

STATE BUDGET 2015–16 — REGIONS

Motion

HON MARK LEWIS (Mining and Pastoral) [11.25 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house acknowledges the benefits to each of the Legislative Council's regions from the recent state budget.

Firstly, I congratulate the Treasurer, Hon Mike Nahan, and I note he has been in the job just over a year. As we know, he came into the job when the GST revenue and the resources industry were probably at their lowest ebb. I congratulate him for pulling off the budget that he did, and I will explain how it affects my region. Members might remember when the global financial crisis confronted the Rudd government. This government faced an even greater revenue loss than that faced by the Rudd government in the GFC. We faced a 15 per cent decrease in revenue. As I said, that was as big as or bigger than what the Rudd government faced when it entered the GFC. Not only have we moved through that, but as members will recall, the world global financial sector nearly collapsed. I would like to make that comparison, because we have not seen that happen in WA, even though there has been a bigger fall in revenue than that experienced by the Rudd federal government. We were still able to spend \$29 billion on things such as health, education, law and order, transport, roads, disability services, child protection, training, water subsidies and electricity subsidies. Also, in the forward estimates we will spend \$24.1 billion over the next four years. I am not a Keynesian, but over the forward estimates this budget is expected to create 67 000 jobs and, importantly, it will hold those jobs that would not normally have survived if that infrastructure spend had not been made. As I said, members on this side do not normally take a Keynesian approach to economics, but I can say that \$24.1 billion will make a significant impact on the number of jobs we retain and develop.

I turn specifically to the government's continued investment to build regional WA and particularly my electorate, the Mining and Pastoral Region, through the royalties for regions program. Over the next four years it will invest \$4 billion. I remind members that this is just one program. Of that \$4 billion, \$1.6 billion will be used to continue to fund not only the regional revitalisation plans but also, more broadly, initiatives in health, community services, education, sport and recreation, Aboriginal initiatives, agriculture and tourism. I will come back to those and elaborate further.

This budget will provide essential services and infrastructure that will drive development in the regions, creating jobs and generating economic opportunities. This demonstrates that the government is determined to invest in regional, economic, social and community development in order to capitalise on long-term growth and opportunities. This is all about strengthening and growing our regions, and the investment will help regional communities realise their economic potential for the benefit of all Western Australians. This is important, as we all know that the Mining and Pastoral Region contains the powerhouse that can lead us out of the economic conditions we are currently facing not only here, but also across Australia.

To put this in perspective and for the information of members, in 2014, WA accounted for almost half of the nation's merchandise exports, most of which came from the resource sector in my region. WA has the highest rate of growth in new dwelling commencements, at nearly 20 per cent compared with the national average of 18 per cent. In 2014, WA's employment growth rate of 1.6 per cent was higher than the national rate of 0.8 per cent. In 2013–14, WA's population growth rate of 2.6 per cent was higher than the national rate of 1.7 per cent. Obviously, all those have big impacts on the budget. WA also has the highest gross state product per capita, with a whopping \$100 455 compared with the national figure of \$66 907. Again I remind members that a lot of that was probably driven by the Mining and Pastoral Region.

It would be remiss of me not to mention our contribution to the rest of Australia through the GST. I do not know about other members, but I am proud of Darwin. When I go to Darwin, I see a magnificent city—because we paid for it! I like going there because I know that that is our money at work. Every Western Australian contributes an average of \$2 370 a year through GST, but we get back just \$714. That is \$1 656 per person going to other states. In 2015–16, WA will receive just 30 cents in the dollar for its population share of the GST raised nationally. We should receive \$6.4 billion but will receive just \$1.9 billion in 2015–16. Rudimentary sums tell us that that is a \$4.5 billion difference. If nearly half of that amount came back, there would be no deficit.

The point is that even though we have had a significant drop in revenue, this budget will still provide significant benefits to the state, particularly in my region, and I will outline those. To this end, I want to outline the funding in the 2015–16 state budget and the forward estimates for new projects. It includes \$150 million for the regional reform fund, which will invest in strategic reform initiatives in regional WA designed to support state government objectives. The first focus area of this funding will be centred on Aboriginal regional reform initiatives. The Laverton primary health and aged-care facility will be built for \$19.5 million. Social housing will

receive an \$85.2 million boost to provide dwellings in regional areas for priority waitlist clients. This is part of the \$560 million program announced earlier by the Minister for Housing that will aim to halve the number of seniors and families with dependent children on priority waitlists across the state. Carnarvon Community College has been allocated \$17.6 million to amalgamate the primary and secondary public schools, which is dear to my heart as it is my old home town. The regional tourism marketing campaign will receive \$11 million over two years.

Although these are just some of the new initiatives, I also want to outline the key focuses for government attention over the forward estimates program. The first of these will be to continue the Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture vision. It is unfortunate that Hon Darren West is away on urgent parliamentary business, because I will outline some of those initiatives that he thinks are a figment of his imagination. There will be \$20 million for WA's biosecurity defence, \$40 million for the Water for Food initiative, \$20 million for agriculture sciences research and development, and \$80 million for infrastructure audit and investment. There is also the program to boost grains research and development support, the "WA: Open for Business" program to boost the business skills of agrifood businesses, and \$15 million for the northern beef futures initiative. I hope the member reads this in *Hansard*, because he will find out where that money for Seizing the Opportunity is going.

As I mentioned earlier, a lot of this program of investment will be via regional revitalisation programs. There will be \$362 million for the statewide regional blueprint initiative and \$757 million will be invested in Pilbara Cities. There will be \$47 million for the West Kimberley and East Kimberley revitalisation plans, \$162 million for the goldfields–Esperance revitalisation plan, and \$31 million for the Gascoyne revitalisation plan, which again is dear to my heart, although it started the revitalisation program when I was there and it conceived the idea of revitalisation programs, so the funding is diminishing because it has been going for a lot longer. Let us not forget that these investments will attract private investment. However, funding from these initiatives is also reflected in other initiatives such as in health, with \$920 million to continue to be invested over four years in the North West Health Initiative, the patient assisted travel scheme, St John Ambulance services in country Western Australia, regional men's health, the expansion of renal dialysis services, ear health, goldfields emergency telehealth, the Southern Inland Health Initiative and the Royal Flying Doctor Service. I also congratulate Rio Tinto for giving additional funding to the Royal Flying Doctor Service; it is great support. New projects include the primary health and aged-care facility and the subacute mental health services in Karratha.

Within the community support services space, \$747 million has been committed over the next four years to the regional grants scheme, the community chest fund, the Country Age Pension Fuel Card, the volunteer fuel card, regional police incentives, regional workers' incentives, the south west emergency rescue helicopter service, fire crew protection, the regional telecommunications project, the West Kimberley transitional program and the creative regions program. New projects also include the natural resources program and the social housing project. These projects are just from the royalties for regions program. It does not mean that the core allocation from the normal appropriation in the capital works program has not been made. However, I digress. I have only two minutes and 40 seconds to go through the other programs that affect the Mining and Pastoral Region.

In education, we will continue to invest \$159 million in the boarding away from home program, the Better Beginnings program, the electrical specialist centre and allied health training centre at the Pilbara Institute, and the Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School, which is very important to me. New investment will also support the development of stage 2 of the Carnarvon Community College, as I mentioned earlier. I know that Hon Peter Collier and Hon Terry Redman have been working hard on that.

In the sport and recreation area, \$54.3 million will continue to be invested in the community sport program, the community pool revitalisation program and the recreational boating facilities scheme, which are significant in our region. New investment will support Western Australian regional museums and art galleries.

Importantly, in economic development, \$277 million will be committed over the next four years to the regional Buy Local initiative, underground power, the Exmouth boat harbour, the Broome Road industrial area and the Dampier community hub.

With respect to Aboriginal initiatives, \$254 million will continue to be invested over four years in the expansion of the Kimberley and Pilbara regional youth justice strategy, the north west drug and alcohol support program, regional men's health and Indigenous packages. Funds will also be allocated to the new regional reform fund with initial focus on regional Aboriginal affairs.

Last, but not least, tourism: \$183 million will be spent on a range of projects. Knowing that time is important, as I said before, these are only a snapshot of some of the projects that are being funded through royalties for regions, but there will be a host of other things through the appropriations process and the capital works program. I trust that this oversight has given members and our constituents an appreciation of the government's

Hon Mark Lewis; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Phil Edman; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Brian Ellis

intention to provide significant ongoing support to the Mining and Pastoral Region. I look forward to hearing other members' contributions that highlight budget initiatives within their regions.

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [11.40 am]: This is a great opportunity for the house to get advanced copy of the text of government budget newsletters that will be put out into the regions, and we thank government members for that.

It is important to celebrate success and to note when good things happen, but I believe that the modern political environment is telling us that we need to be real. When government members put out newsletters that tell people about all the fabulous things that the budget will deliver, I assume they will also tell them what is not so fabulous in the budget. I assume that government members will also share with people the news that this is the worst set of budget numbers that Western Australia has ever seen, that the Premier is leading a government that he has taken into deficit when he said that he would never lead such a government and that there is a \$2.7 billion deficit, the biggest ever in WA's history.

Point of Order

Hon LIZ BEHJAT: I would seek your guidance in this matter, Madam Deputy President. My reading of the notice paper is that the matter before the house is that this house acknowledges the "benefits" to each of the Legislative Council's regions in the recent state budget. The dictionary definition of "benefit" says anything that gives us an advantage or profit gained from something. Under standing order 47 I ask whether or not the contribution currently being made by the Leader of the Opposition is relevant to the motion on the notice paper.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! This is not an opportunity to join in the debate and give me guidance on determining the point of order. The honourable member has not progressed far enough for me to make a determination about whether her comments are relevant to the motion. I think Hon Sue Ellery is providing context at this point in time, but I remind her about the standing orders and the need for her comments to be relevant.

Debate Resumed

Hon SUE ELLERY: The motion before the house that the house is being asked to consider is that the house "acknowledges the benefits". Therefore, it is a question for the house to consider whether we support that motion or not, and I am suggesting that I would not, and that is entirely relevant to the motion.

Where had I got to? I hope that in addition to telling their constituents in their newsletters about all of the fabulous things in the budget, government members will also be telling their constituents that if they live in the north eastern suburbs of Perth, for example, they will not be getting Metro Area Express light rail; that if they live in the South Metropolitan Region they will be leasing Fremantle port; and, as a consequence of the changes the government proposes to make to roads in that area, they will be reminding the good residents of South Metropolitan Region of the little letter that the people of Palmyra got in their letterbox recently that told them that their family home was about to be sold. I hope that they will be reminding their constituents about the sale of the TAB and the benefits that they think that will bring to local racing in regional Western Australia. I assume, of course, that they will be telling their constituents about the cost-of-living increases set out in the budget—those costs that the Premier promised would stay at or around the inflation figure but which are actually going up by some 4.5 per cent, including electricity prices. I hope that they will be also reminding their constituents that the Premier promised that that would not happen. I assume that they will be reminding those constituents who send their children to district high schools that they were promised \$20 million worth of refurbishments two budgets ago and still have not got them. I assume that they will remind the constituents of my little part of south metro that there is no money in the budget for the additional lanes on Shelley Bridge, which the local member for Riverton promised at the last election. I assume that they will be reminding people that the state of the budget is in such dire condition that the state government is going to put a submission to the state wage case that there be an increase in the minimum wage of a measly two per cent at a time when the government is putting up electricity prices and the other utility costs far in excess of that. I hope that they will be telling the good people of their respective Legislative Council regions what other people have said about the budget—that is, what organisations such as Western Australian Council of Social Service have said especially, for example, about that issue I raised about the state wage case.

I welcome the rest of the debate in which we will be given an advanced copy of the newsletters about the budget that people are sending out into the regions. I look forward to hearing all of that. I look forward to hearing how members are going to keep it real. I look forward to hearing some fabulous examples of spin at its very best, which tries to make the proverbial out of a pig's ear.

Hon Mark Lewis; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Phil Edman; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Brian Ellis

HON DAVE GRILLS (Mining and Pastoral) [11.46 am]: I would like to take the opportunity as a member of the National Party to highlight the opportunities and present some informed debate and acknowledgement about the benefits the state budget will bring to regional WA. I said the other day that people were walking around with crash helmets on their heads, saying that the world is going to cave in, and I will have to say that again after hearing some of the previous comments.

Hon Martin Aldridge: They are so negative.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: I do not talk to people about stuff like that; I tell them that the best thing we have in regional WA is royalties for regions and that they need a Nationals member to support them in regional WA to continue that. I could speak about many positive initiatives in the Mining and Pastoral Region; however, given the limited time available, I will focus on the Eyre and Kimberley regions only.

Royalties for regions will continue to deliver unprecedented investment in the Eyre and Kimberley regions, despite a challenging 2015–16 state budget. The state government will invest \$4 billion of royalties for regions money over the next four years to encourage economic development and create opportunities for employment growth in regional Western Australia. Since 2008, royalties for regions has delivered more than \$6.1 billion to regional WA, and has funded more than 3 600 projects to build the economic and social capacity of our communities. Although the state budget has been hit by declining mining royalties, lower GST return and population pressure, I am glad to say that royalties for regions remains unchanged and will continue to deliver billions of dollars of investment in our regions.

The Eyre and Kimberley regions will benefit from a number of new royalties for regions initiatives contained in the budget. Social housing has been identified as an issue in both regions, and I am pleased that significant funding has been allocated in this budget to provide housing in regional areas for those most in need. The goldfields–Esperance revitalisation initiative will deliver \$162 million over four years to priority projects aimed at enhancing the region's economic and social development. This significant investment will complement the \$292 million worth of royalties for regions investment blueprint funding, which was announced in last year's budget. The Esperance Health Campus will receive \$3.8 million as part of the facility's ongoing redevelopment.

The Kimberley region will also benefit from a number of new royalties for regions initiatives. Specific Kimberley projects to be funded across the 2015–16 state budget and forward estimates include \$47 million for the West Kimberley and East Kimberley revitalisation plans, which include \$10 million of project funding for the Broome Road industrial area; \$19.4 million for the West Kimberley transitional housing program; \$2.9 million for the Fitzroy Crossing courthouse; \$10 million for the Chinatown redevelopment; \$10.6 million for the great Kimberley marine park; \$7.5 million for upgrades to the Broome Residential College; and \$2.4 million for the new Kimberley national park. This is in addition to broader ongoing initiatives delivering real benefits to the electorate through the royalties for regions program, which include \$85.2 million royalties for regions contribution to a social housing investment package—\$560 million in total—to provide housing in regional areas for priority waitlist clients. The intent is to provide 1 000 homes across the state—that is 1 000 homes—to halve the number of seniors and families with children on the priority waitlist for social housing across Western Australia. That is 1 000 homes, in case members were not listening. There is \$11 million for a regional tourism marketing campaign over two years to increase Western Australia's appeal to interstate and international visitors, and \$150 million will be spent on the regional reform fund, which will invest in strategic reform initiatives in regional WA designed to support state government objectives. If members want to look at some of those, they should come with me and I will show them what is going in Halls Creek. There is also the Southern Inland Health Initiative, which amounts to \$565 million over five years. These payments will help to attract and retain doctors and will provide telehealth for our regional hospitals. The other day we committed \$19.4 million to help the Laverton Hospital along. We heard some very rude reports about that, but people actually loved that. That is royalties for regions bringing good positive outcomes to regional Western Australian towns such as Laverton. Good on us for doing that! The \$565 million over five years will be used for investment in capital upgrades to our small hospitals, funding for primary healthcare workers, funding for aged-care solutions and innovative new primary healthcare centres.

The \$300 million for the Seizing the Opportunity program is the biggest investment in the agricultural sector to support growth and innovation, and includes projects to support grains research and development, an audit of key infrastructure in agricultural supply chains to fund upgrades and improvements and a sheep industry business innovation project. Members opposite should visit the Esperance port if they want to see how things like that actually work. More than \$45 million has been invested in the past six years and will continue to be invested to support the Royal Flying Doctor Service, including a new jet aircraft, flight and medical teams and a new jet. We will also look at getting a bitumen airstrip outside the Tjukayirla Roadhouse—I do not know whether members know where that is—on which the new jet will land. That is another good thing.

Hon Mark Lewis; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Phil Edman; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Brian Ellis

Hon Martin Aldridge: You've got us Dave; we've got no idea!

Hon DAVE GRILLS: It is a great place Tjukayirla Roadhouse.

Hon Helen Morton: Where is it?

Hon DAVE GRILLS: It is the halfway spot between Laverton and Warburton. It is the last place where —

Hon Martin Aldridge: He can take you there if you want.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: Yes. I have been there. It provides a good meal and good drinks. It is the last place to have a drink before you go out on the lands.

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

Hon DAVE GRILLS: No, it is to get the plane on the runway, Hon Simon O'Brien.

The Regional Men's Health Initiative supports the work of Regional Men's Health to increase community awareness and management of anxiety and depression. It will provide counselling and assist with the prevention of suicide, which is something else that is important. The community pools revitalisation program will provide local government \$30 000 per aquatic centre to support local government to maintain or upgrade the local pool or aquatic facility and reduce the cost for ratepayers for this important community infrastructure. That is great; the kids in Laverton love the pool and it is a great spend of money. It will also help with kids' health, such as sticky eye and things like that. That is another benefit. The Country Age Pension Fuel Card supports our aged and disability pensioners by acknowledging that they do not have access to the same public transport network as their metropolitan counterparts. The regional grants scheme and community chest fund is being administered by the Goldfields-Esperance Development Commission and is providing our community and non-government organisations the opportunity to access grants for projects to support local initiatives. I could go on, but this next one will be the last. The Regional Community Child Care Development Fund will support the operations of our volunteer-run childcare centres to enable parents to engage in employment or study or to volunteer in their community. I am quite proud of that. I am glad that members opposite like that we are going to bring that on. It makes me so proud to be a WA National and to talk to people in the community and say, "Royalties for regions has money. We will help you do this. We might not have everything or the best, but we are going to help you do this." People know that when we go out there and say that, we say it from our heart and we know that people appreciate that.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral) [11.54 am]: I am pleased to make a contribution to the debate on this motion this morning. Like the Leader of the Opposition, I, too, do not quite agree with the motion that we acknowledge the benefits of the recent state budget to each of the Legislative Council's regions.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: As a regional member of Parliament who represents the same region as Hon Mark Lewis and Hon Dave Grills —

Hon Dave Grills interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I have a different view. One need only look at Broome, for example. In 2010, after much lobbying and hard work on behalf of the Broome community, this government promised a boating facility for the town. What we have seen since then? First of all, a bit more work went into the project. There were issues with heritage and planning approvals, but they were dealt with. The project cost increased to \$42 million. What funding was allocated in the last budget and this budget? Absolutely nothing—the project has disappeared. Former Treasurer Hon Troy Buswell said that the Broome community had a right to be disappointed, but because of hard times it missed out. Why is the Broome community missing out on the benefits of this budget? Plainly and simply, there are very few benefits for Broome and indeed the Kimberley. I know Hon Dave Grills read from perhaps a minister's press release, which detailed how the Kimberley would benefit, but I have to say that it is very little; it is a piddling amount of money when we compare it with a place such as Karratha. Karratha and the Pilbara have fared a lot better from the budget than have places such as the Kimberley.

A government member: That's because of your government.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, not because of my government or anyone's government. There has been a massive amount of waste.

Several members interjected.

Hon Mark Lewis; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Phil Edman; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Brian Ellis

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! You will get an opportunity to make a contribution if you would like to seek the call.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: One need only look at the massive amount of waste in Karratha, in particular. I refer to the massive amount of money wasted on the Pelago building and the massive amount of money wasted on deals with private companies. The people have not benefited. As I have said before, its name has changed to the City of Karratha, but just because the name has changed, that does not make it a city. The town does not have the services that it needs to be a city. It is not getting the money for those things. Although the government may have spent a great deal of money in Karratha, it has been misguided and wasted. This waste has happened in not only Karratha but also Hedland with Osprey Village and the money that the government is continuing to waste on it. It is still half empty. I asked a question in here yesterday. I think there are between 320 and 350 people on the Homeswest waiting list in Hedland with 40-odd on the priority waiting list. Hundreds of people need assistance from government but, at the same time, Osprey Village on the edge of town remains half empty. That is a massive waste. Those people will also not be celebrating this budget. They will not be celebrating this budget because yet again they are getting sluggish. Right around the state people are paying an extra 4.5 per cent for their power and water and that is after numerous promises were made about prices being kept to the consumer price index. I do not have the figures before me, but since this government came into office, power and utility prices have risen on average between 70-odd and 80-odd per cent. They are huge rises. People in the community are not thanking this government for their benefits because they are not benefits—plain and simple. It is not only those people of the Kimberley and the Pilbara that are concerned; people in the goldfields, I have to say, are also concerned.

Hon Dave Grills: About what?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: They are concerned about missing out, Hon Dave Grills. In fact, one needed only to read the *Kalgoorlie Miner* last week to have seen comments from the Mayor of Kalgoorlie–Boulder, Ron Yuryevich, who expressed concerns directly to Wendy Duncan, the member for Kalgoorlie, and asked why that region was missing out.

Why did that region not get its fair share? Let us remember that these royalties come from around the state, and Kalgoorlie and the goldfields–Esperance region have mining tenements and mining is undertaken there. Gold and other minerals come from that region, yet people in that community feel they are missing out and do not believe they are getting a fair slice of the pie. I have to say that I agree with them. The Pilbara has done well out of royalties for regions, albeit a lot of the money has been wasted on silly projects or projects that have been bad investments, but the Kimberley has missed out. It is as though this government has forgotten about the Kimberley. Members can open budget paper No 3 and read about royalties for regions expenditure.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! I am interested in hearing what Hon Stephen Dawson has to say.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I was saying, over the interjections, that the Kimberley and Broome have been forgotten. Members can go to page 211 of budget paper No 3 to read about royalties for regions expenditure. Hon Dave Grills did read out a few projects in the Kimberley that are getting some money, but they are piddling amounts. It is great that the Chinatown redevelopment got \$10 million, and that will benefit the town. However, the town had been promised a \$40-odd million boating facility. That has gone; the government has taken that away. It is as though this government has forgotten Broome. Budget paper No 3 shows some money allocated to projects in 2015–16, but when members look at the out years they will see very little has been allocated. There are blank spaces on those pages. It is as though the government has abandoned the Kimberley.

Several members interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I have obviously touched a raw nerve this morning!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I was saying that I have obviously touched a raw nerve, because the Kimberley and the goldfields have missed out. I could read into *Hansard* all sorts of documents this afternoon.

Hon Peter Collier: There's \$45 million for a new high school in the Kimberley.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Good; it is absolutely about time! It has taken a long time.

Hon Liz Behjat: Let's talk about what your government did to trash this state.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is preposterous!

Several members interjected.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: This government has been in for years!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! Raising the volume of your interjection or your contribution does not make it more valid.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I apologise for having to raise my voice this afternoon. It is the constant interjections from the people on the far side of the chamber who know they are wrong and who should be ashamed because they know there is little benefit from this budget. We have heard in debates over the past few weeks about the massive state debt that the mob on the other side of the chamber has left this state with for future generations. The government has squandered the money.

I will move on to the south west.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The south west, of course, is Madam Deputy President's neck of the woods. I turn to the pre-budget submission prepared by the Western Australian Council of Social Service and given to the government last October in which it asked for a long overdue drug and alcohol facility in the south west of the state. WACOSS said it is needed and, in particular, it asked for an Aboriginal-specific residential alcohol and drug rehabilitation service in the south west region. WACOSS asked for \$9 million, which is not a great deal of money at all. Do we see an allocation for that in the budget papers? Absolutely not! I have looked through all three budget papers—I have only one in front of me now—but no funding has been allocated. The things that the community wants are not in these budget papers. This government is not funding those things in the south west, the Kimberley or the goldfields–Esperance region; this government has not given the members of the community what they want. What it is giving them is more pain, with increases in people's power and water bills; people are getting it in the neck. I cannot agree with Hon Mark Lewis's motion this afternoon that we acknowledge benefits from the recent state budget, because plainly and simply there are very few benefits from this budget, and the mob on the other side of the chamber should be ashamed of themselves well and truly.

HON PHIL EDMAN (South Metropolitan) [12.05 pm]: When I was a young boy, my grandmother said to me that if I did not have anything good to say, I should not say anything at all.

Several members interjected.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: I have a few things I would like to talk about, which involves new money that has been given to Rockingham in this budget.

Hon Kate Doust interjected.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: Hon Kate Doust will be pleased with this, if she listens instead of talks.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! I am interested to hear what Hon Phil Edman has to say, so perhaps we could hear him in silence.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: I would like to mention some money that has been allocated in the budget. One item is for the Mersey Point jetty. If members want to take a ferry to Penguin Island, they will need to use that jetty. A lot of Western Australians and also people from all over the world specifically go to Penguin Island to look at the penguins, seals and the many dolphins in that area. I am really happy about this project. The government has not announced this amount yet, but I will do it and hope that I do not get rapped over the knuckles. It is half a million dollars, which is really good. I was at the full council meeting of the City of Rockingham when its councillors knocked back going ahead and approving money for that jetty because it was going to be funded solely by the council. After that motion was lost, I suggested they apply to the state government for some funds. The council has been successful in that. I was talking to the Mayor of Rockingham last night who told me that the council will be able to fix up that jetty, which is well overdue.

Recently I was on my pushbike and I rode down to Safety Bay.

Several members interjected.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: Honesty and integrity are always the things I live by.

An opposition member: Were you wearing a helmet?

Hon PHIL EDMAN: I did wear a bike helmet and, of course, it is the law.

I was very pleased to be at that meeting with Rockingham's Mayor Barry Sammels to announce that the state government will provide \$1.2 million for a bike path for Safety Bay Road. It will cover 4.1 kilometres from the Warnbro train station. I have been asking for that for a few years now and to get that is great. If members know the area, they will be aware there is no bike path at all for that whole distance, and it is quite dangerous. The City of Rockingham is putting \$2 million towards that path as well. It is fantastic news that that infrastructure is going into the area.

I refer to the Mangles Bay marina. Everybody who knows me well would know that I am passionate about the project. It is the Mangles Bay marina, not the Point Peron marina or the "preserve Point Peron" or something or other marina. I reckon Hon Kate Doust will love it when this marina is built. She will be able to go down there with her mum and have a cup of coffee and say, "Wow! Isn't this fantastic!"

Hon Kate Doust: I think you are devastating a pristine area.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: I would love to hear what Mark McGowan thinks of the marina, because he supports it. Hon Kate Doust should be very, very careful because "Marky" supports it.

LandCorp, in partnership with the private sector, will spend over \$26.8 million over the 2014–15 to 2018–19 period. Jeez, I cannot wait for that to happen. I might even think about parking my boat down there after all. I will see what happens. That marina will accommodate up to 500 boats.

Several members interjected.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: Sorry, I did not get that joke.

Hon Robyn McSweeney: I don't think bikes can tow boats!

Hon PHIL EDMAN: It is good that we are all so happy on the last Thursday of a sitting week. It is good to have these happy, happy members here in the house. I love them all dearly, by the way.

This marina will bring massive tourism facilities, short-term accommodation and retail and commercial development and public open space to residential land users, and a site for local boating and fishing clubs.

This one will kill members—they will love it! This one is from the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board. Rockingham Regional Memorial Park Cemetery will now get a crematorium.

Members who have ever thought about whether they want to be buried or cremated—now people in Rockingham have the choice to start thinking about that.

Several members interjected.

Hon PHIL EDMAN: I do not know whether I will write a letter. I do not think I will do an ad on that one.

The state government has set aside \$1.3 million for a chapel and a crematorium for Rockingham Regional Memorial Park. Members who have been to a service or know the area would know that there is no chapel there; there is just a gazebo and on a windy or rainy day, a service can be pretty uncomfortable. I am pretty happy about that. Hopefully, I will not get to use it anytime soon.

Hon Jim Chown: Have you decided what choice you will make?

Hon PHIL EDMAN: It is nice to see Hon Jim Chown.

The last two items I will refer to are not new funding. The government is continuing to pour money into the Challenger Institute of Technology and also into education, with Baldivis Primary School. There is good news in the budget for Rockingham residents. I am very proud of the Rockingham area. At the end of the day, we need someone in the electorate who will do the right thing for Rockingham, and at the moment it is me.

HON SALLY TALBOT (South West) [12.11 pm]: I will do my very best under enormously difficult circumstances to keep all my remarks positive for the next 10 minutes. I recognise that this motion is very carefully crafted to bring smiles to the faces of what we have seen all week—in fact all year—to be a very, very unhappy backbench in this place. The beauty of sitting on the front bench, on the government side of the table, is that members do not see what is going on behind them.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members.

Hon Mark Lewis; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Phil Edman; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Brian Ellis

Hon SALLY TALBOT: One of the very few benefits of sitting on the opposition side of the chamber is that we get to monitor the mood of the backbench. This is the first time in many, many weeks that we have seen smiles on their faces. That is probably because 35 per cent of their front bench is away from Parliament today on urgent parliamentary business and they have been given a little bit of time to do their own thing.

Point of Order

Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN: Through the Chair, Madam Deputy President, I would like the member to address the motion in front of her and not speculate about what the front bench and backbench on this side of the chamber are doing or where they are because she obviously has no idea about that. This has nothing to do with the motion.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Members, we have a point of order before the Chair.

I do not think we have a point of order for the following reasons. The motion before us is on the state budget and it is a wide-ranging and broad discussion. Members who speak to the motion do not have to agree with it. That is the whole point of having motions and taking speakers for and against motions. There has been a fair bit of comment from members on both sides of the house about the mood of members in the chamber and their views, but I remind members that they need to have regard to standing orders and to be relevant with the contributions they make. Members really should not comment on members who are absent from the chamber on urgent parliamentary business.

Debate Resumed

Hon SALLY TALBOT: As I said, I am determined to see a ray of sunshine where some of my colleagues on this side of the house have not been able to find one. I did find one. There is indeed an enormous benefit in the recent state budget—that is, finally we know that the Emperor has no clothes.

Hon Simon O'Brien: This is getting really unpleasant now!

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members. An entertaining interjection, but perhaps we could have fewer of them.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: There are obviously members sitting on the government benches who do not realise that this is actually a metaphor. Obviously the pictures that came into their minds were very literal ones. Of course, that is not what I meant. My point is that we have now had three Treasurers who have tried to tell the Emperor that he has no clothes, but he has chosen not to hear them. This budget conclusively proves to the entire electorate that the Emperor has no clothes and that this is an irresponsible government with a reckless economic policy and a fiscal strategy that is nothing short of chaotic.

By carefully reading the budget documents and media releases that went out afterwards, I have discovered that there is a keyword —

Hon Kate Doust: Is it debt?

Hon SALLY TALBOT: No, it is not debt, Hon Kate Doust. It is not debt—it is not what one would think. It is not debt; it is not deficit. It is “challenge”. Challenge is the keyword. This budget is challenging. At the end of last week, the frontbenchers and backbenchers went out and stuck to their key lines. In Bunbury, Bunbury MLA, John Castrilli, said “it is a challenging budget”. Last Friday, Hon Terry Redman addressed a budget breakfast in Albany and not only said it is a challenging budget, but that it is hugely challenging. He described the state government’s latest budget as hugely challenging. The good news is that now everybody knows how bad, hopeless, pathetic, chaotic and reckless government members are when they try to steer the state’s economy. I will end on a very positive note, but members will have to wait a few minutes for that.

We all know what the word challenge means. Do members remember a few years ago when we all got very politically correct about people losing their hair, and instead of calling them bald we called them “hair follicle challenged”? That actually means that they are bald. The same thing goes for this budget.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members. I am having difficulty hearing Hon Sally Talbot’s contribution.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: I am trying to talk about the subject of the motion. I see the Greens have gone off the faces opposite. For some strange reason, they did not realise that opposition members would have so much to say about this motion. It is extraordinary how government members constantly miscalculate things.

When a person is hair follicle challenged, they are bald. When a government is budget challenged, it means that it is broke. Remember, last night, I put on the record that the Premier stood up in public and told us that he had told his former Minister for Sport and Recreation Terry Waldron, “We’ve got no money, mate.” That is the challenge: this government is broke —

Hon Helen Morton interjected.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Do not start talking about jobs, minister. The minister is on very, very thin ice when she starts talking about jobs.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Opposition members are used to conservative government budgets delivering for sectional interests. Here is a positive note from members: it is a great budget unless one is ... Let us fill in the missing bit. It is a great budget unless—let us start from the beginning—one is a pensioner or a senior. But even then there is good news. Although seniors have had all their local government rebates cut and their gas and electricity rebates cut, they have free transport at midnight. It is a great budget unless one is a pensioner who wants to get a bus or train at midnight. That is positive. Is that not positive? I do not think they are enjoying themselves so much at the moment, Madam Deputy President.

Hon Helen Morton: I go to Northbridge.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members! The honourable member should not invite interjections.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: Madam Deputy President, I am not; I have not taken my eyes off you.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: So, it was a rhetorical quiz again!

Hon SALLY TALBOT: It is a great budget unless one is a pensioner; it is a great budget unless one is young. Young people go to schools that have lost their education assistants and are having their programs cut. If they go to a school in the country, they cannot afford to go to Country Week anymore.

Several members interjected

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order members! You are making it very challenging for Hansard. None of your comments are being recorded by Hansard if you are just making interjections over the top of each other.

Hon Stephen Dawson: If this is challenging, so is your budget challenging.

Hon SALLY TALBOT: They admit their own budget is challenging. They are definitely budget challenged.

It is a great budget unless one is a pensioner or a senior; it is a great budget unless one is young and at school; it is a great budget unless one is a young person who is hoping to go to TAFE or, indeed, an older worker wanting to retrain, because the money has been stripped out of TAFE. Something like \$45 million this year—the training budget is down by more than 10 per cent. It is a great budget unless one is a parent because household expenses are skyrocketing, despite the Premier’s promise two years ago that utility price increases would be held to cost-of-living increases. All those promises have been broken, so the family budget has been blown. It is a great budget unless one owns a small to medium-sized business, in which case the tax bills are going up and all the incentives for the business to grow are being taken away by this budget. Quite frankly, it is a great budget unless one runs a big business, because I can tell members that up and down the Terrace, the worst thing that can happen for any business in this state is to have the Premier come out on its side. People absolutely dread the Premier walking up to them and saying, “Let’s stand shoulder-to-shoulder. They absolutely hate it. Members opposite should ask big business in this state whether they want the Premier’s support, because his support is the kiss of death. As for our major economic driving industries such as manufacturing, services, IT, mining and agriculture, they have all had the bottom taken out of their businesses partly because the government is running massive debts and therefore cannot afford to grow the state anymore and partly because the whole training sector and other industries that drive the training sector have been demolished. There we go. It is a great budget unless one is a human being trying to live in Western Australia; in which case, it is a very, very bad budget.

I promised to end on a positive note and I will keep that promise. Despite the fact that this government has just brought down a budget that destroys jobs, that has dramatically cut the asset investment program and that destroys opportunity for all Western Australians, and despite the fact that this government is tired and worn out, on the second Saturday in March 2017, members opposite will be thrown out so fast that their feet will not touch the ground and Labor will once again be in government in this state. Once again, we will have a government that

Hon Mark Lewis; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Dave Grills; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Phil Edman; Hon Dr Sally Talbot; Hon Brian Ellis

understands what it is to spend 87c in the dollar and save 13c in every dollar rather than \$1.40, which is why we have ended up in the mess we are in.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Members!

HON BRIAN ELLIS (Agricultural) [12.23 pm]: Thank you, Madam Deputy President. I had plenty of positive things to say about what this government has achieved since 2008. However, owing to the time, I will sum up by commenting on some of the remarks I heard recently in budget reply speeches, such as “What about the debt we will leave for the next generation to pay?” My comment to that is, so what?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Typical baby boomer.

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: If members will let me explain.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon BRIAN ELLIS: I see no difference between that and the debt I will leave to my son for the land I bought to carry on my business. It is called investing in the future. The next generation will pay for something that they will enjoy, such as the best health services in the country; the best education services for their children; the best road infrastructure, with more than \$15.1 billion spent on roads and infrastructure for our transport system. They will be proud to be living in a progressive state that leads the nation and is the engine room of Australia.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! I do not know whether there is much point giving anyone else the call because I think time has just about run out. I need to welcome the students from Rockingham John Calvin School into the chamber. I welcome them to the Legislative Council and to the Parliament of Western Australia, and I hope they find their visit here both informative and enjoyable. Have a good visit.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.