinpointed by the science. It is probably fair to say that a number of people are praying that the worst outcome will not happen. That is clearly not good enough. As members pointed out earlier in the debate, the science on this topic is in. Hon Ken Travers informed me when Hon Philip Gardiner was speaking that, when he was at university in 1986, he wrote a paper on the very topic raised by Hon Philip Gardiner. Perhaps I could effect an introduction at some stage and they can share the information they have on that topic.

Of course, the poor besieged Minister for Environment also has to contend with her federal leader who is on record as saying that his view about climate change is that it is absolute crap.

Hon Ken Travers: Don't say that; it's unparliamentary!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I believe I am entitled to say that because I am only quoting the national leader of the Liberal Party. A few obstacles are being placed in the minister's way and she is clearly falling at all those hurdles.

As the Labor Party's spokesperson on climate change, I am happy to say that it was a very great moment when the previous Labor Premier made David Templeman only the second minister with the portfolio of climate change. That was a very significant move and it was reflected in all the policy settings that the former Labor government put in place. I also inform the house that the state Parliamentary Labor Party agrees absolutely with the view of the new Prime Minister that what we need is action on carbon prices, as Hon Philip Gardiner also has said. I absolutely concur with his sentiments. I only wish that the state minister would open her ears and listen to some of the advice that is coming from her own backbench that this action on carbon pricing needs to be couched in such a way that everybody can get on board and that we capture the imaginations of our young people, as well as the attention of our scientists in working out the technical changes that we need to put in place.

This is one of those occasions on which local government is effectively leading the charge. That is not true on a number of counts, but I think it is important to give credit where it is due. I draw the attention of honourable members to two specific moves that have been made in my area of the South West Region. One move relates to the City of Albany. I will not quote the article in detail but I draw members' attention to the report in the *Albany Advertiser* of 22 June headed "Region's climate on notice". It is a report of an excellent submission made by the South Coast Natural Resource Management group under the leadership of the chief executive, Rob Edkins. It is a fantastic report. I refer all honourable members to that report to get a flavour of how proactive local governments are prepared to be in representing community views on this issue. The other move relates to my home town of Denmark. An article in the *Albany Advertiser* of 29 June headed "Denmark council votes to go green" states —

The Shire of Denmark is officially green after council voted to sign a declaration on climate change being supported by WA's peak local government body.

I take my hat off to these people. There are on some of these local councils a number of excellent advocates for real practical activism in the area of climate change and they are doing a fine job. I wish, like Hon Robin Chapple, that they could get any leadership at all from the state government. I saw in an Ian McEwan novel that I was reading the other day reference to climate change as the hot breath of civilisation. That is a very poetic way of expressing what is likely to be one of the most difficult problems that we will have to face in our time. I believe that climate change is not the price we have to pay for being civilised. I look forward to being part of putting in place the Labor Party's policy platform in this area so that when we win the next election, we can get off to a flying start in making real changes in this area.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Minister for Energy) [11.29 am]: I am not sure how much time I have.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT (Hon Max Trenorden): You have three minutes and 16 seconds.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I thank the house for allowing me a few minutes to make some comments. Ideally, I could talk about this subject for hours. I will make a few comments about the motion. The government has hit the ground running with regard to renewable energy. We are signatories to the Council of Australian Governments agreement to meet the national target of producing 20 per cent of our energy from renewable

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energy sources by 2020. In the short time that we have been in government, as Hon Donna Faragher has said, we have provided \$12.5 million for the Carnegie wave power pilot plant. In one fell swoop we almost doubled the contribution of renewable energy in the south west interconnected system from five per cent to nine per cent with the agreement to build a 206-megawatt 111-turbine wind farm in Merredin. We are actually doing things, and that needs to be acknowledged. An increase from five per cent to nine per cent in 18 months is a pretty good start, although we have a lot to do yet. We are looking at further extending the LEED—low emissions energy development—program at the moment. Hon Donna Faragher also alluded to the \$6.5 million allocated to the Solar Schools program. We extended that program to independent and Catholic schools so that all the younger generation can be involved, not just those in the public schools. That gets the message through to the younger generation.

For the first time we are developing a strategic energy initiative. That is a broad-based holistic approach to energy that has not been taken in this state since 1979. That was the last time we had a comprehensive energy policy. We are doing that. I would like to think that Hon Robin Chapple and the Greens (WA) have made a contribution to the SEI. I have been to a number of consultations around the state; I was in Mandurah just last week. We are seeking advice from the community. It will not be the gospel according to Pete or the Liberals; it will be the gospel according to the community. That is what the SEI is all about. We have hit the ground running.

We have allocated \$600 000 in this year's budget to develop a plan on energy efficiency. We are taking a holistic approach. There were problems with the Energy Smart program. We acknowledged that it did not achieve its aims. We brought the Sustainable Energy Development Office into the Office of Energy to make it mainstream. That is what the energy efficiency plan will do, and we will develop that. Over the next few months I will make several announcements regarding energy efficiency in particular. I will say yet again that we have hit the ground running. The strategic energy initiative has had tremendous support from the industry and the community at large. I have been heartened by the contributions to the SEI that we have received over the past eight months. I have been to a number of those consultations. There is a lot of energy and support for the SEI, which I am delighted with. I look forward to debating the Renewable Energy Feed-in Tariff (REFiT WA) Bill 2010 introduced by Hon Robin Chapple. The gross feed-in tariff is not all peaches and cream; there are problems. We have made a start by introducing a net feed-in tariff and we are looking at a proposal for a commercial feed-in tariff. At this stage, we have got some runs on the board in a short time.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to temporary orders.