

HOMELESSNESS

Motion

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [1.09 pm]: I move —

That this house —

- (a) expresses its grave concern about growing rates of homelessness in Western Australia;
- (b) recognises that the WA Labor government's initiatives and announcements to date are wholly insufficient to address this crisis; and
- (c) condemns the WA Labor government for failing to take a whole-of-government approach to homelessness, acknowledging particularly the failed intersections between homelessness responses and WA police, transport, justice, mental health, and alcohol and other drug services.

I thought long and hard before putting this motion on the notice paper. I was unsure whether I should bring on this motion or a motion to highlight the failings of this government on either community-managed mental health services or what is happening in child protection. However, I recognised that we will have an opportunity to talk about what is happening with child protection during debate on one of the bills on the notice paper that is scheduled to be dealt with later in this term, so I hope I will get more of an opportunity to speak about that then. The reason I decided to bring the issue of homelessness to this chamber for its consideration is that too many services are contacting me because they are concerned that despite all the announcements being made by the government, things are not improving on the ground and, in many cases, elements are getting worse. This issue continues to be raised with me. I note that it is becoming such a big problem that it is also getting a significant amount of attention in the lead-up to the Perth mayoral election. It is a serious and vitally important topic and is an area on which I think, frankly, the WA Labor government's performance to date has been very poor. It has displayed a great commitment to spin over substance. I have no doubt that in response to this motion, Labor members will stand and once again put out there all the announcements that have been made—I do not doubt that. I will not be surprised if we see a government amendment to my motion to try to congratulate itself, as ill-deserved as that would be. I am used to the way that the Labor government chooses to respond to legitimate and genuine concerns that are brought to its attention and I anticipate that we will hear all of it. But that does not mean that I need to make any apology for raising concerns in this chamber. I suspect that a number of people will want to speak about what they are seeing and what they are hearing from services, because things are simply not improving on the ground and, in many instances, they are getting worse.

We know that access to stable and secure housing is a fundamental right. This is not a luxury that we are trying to give to people; it is absolutely essential. Without a home, it is virtually impossible to be physically and mentally well and it is virtually impossible to access employment or even to succeed at education or training. When people do not have homes, the costs borne by the community are significant, and it is simply a false economy to not adequately address homelessness. It is a short-term saving for a long-term cost. But it is not just about the money that is thrown at this issue; it is also about how we engage with those communities that are so desperately in need of support.

The first part of this motion calls on the Legislative Council to express grave concern about the growing rates of homelessness. I am the first to acknowledge that there is a frustrating paucity of robust evidence in this space. We have census data that presents the most accurate and detailed information, but that is now four years old. We have public housing waitlists, but they are not an accurate reflection of the full extent of need, particularly amongst the most vulnerable, who may not have access to identification and the other documents that are an essential part of being able to even apply for public housing in the first place. Public housing eviction statistics rarely provide a complete picture because they do not include tenancies that end before formal eviction has taken place, which is the case with many proceedings because obviously people seek to avoid the costs associated with the completion of formal eviction proceedings.

That being said, we know that homelessness in Western Australia is on the increase. We know this based on the most recent data available from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, which demonstrates a rise in homelessness service clients in WA from 92 clients per 10 000 in 2017 to 95.8 clients in 2018–19. That is a four per cent rise, and, members, that is before the pandemic was a thing. It is particularly concerning that this number includes a disproportionate increase in the number of First Nation people, children on child protection orders and people with mental health and alcohol and other drug issues who are accessing homelessness services. These are some of the most vulnerable people in our community and, frankly, I am appalled that they are amongst those who are being increasingly represented by those who find themselves homeless.

We are also receiving lots of anecdotal evidence about what is happening with the homelessness rates in this state. I know that St Patrick's Community Support Centre in Fremantle, for example, has been reporting a steady increase in the number of people needing support who are coming to its centre. We also know that the Day Dawn Advocacy

Centre in Perth has been seeing an increase in the number of people who are homeless, particularly those who are rough sleeping.

We also know, as we have discussed previously in this chamber, that there are over 1 000 fewer social and public housing dwellings in WA than there were in 2017, when this Labor government took office. The minister's answer to the question on notice asked by my colleague Hon Tim Clifford yesterday revealed that since 30 March this year, the McGowan government has built, purchased or internally transferred only 24 properties for use as social housing—only 24 properties in nearly six months, when we are facing a shortfall of 15 000 properties! According to Anglicare, before the COVID-19 pandemic, WA needed about 15 000 additional public housing properties, and that number could double considering the economic impact of COVID-19. This data absolutely demonstrates a wholly insufficient—that is, a terrible—response to homelessness in WA by the current government. As at 31 May 2020, 23 709 people were seeking public housing. That is an appalling figure in a developed, relatively prosperous state.

As I said, I am anticipating—I think we are all expecting—that government members will see this motion as an opportunity to rise and say that they are doing all these amazing things. For example, I am anticipating that they will use words such as “unprecedented levels of spending” and they will talk about the Common Ground facilities, which I will also have some things to say about. I acknowledge that some positive initiatives and ideas have been put out there, but I note that some of them have been announced repeatedly as though they are separate announcements. Maybe that is because there are not enough actual things to announce or possibly it is because the government is still absolutely not doing enough in this space. The Common Ground facilities have been mentioned in government media statements on at least three occasions, yet not one dollar has been spent on this project, and there is no estimated completion date for the first of the two facilities, nor even a location for the second.

People on the ground are going to tell us that what WA needs to properly address the homelessness crisis is more housing, and that is absolutely self-evident. According to the minister's media statements, over the next year the following will be built, and members do not need to repeat this, because we are well aware of the announcements; they have been published breathlessly by *The West Australian*. The media statements have stated that 250 new social housing dwellings will be built as part of a \$444 million stimulus package; 300 social housing dwellings and 200 affordable Keystart homes will be built as part of the housing investment package; and 170 vulnerable rough sleepers will be housed as part of the Housing First homelessness initiative. That is a grand total of 920 new homes. Members, that is fewer than 1 000. That does not come anywhere near the at least 15 000 new homes we need to deal with Western Australia's homelessness crisis. I repeat that that number of 15 000 new homes is expected to double. Western Australia now has over 1 000 fewer social and public housing homes than it did in 2017 when the Australian Labor Party took government. I remind members opposite, before they rise and talk about this initiative—which I have just repeated for them, so they do not need to do that—that this is not even replacing the number of social houses that have been lost since the Labor Party has been in government. Only 24 social houses have been built or purchased since March this year.

I have to say something about this government's response to the COVID-19 crisis in March and April. People in the homelessness and housing sector, and also in the mental health sector, are still reeling from how badly the government handled the immediate response to COVID. It was chaos.

Hon Stephen Dawson interjected.

Hon ALISON XAMON: There were simply not enough viable options to keep people safe.

The PRESIDENT: There is no need to yell across the chamber.

Hon ALISON XAMON: The department was in turmoil.

Hon Stephen Dawson interjected.

Hon ALISON XAMON: WA managed to dodge a bullet.

Hon Stephen Dawson interjected.

Hon ALISON XAMON: Excuse me, minister! I am speaking.

Western Australia dodged a bullet, but we may not be as lucky next time. Everyone is anticipating that this state will have a second wave at some point. The question will be: will it look like New South Wales or will it look like Victoria? We will not know that until it hits. Experts are predicting that, either way, there will be an increased chance of other pandemics as a result of climate change. We have to start to be adequately prepared. An important aspect of this preparation is how we deal with the long-term homeless, and in particular rough sleepers. This state did not do anywhere near what the other states did at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. It was absolutely woeful.

I want to say something about Housing First. I anticipate that the government will say that it is taking an evidence-based, progressive, Housing First approach to address the issue of long-term homelessness. Of course the Greens absolutely support this approach. Housing First principles include that everyone has a right to a home. It also recognises that

the long-term homeless need holistic support. That is what we have been saying all along. The Housing First principles also include that everyone has a right to flexible support for as long as it is needed, with the onus on working to maintain the relationship rather than blaming people for disengaging. The government's actions have been fundamentally at odds with these principles. There continues to be a significant lack of work in helping people to sustain their tenancies, particularly people with serious mental health issues. I have spoken on numerous occasions in this place about this issue. I continue to be frustrated by the government's response. I am also frustrated when my office tries to work directly with the minister's officers on individual cases. Data from the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveals that the number of specialist homelessness services' clients with mental health issues has increased every year from 2011–12, and that currently about one in three clients has a mental health issue. I understand that eviction proceedings have continued in one particular hoarding case on which I have been advocating. The department's response to a person with serious mental health issues has been appalling. I am sure this is not the only case—I have been told by community legal centres that are working in this space that this is not the only one. This is a poor and short-sighted response. I point out again that it is absolutely not faithful to the principles of the Housing First approach.

Homelessness Australia has cautioned that a watered-down approach to Housing First is unlikely to succeed. This is a serious concern in Western Australia. I obviously welcome the government's announcement of a mobile mental health service for the homeless, recognising that homelessness and mental health issues are intertwined. However, it is difficult, if not impossible, to effectively address a person's mental health issues if the person does not have a home. The Housing First approach recognises that a house should come first. Therefore, the government needs to match its rhetoric with its actions.

The government has also done nothing to address the toxic culture that was brought across from the former department of housing. That came to the fore publicly with the introduction of the three-strikes policy. This policy was introduced despite issues being raised about the impact on children, First Nation families and people with mental health and substance use issues. That has been highlighted by the Auditor General. This culture is completely at odds with the underlying principles of the Housing First policy, which has been so successful internationally and which the minister keeps spruiking. In 2019–20, 470 people were evicted from public housing properties. It is hard to believe that those people will go anywhere other than joining the ranks of the homeless. The Minister for Housing recently put out a special media statement to reassure the community that public housing evictions will still go ahead, despite the extension of the moratorium on evictions. The long wait times for social housing mean that many people spend years in the cycle of crisis accommodation and other temporary options, with devastating consequences to their health and capacity to engage in education or employment. It also means that some people will require support to maintain their tenancy—support that this government is simply not giving them.

The Department of Transport also does not seem to be on board with the underlying principles of Housing First. Instead of consulting and engaging with the Minister for Housing, the Department of Communities or service providers, the Department of Transport has put up a huge fence to prevent people from rough sleeping under the Lord Street overpass. I note that in answer to a question on notice in the other place about whether the Department of Communities had been afforded any opportunity, before the fence was built, to engage in outreach with those people, the minister replied that services funded by Communities had visited the area since it became aware of the issue on 31 July. That was two months after the fence had gone up. The answer said also that offers of assistance or support had been declined. That is an appalling response. The Department of Transport took punitive action against a group of people rough sleeping, without any consultation with Communities. The left hand is clearly not talking to the right hand. Two months later, the government found out that there was an issue. I have to say that every bike rider in the metro area could have told the government that there was an issue. The government's response was, "Don't worry. Those people have been offered help, but they don't want it." Nothing about this response adheres to the Housing First principles. It does not reflect what was reported in the media about this issue—that is, that these people want to be housed. It also fails to acknowledge that there is a lack of appropriate housing options for many of these people. It makes it clear that Communities is not taking a culturally appropriate attitude to engaging with these people.

There is much more that I want to say in this space. I want to talk about the horrendous reoffending rates, and the failure to support people who are leaving prison, including through the provision of housing. I want to talk about the interaction between police and people who are homeless, because being homeless is not a crime. I am pleased that the need for work in this space is reflected in the homelessness action plan. However, I am concerned that it will turn out to be another example of how the government says all the right things, but nothing changes. When we talk to the services that work with rough sleepers, particularly in Perth and Fremantle, they tell us terrible stories about the way in which the police interact with those people. None of that is consistent with an appropriate way to deal with systemic homelessness.

I also want to mention the children and young people who are disproportionately impacted, particularly those involved in the child protection system. The government may talk about the Home Stretch trial, which has also been brought to

the attention of the media on a number of occasions. It is an excellent initiative. More than anything, it serves to highlight the huge gaps in meeting the needs of young people leaving care. We know that young people leaving out-of-home care experience higher rates of homelessness and unemployment than other young people. According to Anglicare, which is running the Home Stretch program, the current post-care system is fragmented, lacks intentionality in design, relies on limited resourcing, and is highly discretionary. This is not okay. Home Stretch is an essential service. It should not be a trial. It should be rolled out broadly and be available to all young people who need it.

I want to talk about how shameful it is that up to 50 per cent of our street homeless are First Nation people who have no culturally secure accommodation in their own country. I think this is a watershed moment for the government. The pandemic has thrown into stark relief not only the magnitude of the homelessness crisis in our community, but also how poorly this government deals with the issue of homelessness as a whole, particularly compared with other states. Frankly, we all know that the Labor Party is likely to romp in at the next election—and isn't it aware of that as well! That does not give this government an out. It still needs to deal with the hard stuff, and homelessness is hard stuff; I am the first to recognise this. It is really important stuff. In many ways, communities are giving the right rhetoric in press conference after press conference, but the news stories and the good intentions are not action, and they are simply not being reflected on the ground. I do not want to hear the spin anymore, although I am quite sure that I am going to hear plenty of spin in the government's response to this motion. As I say, I also anticipate some spurious attempt to change the wording of the motion, rather than those who disagree with it just voting against it. This is a huge issue in our community.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [1.30 pm]: I stand to speak on this motion on behalf of the opposition. I know that Hon Tjorn Sibma is also going to speak on this motion to say that, unfortunately, we enthusiastically support it. I do not say “unfortunately” because we do not support the intent of the motion; we support it because, in fact, it has so much merit. Homelessness in Western Australia at the moment is appalling. It is absolutely extraordinary. About six months ago, pre-COVID, I went to a function in the city and I parked at Pier Street. At the end of Wellington Street, I saw a line 100 to 150 metres long of people who were waiting at a soup kitchen. I went over and spoke to a number of those people, not because I was a member of Parliament, but because I felt so moved by it. So many of them were actually homeless. The notion that people choose homelessness is misguided; it does not exist. A month to six weeks ago, I went into the city. I do not go into the city very often nowadays and, unfortunately, that has become part of a mantra in Western Australia. The number of homeless people who were in the little enclaves of empty shops and down the back streets of Perth was just frightening.

Interestingly, this has become pretty much the number one campaign issue for the current Lord Mayor aspirants. That in itself is testament to the fact that we have a problem here. I say that, unfortunately, the government has done nothing. Hon Alison Xamon is quite right; I have no doubt that the minister will stand up and wave about the relentless and repetitive media releases with all the spin that takes place on the tens of millions of dollars that quite frankly only fill in the gaps that it has created over the past three years. The reality is that at least 9 000 people are homeless in Western Australia at the moment. That goes back to statistics from 2016. If we took statistics from 2016 and assumed that everything has remained the same, it would be naïve in the extreme. It does not exist that way. At the moment, tens of thousands of Western Australians are homeless at some stage. Just imagine that. Imagine not having somewhere to go. Imagine having two or three kids in the back of the car and having to ask to use the toilets at the local sporting facility. Imagine having to line up in Wellington Street every night to get some food for our children. That is what we have to deal with. The biggest issue we have with homelessness in Western Australia is the fact that at the moment we do not have a solution for these people. In the twenty-first century, in one of the most developed nations in the world, COVID or no COVID—this has not emerged just as a result of COVID—thousands upon thousands of Western Australians have nowhere to sleep every night.

I refer to a document titled “The Western Australian Alliance to End Homelessness: Ending Homelessness in Western Australia Report”, which is from August 2019. This is compelling reading. If members ever want to shake their head in disbelief and despair, they should read this report. It is compelling. It goes right through and looks at the number of homeless people and the reasons for their homelessness. As I said, it is staggering that in one of the most developed nations in the world, this is as good as it gets for thousands upon thousands of Western Australians. Let me go through a few of the figures in this report from August 2019. Just after the government took office in 2017, 9 005 people were experiencing homelessness in WA. That included 1 083 sleeping rough, 1 042 sleeping in boarding houses or temporary lodgings, 3 871 in severely crowded dwellings and 1 950 staying with others temporarily. Of these people experiencing homelessness, 58 per cent were male and 42 per cent were female. The reasons for their homelessness have been broken down very generically, because it is hard to be specific in a lot of instances when there might have been a combination of factors. Family and domestic violence, which is an issue in itself, was the cause of 41 per cent of homelessness, financial difficulties caused 39 per cent—we can imagine that will get a lot worse, particularly in the current economic climate—and relationship or family breakdown caused 24 per cent. Mental health issues are very significant. As a result of all those factors, we have a combination or conjuncture of circumstances whereby, for one reason or another, people have nowhere to live.

As I keep saying, one of the most unfortunate things to come out of the report was that statistically the largest cohort of people who are homeless in Western Australia are Aboriginal people—the original Australians. According to this report, 29 per cent of homeless people are original Australians. From that perspective, we are by far the worst state in the nation when it comes to homeless Aboriginal people. We get the blue ribbon—the first prize—in Western Australia. This is the rate of homelessness per 10 000 of the population by Indigenous background. On a statistical basis, 344.6 out of every 10 000 Aboriginal people in Western Australia were homeless. Next was South Australia, with 273.8 out of 10 000. Next was Queensland, with 238.6 out of 10 000. Next was Victoria, with 163.8. Next was New South Wales, with 105.4, and next was Tasmania, with 55.2. I repeat: in Western Australia, it is 344.6.

That does not surprise me, I have to say, as a former Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, but the fact that that statistic is so alarmingly high after the Labor Party has had almost four years in government is absolutely appalling. In addition, the various cohorts that make up the homeless population include a large number of veterans, interestingly enough; those who have had some issue with the justice system as former inmates et cetera; those with a disability rate very highly; and culturally and linguistically diverse people. We are talking about some of the most marginalised groups in our community that need a lift up or a step up more than anyone else does. They comprise the vast majority of homeless people in our state. That is absolutely appalling.

Having said that, the members opposite spent the first two years of their time in government constantly, relentlessly, unambiguously and transparently complaining about the previous government. It has become boring. Members opposite have been in government for nearly four years, and we are not for a second going to use COVID as an excuse. This is not something that has just emerged as a result of COVID; this has been around since ministers signed their ministerial edicts after the election in March 2017. Let us look at what the government has purported to have done. In fact, state funding for homelessness services in Western Australia has dropped from almost \$53 million in 2017 to \$46 million in 2019–20. That is a cut of \$6.8 million per annum. There has been a cut in funding for homelessness services. On 4 September 2019, the minister announced funding of \$34.5 million over five years for Housing First initiatives. That is very nice; it is good money that is desperately needed. Unfortunately, that much-needed funding of around \$7 million a year simply reinstates funding to take the total funding back to 2017–18 levels, so there has been no net increase at all.

Hon Alison Xamon: They didn't say that in a press release.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Of course not; it is all smoke and mirrors.

Hon Alanna Clohesy interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: No, I have not finished yet. I have just started.

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is one person on their feet, other people will have lots of opportunities this afternoon if they want to rise and speak on this motion, but I say to the speaker on their feet that you might want to direct your comments to me and not others.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Thanks, Madam President. I thought I was, actually.

With over 1 000 people sleeping rough on our streets every night, it is clear we desperately, desperately need more beds. That is a given. In the almost four years since the government came to power, we have seen the loss of seven crisis accommodation beds, down from 253 in 2017–18 to 246 in 2018–19. Hon Alison Xamon mentioned the Common Ground facility. I am sure the minister will stand up and wave the media release about and say the 70-bed Common Ground facility is the answer. I say to the minister before he starts his contribution that construction of the first Common Ground facility will not even start until probably the middle to end of next year. There is no site for the second facility at all, so at this stage, after four years in government, nothing has started. There are no excuses, guys; you have been in government for four years. Do not forget that 50 per cent of the beds in that facility will be allocated for homeless tenants and the rest is for social housing, so it will not really have much of an impact at all. Only 35 homeless people will be assisted.

Let us have a look at this Common Ground facility, shall we, to see how good it is and whether it meets the test of scrutiny. A media release titled “Record funding boost to help homeless find Common Ground” from Hon Mark McGowan and Hon Simone McGurk, dated 4 December 2019”, states —

- \$72 million investment forms part of WA’s first 10-year homelessness strategy
- Two ‘Common Ground’ facilities to help break the cycle of homelessness and give rough-sleeping Western Australians a place to call home

The media release says there will be two Common Ground facilities. It continues —

The planning, design and construction of the ‘Common Ground’ facilities will receive \$35 million over three years.

Extract from Hansard

[COUNCIL — Wednesday, 16 September 2020]
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Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon Tim Clifford; Hon Charles Smith; Hon Colin Holt; Hon Pierre Yang; Hon Tjorn Sibma

Remember that the funding is for two facilities. Let us have a look at Common Ground. A group of prominent community organisations—St Patrick’s Community Support Centre, the City of Perth, Shelter WA, Foundation Housing, St Bart’s, Rotary WA and RUAH Community Services—prepared the report “Common Ground: A Permanent Home for People with Supported Needs in Perth”. The last page of the report states —

The capital cost of creating a 100 room facility in Perth is around \$36 m, comprising \$30 m for construction at market rates (site dependent, as a small footprint forces a higher building and higher costs), \$3 m professional fees and \$3 m fit-out costs. No land cost is assumed.

The report states that it will cost \$30 million for one Common Ground facility. The minister’s media statement says that we can have two Common Ground facilities for \$35 million. This report is not just from a group of community organisations; it has the endorsement of no less than John Carey, MLA, member for Perth. He states —

“The Common Ground model is a real opportunity for our people and city: which shifts the focus from managing homelessness to a credible sustainable approach to ending homelessness.”

The member for Perth—I think he is a parliamentary secretary—put his name to a document that states it will cost \$30 million to \$35 million for one Common Ground facility, but the media statement from the Premier no less and Minister McGurk states it will cost \$35 million for two facilities. The government cannot have it both ways. Not only that, the government has not started the project. At this stage, after four years, it does not even have the ink on the architectural drawings. That is after four years, guys; give me a break!

Again, let us have a look at the problem, dare I say it, in political terms. We have crossed boundaries, with the Greens and the Liberal Party seeing ferociously eye to eye on an issue. Is it a political stunt to have a go at the government for a member to come into this chamber on a Wednesday afternoon and move a motion about homelessness? Of course it is not, because it is true and it is real. I challenge anyone on the government bench to go into the city and have a look. It is not just people sitting in the enclaves of shops in the city. There are not 11 000 or 12 000 people sitting in enclaves; they are out there in the ether, guys. They are real, living, breathing people. Imagine the quality of life that they have day in, day out.

Let us have a look at the #YourHelpWA campaign. This is a group of 450 community service organisations. I assure members that, as far as I am concerned, none of these groups or organisations are affiliated with the Liberal Party and I assume that they are not affiliated with the Greens or anyone else. They are just decent, hardworking organisations trying to help out some of the most marginalised people in our community. That is what they are all about. I am running a bit short of time, but I will read part of the media release Your Help WA put out on 6 December 2019. The media release states —

Community Employers WA, Executive Director, John Bouffler says the community services sector is in crisis—demand for social services in WA is outstripping the available resources.

“More than half a million people in Western Australia need support, care and services for a vast range of reasons including domestic violence, mental health, hunger, community health care, homelessness and addiction—that’s enough people to fill eight Perth Stadiums.

“We are demanding the State Government commit to increase funding to the community service sector by 20 per cent which will help adequately fund high-quality services in our community and positively impact people who need it most,” Mr Bouffler said.

Representatives from the Community Services Sector have held meetings with senior bureaucrats in the Departments of Treasury and Finance, and with Premier Mark McGowan and he gave no clear acknowledgement of the scale of the issues faced.

The Western Australian Council of Social Service, Chief Executive Officer, Louise Giolitto says that the Community Service Sector and the State Government have reached an impasse which is underpinned by a lack of understanding the investment required for people who are in need in our state and for the community providers working on the frontline.

If members need any more convincing, let us have a look at the Western Australian Council of Social Service’s state budget submission 2020–21. This gets to the heart of the issue, Madam President. The submission states, in part —

At the same time, there is a strong sense that our society has become more divided and unequal, that the gap between haves and have nots has widened, and our systems have become harsher and more unfair. More families are feeling that their livelihoods and the wellbeing of those they care about is more uncertain and more at risk. Jobs and incomes are less secure and there is less of a safety net. Our social security system has become increasingly mean-fisted, judgmental and much less fair. Managing money is more complex and risky, and there is a looming fear of being wiped out by forces beyond our control. Frontline services feel overwhelmed and under-valued, as they are forced to turn away more people than they can help. Frontline staff are run down by the incessant demands, while their jobs have become more insecure,

funding more competitive and increasingly reliant on last minute contract roll-overs. This is particularly true for regional, outreach and after-hours services—but these pressures are being felt across the board. Everywhere we went, community services were talking about an emerging crisis.

There is clear frustration that the promises of more collaborative and joined-up service design and delivery have not materialised, particularly place-based reforms in regional areas. Meanwhile, the focus on complex machinery of government changes and a lack of communication have led to a loss of clarity in roles and responsibilities and contact points, particularly in the Department of Communities.

Hear, hear —

The sector is struggling with ‘reform fatigue’, with organisations and consumers participating in multiple consultations and strategies without seeing it translate into new services, investments or ways of doing things. Having enthusiastically embraced opportunities to discuss doing things differently, sector leaders are now reluctant to participate in consultative processes where there are not dedicated resources backed up by a political commitment to act.

Hear, Hear! That is a direct result of the fact that the Department of Communities is this massive department dealing with the most marginalised groups in our community, and it is losing contact with the community and its constituents. We are talking about Aboriginal people, people with a disability, people who require child protection support and people who require housing all in the one department. It is inevitable with the construction of such a massive department that it will not see the wood for the trees. Over 450 organisations that represent these people have said unambiguously that the Department of Communities is not working. How on earth can the Department of Communities have any idea what it is like out there on the front line? How on earth can it have any idea what it is like for someone who is homeless? Who do they go to? They go to the Department of Communities and they do not know which sub-department to go to. This construction of the Department of Communities has been an abject failure, and the people who are suffering most in our community are those who are most marginalised. Quite frankly, the Labor government has done absolutely nothing to improve their lot.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment) [1.51 pm]: I am very happy to stand in this place at any stage to talk about homelessness, and I acknowledge Hon Alison Xamon for moving the motion. The issue has been around for a very long time and will be around for a long time to come. But I have to say it is hard not to see this as a cynical motion, with an election on the way, because there was not one skerrick of advice to or support for government in what was said.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! The other speakers were pretty much heard quietly, bar a couple of minor interruptions. Give the minister the opportunity to have his say and respect the fact that he is on his feet.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: There was not one element of advice, support or assistance—offer of advice—in that contribution, and I have to say that is disappointing. It is hard to think it is not about the election in six months. It is hard to think that the member is not focused on that. Hon Alison Xamon made all sorts of accusations in her contribution today, but failed to provide any evidence. I am not sure how she missed the fact that the world was not ready for the COVID-19 pandemic; however, notwithstanding that, Western Australia has done exceptionally well. The member is right that a COVID outbreak may happen again, but we can be very proud of what we, all of us, in the community of Western Australia have done in dealing with COVID. Regarding the suggestion that the number of houses has not changed since 31 March, guess what happened in the middle of March? COVID hit us. Guess what? The world went into lockdown and houses were not built—nothing was happening, absolutely nothing—but we kept people alive in Western Australia, and I am very grateful for that.

In his contribution Hon Peter Collier seemed to suggest that on 17 March 2017, which is when I think we got sworn in, homelessness suddenly appeared from nowhere. Guess what? Homelessness was there for the eight years that Hon Peter Collier sat on the treasury bench—absolutely it was.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: In fact, statistics from the Australian Bureau of Statistics show that in 2016, Western Australia and the Northern Territory were the worst for Aboriginal homelessness across the country. That has not changed, so for Hon Peter Collier to say that somehow, miraculously, homelessness got worse upon the election of the Labor government is an absolute crock.

Homelessness is a very, very difficult issue. It was then, and it remains a difficult issue. Let me tell members some of the things we have done since we came to government. I make the point that in his contribution Hon Peter Collier talked about Australia being somehow a progressive—he did not use the word “progressive”—First World nation

that suddenly has this homelessness problem. Can I say that the United Kingdom, England, the United States of America, Norway and all those countries have homelessness problems. This exists right around the world.

Hon Peter Collier: That does not make it right.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It does not make it right, but it exists.

Hon Peter Collier: Do something about it.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Guess what? We are.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is absolute crock. Madam President, I will keep directing my comments through you, because I am sick of listening to that bloke this afternoon. He had 20 minutes and he did not make any sense. I am going to talk to you, Madam President.

In coming to government in 2017, it was clear that there was a lack of policy direction in this area. That mob had eight years and they did nothing. Homelessness was there then and we took up the mantle. We put in place a process to build on the significant work of the not-for-profit sector, led by the Western Australia Alliance to End Homelessness in partnership with the WA community sector. That was led by the Supporting Communities Forum, with not-for-profit providers and government working together through the leadership of Michelle Scott, Michelle Andrews and Deb Zanella. We were able to commission a research paper by world-leading academic Paul Flatau to synthesise and collate current data about homelessness in the Western Australian context. The result was titled “Homelessness in Western Australia: A Review of the Research and Statistical Evidence”. Comprehensive consultation was undertaken, with about 12 community events and over 275 responses to a public survey from people living around the state. There were countless conversations with important stakeholders. A directions paper was published to signal our intent for the strategy and make sure that we were on the right path.

Hon Peter Collier: You are reading your notes.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Absolutely; I am not the minister with responsibility for this, so I want to put the facts. Guess what? I am the first person today to use facts in my presentation, because Hon Alison Xamon did not and Hon Peter Collier did not.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! I can actually hear people; you do not need to raise your voices.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: We put out a directions paper to signal our intent through the strategy to make sure that we were on the right path, and we received 56 public submissions in response. Then, we launched the state’s first homelessness strategy, with record-breaking investment by government to support it. This document is titled “All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia’s 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–2030”. This came from significant consultation with the not-for-profit sector and those working with society’s most vulnerable. We worked together to understand the problem and to have a path for how we might deal with and tackle the issue. As I said, rough sleeping and homelessness have been around for a long, long time. It is a very complex issue, and as we see in the mental health sector and with drug and alcohol use on the rise, it is a very difficult issue to tackle.

Since then we have done a number of things. As I indicated, we announced our housing and homelessness investment package. We announced a \$222 million package late last year in support of the release of the state’s homelessness strategy. We announced a \$72 million investment in homelessness services and infrastructure, including \$35 million for two Common Ground facilities. We have had people suggest that they are not good enough and that they are not here yet. As has been indicated, a site for one has been announced, and the second site will be announced later this year. In the interim we have put extra money, about \$4.8 million, into the sector to help homelessness services get us from now to the time when these new Common Ground facilities are open. The Common Ground facilities will help break the cycle of homelessness.

In Parliament I represent a regional area and I see that homelessness is here, whether it is regional Western Australia or the city. When we could travel across the country, when the borders were open and we could fly to Melbourne and Sydney, we saw that homelessness was there too. To suggest that somehow it is just a Western Australian problem is absolute baloney; it is not, but it is a problem we should all work together on. I am happy to hear suggestions from people in this place about new initiatives for the types of things that governments should do to tackle the problem, but just to keep suggesting that nothing has been done is absolutely wrong.

A comment was made about specialist homelessness services data showing that the numbers have increased. They have increased, but they have increased as services expand. As services see more people, they therefore report higher

Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon Tim Clifford; Hon Charles Smith; Hon Colin Holt; Hon Pierre Yang; Hon Tjorn Sibma

numbers. To somehow suggest that that occurs for some other reason is absolutely wrong. In his contribution the Leader of the Opposition talked about funding going backwards. It absolutely has not gone backwards. That was a result of a back payment from the commonwealth over two years—absolutely.

Hon Peter Collier: No, it's not.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is; it is absolutely true. What else have the Leader of the Opposition's mates in the commonwealth done? They have taken money out of housing services in remote Aboriginal communities and from mental health services. Guess what? All these things need to work together and if they do not, and the commonwealth takes money away, more people end up homeless.

I want to touch on the other things we have done. As I said, we have announced \$35 million for two Common Ground facilities and \$34.5 million towards the Housing First initiative that is based on the successful 50 Lives 50 Homes project. We also announced funding for the code design and development of an online portal to help refer, triage and track live bed counts in the homelessness sector, in support of a "no wrong door" approach. In the housing portfolio, we made a \$150 million investment in the state's housing sector, including \$125 million for more than 300 new public housing units to target homelessness and vulnerable people on the priority waitlist.

We also announced \$6 million to refurbish 20 regional and 50 metropolitan public housing properties, and \$19.2 million for 200 additional shared equity homes delivered in partnership with Keystart, WA's low-deposit home ownership scheme. People seem to suggest that just because people need houses, the state should always provide them. I do not agree. The state does not always have to provide houses, but the state has to help people get into them, and that is what Keystart does. We have expanded that over the past few months.

I will touch again on the COVID response. It has been a particularly gruelling six months. COVID-19 has thrown all sorts of challenges at every one of us, including government agencies and departments. In one sense, it has made people work in a more collaborative fashion, because since the crisis, people have had to think about possible deaths and about things such as masks and putting a roof over people's heads when appropriate to make sure that we are keeping people out of harm's way. It has been unprecedented. Throughout that time, we have also refocused Lotterywest. We have ensured that the money that is given out through Lotterywest is provided to not-for-profit organisations and focused on the delivery of services during this particularly gruelling time. As part of the WA Recovery Plan, we secured an additional \$319 million for a housing stimulus package and an additional \$4.5 million of funding to extend critical homelessness services.

I have mentioned COVID-19, but there are a few other things I want to mention briefly. This is an emotive issue and I have no problem with people being passionate about it and making passionate comments in this place, but what frustrates me is when people think that they do not need to offer any ideas or they do not have any ideas about how to fix such an issue.

Hon Peter Collier: You are the government.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Guess what? As I said, the previous government had eight years and it did not fix it. This issue has been around for a long time.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Adele Farina): Order, members! The minister has the call.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: As I indicated, the man over on the far side had eight years in government, and he did not fix it. I do not condemn him for it, because this issue has been around for a very long time and it warrants a great deal of scrutiny, but we also need to work together if we are going to fix it. If there were a silver bullet to fix this issue, someone would have done it a long time ago. Wherever we are in the world, homelessness exists and it is a challenge for all of us and for governments and politicians of all persuasions. Members can play politics all they want, but if they have ideas and solutions, put them on the table today and let us listen to them.

Hon Colin Tincknell: We already have.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Hon Colin Tincknell has not said anything sensible in the time he has been in this place, let alone today. I have heard no ideas from him.

I turn to the elements of the motion before us in the name of Hon Alison Xamon. Let me find the motion amongst my notes. I have press releases and plans and all sorts of stuff to dazzle members with. I have no issue with the house expressing its grave concern about the growing rate of homelessness in Western Australia. It is an issue in Western Australia and around the world, and a number of actions and initiatives are being taken and funded to help address the issue. Paragraph (b) of the motion states —

recognises that the WA Labor government’s initiatives and announcements to date are wholly insufficient to address this crisis ...

Tell us your ideas. Let us put the ideas on the table and work together if we are serious about tackling the issue. Paragraph (c) of the motion states —

condemns the WA Labor government for failing to take a whole-of-government approach to homelessness ...

That is a condemnation. I have to say that the last time Labor was in government with the Greens on the crossbench, we were able to work together. The Greens at that stage were able to say, “These are the issues of interest to us. Let’s work together on these issues.” It is unfortunate that the Greens we see in here now do not come to us with those types of suggestions and do not come to us with an openness to work together on issues. That is frustrating.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members! We will not be able to get through this debate if we continue with the interjections.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Time and again in this place we see the Greens vote with the opposition. That is fine—that is their prerogative—but it is disappointing that they do not seek to work with us with ideas. I think back to people such as Giz Watson, who worked extremely well with us.

I want to say a few important things about what we are doing. Additional funding has been provided to the Department of Communities for specialist homelessness services. That money has grown from \$86 million in 2016–17 to \$101.7 million in 2019–20. I take this opportunity now to say that I am a supporter of the machinery-of-government changes. As a local member in my office in South Hedland, previously, I regularly saw people be evicted from their housing by Housing. It would say, “No, that’s it, they’re bad; we’re going to evict them”, and immediately those people would have to go to crisis support and seek assistance from what was then the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. We are now seeing agencies work together in a collaborative fashion and support being given to people before they are evicted. We are also seeing early intervention being provided, fewer people being evicted and people getting the support that they need at an earlier stage. It is not one hand of government kicking people out of their house because they have been naughty, or for whatever reason—I am not belittling the reasons—but we saw people forced into crisis. We are not seeing that anymore. Since I became a member, the one constant in my electorate office on Fridays has been signing letters of support for people who want to access housing. When I shared an electorate office with Brendon Grylls, he was the Minister for Housing, and it was the same then. I still sign letters—I suspect we all do—for people looking for housing in this state. It is an issue and we continue to work on it.

I have referred to the \$222.5 million homelessness housing investment package and talked about the Housing First homelessness initiative, the two Common Ground facilities, the \$125 million for more than 300 new public housing units, the \$6 million to refurbish public housing properties and the extra money for shared equity houses, delivered in partnership with Keystart. As part of the government’s response to COVID, Ministers McGurk and Tinley have been able to bring forward the deadlines for these projects and get the money out the door as soon as possible. They are currently going through the procurement processes, I understand. Some of those services are on the way and certainly will be up and running before Christmas.

Also as part of the COVID recovery plan, we have provided funding to various areas that will support people experiencing homelessness, including an extra \$56 million in community mental health and drug and alcohol services. That includes \$25 million for a new 20-bed adult community care unit, \$25 million for the development of new 16-bed youth mental health and alcohol and other drug homelessness services, and \$6 million to support vulnerable cohorts and community wellbeing and to support an increase in demand for community mental health services. There has also been a boost to financial counselling to aid household recovery and to help WA households and small businesses through the COVID-19 pandemic, for those who have been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. There has also been a significant investment of more than \$28 million to help address family and domestic violence in the community, which includes \$8.6 million to employ additional outreach workers to support women and children fleeing family and domestic violence, \$6.7 million for family violence response teams that support victims following police callouts, and \$4 million to expand the new Peel and Kwinana women’s refuges. A further \$6.8 million was provided to a range of specialist homelessness services to ensure immediate delivery of homelessness services to those in need.

As members can see, it is not just about putting a roof over someone’s head. These are very complex issues, and in many cases people need access to quality mental health services and quality drug and alcohol services at the same time. If it were as simple as putting a roof over someone’s head, I am sure the issue would have been addressed many, many moons ago. Unfortunately, it is not.

I appreciate the element of Hon Alison Xamon's motion that mentions what she refers to as the "failed" intersections, but I am going to think about it positively and say yes, absolutely there needs to be a great deal of intersection right across government agencies, including health, housing, child protection, justice, mental health and alcohol and other drug services. Those services absolutely need to work together and to be coordinated. I have to say that we cannot do it alone. In Western Australia, we rely heavily on service provision from the not-for-profit sector. Those organisations work in challenging environments but they do great work, and we are very happy to partner with them. That is not to say that more money could not be thrown at this issue; absolutely, it could. I think it is one of those issues that we could keep putting money into, but I am not confident that we will ever solve the issue of homelessness. But it certainly is an issue, and the state government agrees that homelessness is an issue in Western Australia. We all have a role to play in fixing it, and we certainly will play our part. We will continue to work with the not-for-profit sector to make sure we look after these people.

HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West) [2.11 pm]: I would like to start by congratulating Hon Alison Xamon for bringing this motion to the house. This is the second motion on this issue. It has also been the subject of two non-government business matters, two members' statements, and it has been mentioned in every budget speech for the last three and a half years. So, to Hon Alison Xamon, well done. This is a good motion. Let us just look at the motion. It is a motion that this house —

- (a) expresses its grave concern about growing rates of homelessness in Western Australia;
- (b) recognises that the WA Labor government's initiatives and announcements to date are wholly insufficient to address this crisis; and
- (c) condemns the WA Labor government for failing to take a whole-of-government approach to homelessness, acknowledging particularly the failed intersections between homelessness responses and WA police, transport, justice, mental health, and alcohol and other drug services.

When we look at paragraph (a), we can see that not much is happening. When we look at paragraph (b), we recognise that it is all talk and no action. When we look at the whole-of-government approach, we know, as has been pointed out by previous speakers, that it has not been well coordinated and is not working.

In debates in this house over the past three and a half years, we have talked about prevention programs, programs such as Housing First, and social housing. We have given many, many examples of where homelessness programs are working all over the globe, such as in Utah and Minnesota in the US, and places like Newcastle in New South Wales. Housing First is not just about giving someone a house; that is the starting point, which is why it is called Housing First. We cannot fix someone's mental health issues while they are wandering around the streets. We cannot fix their job prospects or help them to help themselves until we give them a base. That is what Housing First is all about, yet we had those amazing announcements last December, two weeks after we debated the issue of homelessness in this house during non-government business. The government made an announcement and said, "We're going to spend all this money on homelessness." A week or two after that announcement, the government made another announcement, saying that it was going to implement Housing First. I know the government is listening, but it is not acting. That is the problem. I have no doubt that when this motion goes to a vote later on, it will be six or seven to nil, or one. That is what it will be, because everyone in this house is listening to how bad homelessness is in this state. Unfortunately, the government is not listening. It is very good at spin, and I think it believes its own spin, and that is the problem. It is not good on action.

In August, I moved in this place the following motion —

That this house acknowledges the shameful policies of the McGowan government that have led to a tragic rise in the number of homeless Western Australians and a large reduction in the quantity and quality of social housing dwellings available to Western Australians.

Hon Alison Xamon has reaffirmed that and mentioned it again. How many more times do we need to talk about this in this house? Some great new initiatives are happening around the world, but all we ever get is a big advertising campaign or announcements by the government's buddies at *The West Australian*, and then nothing. We get our hopes up and we think, "Finally, they're going to do something here. Finally, they're actually going to take some action, not talk about announcements." The government gets 100 points for marketing, zero for action.

This subject has been raised in many motions, non-government business matters, budget speeches and members' statements. We have talked about the new initiatives that are working very well around the world. However, nothing is working here at this time. Homelessness is growing. For the government to use the election as an excuse is pathetic. We have been talking about this for three and a half years, but every announcement is followed up with non-action. We have talked about homelessness figures; it has gone from 8 000 to 9 000 in the last 12 months. There has been a five per cent increase in the number of Western Australians needing homelessness support, which translates to 1 000 Western Australians reduced to the indignity of living their daily existence on the street. It took

the Department of Communities three years to give us a 10-minute announcement. It was going to improve Aboriginal wellbeing; I have not seen that happen. It was going to provide safe, secure, stable homes. That is not happening. It was going to prevent homelessness, which is getting worse, and it was going to strengthen and coordinate its responses and impact. That has been a total failure. For the last three and a half years, we have provided facts and figures on what is working around the world. We have encouraged the government to try different things. We know homelessness is a very tough subject.

I live in Busselton, and just a month ago I was at a soup kitchen there, and we had 150 people come through. The people at the soup kitchen said that homelessness has gone through the roof in the last two to three years. Busselton is not the most likely place to expect to see a busy soup kitchen. I know how bad things are in Bunbury and other larger regional centres such as Albany, and we obviously are very aware of how bad things are in Perth. How can the government announce that it is going to implement a Housing First program and that it will put all this money behind it, but then water it down? How can the government water down a program that all over the globe has been shown, when done right, to reduce homelessness by 50 per cent? That is why it is considered a good program. It does not solve homelessness—we do not have the answer for that—but it can reduce homelessness by 50 per cent. Would it not be much better to have only 4 500 people on the street than the 9 000 we currently have? Yes, it would. I know there are not a lot of votes there for the government, and I have a feeling that that is the side that motivates it the most. It makes great announcements about this issue, but the action is missing.

This is not new. This has nothing to do with the election. From the moment I came to this place, we have been talking about it. Two motions have been moved by non-government members—I moved a motion and now the honourable member has moved another motion. There have been two or three statements on this subject. It has been discussed and new initiatives have been presented in all the budget speeches. It is important to the people of Western Australia. Every great society looks after its weakest people. At the moment, we cannot say that we are a great society. We are failing the people who are the weakest and who need our support the most. We have let them down. As the honourable opposition leader mentioned, we have an amazing state. It is very wealthy because of the iron ore and other minerals that are sold around the globe, yet we have all the things that lead to homelessness—domestic violence, a housing crisis and a high cost of living. At every election, the three most important things that members of the public talk about are unemployment, the cost of living, and drugs and crime. Drugs and crime go together. They are the three most important things to members of the public. They are the three most important things they want us to fix, yet we are not doing the job. We are not helping these people. Many of these people have heard those announcements and have been let down.

I say well done to the honourable member. I have no doubt that every other party in this chamber will agree with this motion, but the one party that is in government will let this house down and vote against it.

HON TIM CLIFFORD (East Metropolitan) [2.22 pm]: I thank my colleague for moving this motion today. It is quite important because it puts a lot of things into perspective. I have heard a lot of statistics being thrown around. It is quite troubling that things have got a lot worse. Putting aside the COVID crisis for the moment, since coming to Parliament, I have asked quite a few questions of the Minister for Housing about homelessness and what action the government is going to take, but I have been very disappointed because in every answer—in 2017, 2018 and 2019—he was just kicking the can down the road. First of all, it was about Metronet and solving some of the housing crisis by having public–private partnerships around public transport hubs, which is welcome, but there seems to be a paralysis in that the government is almost incapable of making a structural announcement that will change everything.

A lot of great things are being put forward, but the scale of these things is not enough when we look at the absolute numbers—9 000 people are sleeping rough. The statistics indicate that it is getting worse for people. As I said in my first speech in this place, in my view, housing is a human right. I grew up in state housing. At one point in my life, my family had to flee our home because of domestic violence. We had to rely on the goodwill of family and friends and the Salvation Army. We did not know where we were going to stay. That was in the 1990s, and as scary as that was, the waitlist was shorter then and it seemed that people got into places faster. I am speaking from personal experience. At that time, it would have taken weeks or months to get into a place, but now it is taking people years to get into a place. That is a common story for many people. My office is in Midland and I have visited some of the soup kitchens there and in the city. It is a common story for many people. A lot of them are casualties of the boom. In the late 2000s, only a few years ago, we did not see as many people sleeping in doorways, under bridges and in parks as we are seeing now. That is disappointing. It takes massive intervention to deal with these issues. It takes political will and a coalition of people. It also needs acknowledgement that there has been a failure with wraparound supports in the federal space. We have been advocating for years for an increase in the Newstart allowance because it is below the poverty line, and that means that people cannot access housing. We need champions in this space. The government understood the crisis that was on the books when it took office four years ago, so it should be looking at a massive intervention to ensure that people are protected.

A report by the University of New South Wales City Futures Research Centre showed that in 2018 there was an unmet need for 39 200 social and 19 400 affordable homes in Western Australia. That is 58 600 homes. But rather than addressing this crisis, public housing stocks have decreased by four per cent. That is really troubling. There is inefficient housing stock; energy efficiency is needed. I was pleased when the government announced as part of the COVID package that it was looking at putting money into retrofitting houses, but that was more of a response to keep people in work, whereas I am talking about the front end and the humanitarian need. If the government recognised that deficiency four years ago, it would be responding to it.

There is a lack of affordable housing. I mentioned in my contribution to the debate on some of the tenancy reforms in response to the COVID crisis that we are facing an issue with rent bidding. Noting that the borders are closed, people are still coming back into the state, so there is a lack of available rental properties. There have been a few articles in recent weeks about the number of elderly people who have been long-term renters who will not be able to afford a rental property in this state. This goes to the statistic that just shy of 10 per cent of all renters in WA rely on rent assistance. That is galling. It says a lot about the times.

The minister said that we should put forward some solutions. The other week I attended the launch of the “26 Big Ideas for 200,000 Jobs: A Clean State Plan for WA Jobs” report. I was pleased to see Chris Tallentire, the member for Thornlie in the other place, was there, but I was disappointed not to see the housing minister. This report outlines a way forward for how we can address the issue. This Clean State report outlines that significant investment in housing is needed to meet the crisis in front of us. I will read a few lines from it so that members can put some of the things into perspective. It states —

There are currently 14,000 families on WA’s social housing waiting list, waiting an average of 94 weeks for a home. Another 9000 Western Australians are experiencing homelessness with 1000 of these sleeping rough each night.

The proposal put forward in this report also relates to the environment, so there will be a few words about that. It continues —

A Low Carbon Social Housing Construction stimulus package that:

1. Delivers 15,000 new social housing dwellings built to 7.5-star ... rating) and the ‘Improved Liveability’ accessibility standard within three years.
2. Provides each home with 3kw rooftop solar systems (and battery systems to multi-unit dwellings).
3. Leverages support for a local low-emissions building materials sector using sustainable building products.

The report also states —

What are the benefits?

The ABS has reported that every \$1 of residential construction generates an additional \$3 activity across the broader economy. **This package would, therefore, generate \$4.7 billion in economic activity each year.** Every dollar spent is also estimated to boost GDP by \$1.30.

The cost of these 15 000 dwellings is outlined in the report. It is significant. However, these are the things that we need to do if we are to solve the homelessness crisis.

As I said in my inaugural speech in this place, having been on the edge of homelessness in a family situation, it is important that we think about people who are homeless. At the end of the day, if we keep kicking the can down the road and do not make announcements that go to the heart of the issue, the 9 000 homeless and the 1 000 rough sleepers every night will be a mainstay; we will never catch up. What worries me is that when we come out the other side of this pandemic and people are facing accumulated rental debts and the possibility of eviction, and other broader economic issues that will hit our community very hard, there will be an influx of homelessness. We also need to talk about that.

I fully support the motion that the Greens have put forward today, because it enables us to talk about a situation that I think is pretty shameful, considering how rich we are as a state and a nation. It is about priorities and what we are willing to do about this issue. I have mentioned some of the statistics and ideas put forward in this report. I hope the government and the Minister for Housing will read this report. I have asked questions about this issue throughout this government’s term. The answers I have received have been mixed. However, it is always, “in the future”, “a few years from now”, or “if we do this, we can do that”. The numbers that have been put forward are not adequate. This is a conversation that we need to have. What we are doing is not adequate to meet the demand in the community. People are sleeping rough. We are coming into a very hot summer. I hate to think about what it would be like to sleep rough with the impacts of climate change as well. The lack of action is absolutely galling. It is terrible.

I fully support this motion. I hope this motion will prevail and the government will see the light and go all the way towards meeting the actual need. The feedback I have had is that some of the announcements that have been made in recent times go only half the way. They do not go the full way. We have answers to these significant problems. We need to work together on this issue. This issue will not go away if we just kick the can down the road and deal with things on the edges and not with the core issue, which is homelessness.

HON CHARLES SMITH (East Metropolitan) [2.33 pm]: I would like to make a brief contribution to the motion on homelessness. I want to focus on just one part, that being the lack of social housing. According to research from the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, in 2016, Australia as a whole was suffering from a critical shortage of 433 000 social housing dwellings, and, without corrective policy action, that will continue to worsen by an additional 727 300 dwellings by 2036. The report estimated that a tenfold increase in building rates is required to overcome the current social housing shortfall and the projected growth in need by 2036. That would require a threefold expansion of the national social housing stock above its 2016 level—that is, just to prevent the social housing shortage from getting worse, 15 000 extra dwellings would need to be built a year, or over 290 000 homes over the next 20 years. However, to also eliminate the current backlog in Australia would require an annual social building program of 36 000 units a year. That is a daunting task.

We have recently seen the federal government and the state governments offer assistance to the construction industry under the guise of saving tradies' jobs, which of course I fully support. However, an opportunity has been missed to solve the social housing dwelling problem. I understand that if fewer homes are built, more tradies will be out of work. The response of the government of Western Australia has been to offer taxpayer-funded gifts or savings for the construction sector. Although that will help a bit, it is not enough. If these grants are really about jobs, much more will be needed to save tradies' jobs. That is why over the past few months I have called on the government, through parliamentary questions, to fund the construction and repair of social housing as a priority, rather than bring on new construction, which in all likelihood would have been built anyway. The big winners from these taxpayer-funded grants—the federal government's HomeBuilder program and the McGowan government's developer profit booster—are the government's developer mates. Guess what, members! They get to inflate the cost of their house and land packages, and clear their inventories. What a gift from the taxpayer! The question that remains is: why are the federal and state governments seeking to boost new home construction when housing stock is already well supplied, and when, in contrast with new construction, social housing is most definitely needed? That is evidenced by what we have heard today about the growing homelessness problem in Western Australia. Therefore, I suggest that boosting the stock of social housing and eliminating homelessness should have been the McGowan government's first priority. We even have an honourable member in this place who once a year sleeps rough to highlight this issue. This should have been the government's first priority, not lining the pockets of its developer buddies. This would support construction jobs and help needy Western Australians who are doing it tough. Get this, members: it would do this without inflating house and land packages.

I conclude my brief remarks with some comments that were made by the leader of the Australian Greens in the federal Parliament, Adam Bandt, in March, when he called for 500 000 affordable social housing homes to be built. I agree that homelessness in Australia is a disgrace, as people have heard. Governments at all levels need to do more to invest in public housing. However, the Greens as a party also need to be honest with themselves and acknowledge that building 500 000 new homes is bad for the environment. Remember, around one-quarter of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions come from the construction, operation and maintenance of buildings. Therefore, this Greens policy would drive up Australia's emissions, and at the same time chew up our rarer and rarer green space. I would invite the Greens party at all levels to join me to campaign to stop the population Ponzi scheme, which destroys living standards, destroys amenity and destroys our quality of life.

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [2.39 pm]: This is an interesting debate on an interesting motion. The language in the motion is especially interesting. It is a passionate debate. I think what it highlights to me is that there is no silver bullet for homelessness, as the minister responding for the government pointed out. Governments of all persuasions have tried to tackle the issue in different ways and with different policy settings, and there is no one way of solving the problem.

I listened intently to the minister's response. Most of the responses that he listed from the government are really just carryover of programs and responses from previous governments. He talked about shared equity and Keystart. That is not a new idea of this government; it is a continuation from previous governments that used Keystart and its criteria for funding to try to get people into their own homes to help avoid homelessness. Certainly, that is one of the components of solving homelessness, as is the government's current investment of about \$150 million in social housing. The previous government had a social housing investment package—SHIP—of \$560 million. Again, it is part of a solution to the homelessness issue, but I can tell members now that there will never be enough social housing built because there will always be demand. I remember that when I was Minister for Housing, we used to talk about people getting the golden ticket to social housing. It has been developed over decades of policy

settings. The government played a major role in a lot of country towns in providing state housing, as it was called then. A lot of towns were built on the back of state housing for essential workers who worked on railways and roads et cetera, but there was a shift and the housing was provided not for essential worker accommodation, but for those people in the greatest need. Social housing should be focused on the people with the greatest needs.

We have to establish a pipeline whereby people come into social housing and go out the other side into home equity, home ownership, and those sorts of opportunities. I remember that when I was the housing minister, there was a policy in housing. I have spoken about this before in this house. If someone living in Housing Authority social housing turned 100 years old, they got free rent for the rest of their life. When I was the housing minister, a lady turned 100 and we went to visit her. She had been living in a Housing Authority home for 70 years, from her married life all the way through to when she turned 100. She raised two children in that home. I thought to myself: what policy setting did we not get right as governments to say to that family, “Where is your aspiration for home ownership?” They should have bought that home at some point to free up a social housing home for those people most in need. That is what we are talking about here. We need to have a strategy to meet the needs of those who are most in need.

I was recently in Albany. A young woman came up to me and said, “I reckon I’ve got a great idea. We’ve got an agricultural worker shortage and we’ve got homelessness. Why don’t we just put them together?” It seems a pretty simplistic solution that may well work, but if we delve into the nuts and bolts and complexities of it, there are a whole heap of problems to solve. I know that the honourable Leader of the Opposition mentioned those causes of homelessness. It is not just about lacking a roof; it is lacking all the other services that are needed. This young woman said that we should just take that homeless person, ship them up to Beacon, and they can drive a header. It solves a problem; the homeless person finds a home and a job and the employer finds a header driver. But if we think about it, it takes a lot more than just transporting someone. They might have mental health or medical issues. They might not have a licence. They might not have a car or the money to catch a bus. They might not have the skills or the experience necessary to take up that opportunity. That is the complexity we are trying to solve here. There are many reasons for people to be homeless; it is not just that they do not have a roof over their head. People may have a drug addiction or mental health issues, or be escaping family and domestic violence. Those are the things we have to strive to solve.

On the motion before us, I think this government has been found wanting in its delivery of services into the homeless sector. The government has come across challenges. I think it is a complex issue that needs to be addressed with a joined-up approach. Obviously, one joined-up approach that this government has helped to implement is the machinery of government and to put together the Department of Communities from four sub-departments. I have to say, that has been a failure. I noticed an article in today’s *The West Australian* about the overspend in the Department of Communities. The article quoted evidence given by the director general of the Department of Communities to a parliamentary committee. It states —

Ms Andrews said she believed the back-office integration —

That is, of those departments —

should have occurred “two years ago”,

They have been pedalling away for two years. The article continues —

was a “fundamental building block” of the machinery-of-government change and was affecting frontline services.

There has been an internal focus, because the department has been trying to get itself organised. It needs to have an external focus and deliver on outcomes for the communities it is trying to service. I think that has been a failure. There are similar stories about some of those departments being joined up and the depth of morale, the issue of roles and responsibilities, and people not knowing what they are doing or how they get there or their lines of responsibility in reporting. It has been a real problem for this government. I think that quote by the director general of the Department of Communities is very damning. No wonder they have dropped the ball on frontline services into this sector. It seems to me that is exactly what has happened.

I was really interested in what the minister had to say about the document titled, “All Paths Lead to a Home: Western Australia’s 10-Year Strategy on Homelessness 2020–30”. Only time will tell how effective this strategy is going to be, but the joint convenors who put this strategy together—again, Michelle Andrews from the Department of Communities and Debra Zanella, CEO of Ruah Community Services—recognise that it is a complex issue that will need a focused government strategy and working with the not-for-profit sector if it is to be solved. It needs a joined-up approach, and I think that is where this government has failed.

I was really interested in some of the more interesting statistics given by members who talked about homelessness across the regions. I notice that in the outback north and in the Kimberley, a lot of people are considered homeless because they are living in severely crowded dwellings. That has been a challenge and an issue over many

governments. I know that the federal government in partnership with the state government instituted the remote housing initiative, which is a really interesting initiative but did not go any way towards solving the problem. In my mind, they got the policy settings wrong. All they did was build houses in remote communities; they did not provide other services or job opportunities at the same time. The government cannot just say, “Here is your house, tickety-boo, away you go, you’re all sweet.” It does not work that way. There have to be wraparound services. I know that the previous government introduced the transitional housing model in the east Kimberley, which expanded into the west Kimberley, which was about encouraging people in those remote communities and Aboriginal people to take up home ownership. They did not only say, “Here is a transitional home”, but also had a whole heap of wraparound services to ensure that those people learnt how to budget, work with home ownership, go to the bank, talk to the bank and get a job, so that they could move into home ownership. That is the critical part of the pipeline that we need. We need people to move on from social housing and get a job and a stable life in a stable home and to aspire to home ownership to allow spaces and funding for more social housing opportunities for people who, for a massive variety of reasons, find themselves homeless.

I notice the strategy contains a service profile on the Broome Aboriginal Short Stay Accommodation service, which, of course, started under the previous government, as did the Derby and goldfields short stay accommodation services. They are part of the solution as well. People who visit those communities can stay in those accommodation services for up to 28 days. It might be because they have a medical appointment or they are seeing family or it might be the wet season and they cannot get back home or whatever, but that, again, is part of the solution. The government recognised that because it is in the strategy, but it was started under the previous government. At the moment, I do not see any new solution from this government to address these concerns.

I want to talk about one more service profile, Foyer Oxford, before I hand over to another member who wants to speak on this motion. That service is highlighted in “All Paths Lead to a Home” as a great model to follow. Foyer Oxford opened in 2014, under the previous government, and it is delivering great outcomes. When I was Minister for Housing, I visited Foyer Oxford. It is a great model that needs to be repeated across the state. I thought there was an opportunity to incorporate such a service in Bunbury and some other regional centres as well.

I thank the member for bringing the motion to the house. It is a really interesting debate. I am always interested to hear the attack and the defence, with parties blaming each other for there being no outcomes. It is a complex issue and no government has managed to find a silver bullet to solve it. We have to keep chipping away with a range of strategies and make sure that we work in a much more collaborative way across government to solve the issues. A short note in the motion refers to people’s interaction with the justice system. I would really like to see a bilateral approach to justice reinvestment. In March, I wrote to the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee in the other place about undertaking an inquiry into justice reinvestment. It was probably unfortunate timing because of COVID, and the committee found that it could not take up the suggested inquiry. But I would really like to see a parliamentary committee undertake an inquiry into justice reinvestment strategies to develop a whole-of-government strategy on that. I am sure that is a major piece of the pie to solving homelessness. We know too many prisoners are released from prison with nowhere to go, and that is also part of the homelessness problem. It is going to take a government with a focus on homelessness to deliver on that, and I just do not see that at this point in time with this government.

HON PIERRE YANG (South Metropolitan) [2.52 pm]: I really appreciate the opportunity to make a few comments on this motion. As members know, this issue is near and dear to my heart. I participated in the CEO Sleepout in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020. I again thank members who contributed generously to my fundraising for homelessness as part of the Vinnies CEO Sleepout. Members will recall that in previous years, the CEO Sleepout was held at the Western Australian Cricket Association ground. Because of COVID, we could not have a large congregation of people in June this year, so the organisers asked us to have our own sleep out in either our backyard or our car. I chose to participate by sleeping in my vehicle. My wife took a photo of me in the back of the car before I went to bed and I put it on social media. To my pleasant surprise, when I woke up, I found quite a few thousands of dollars had come in. I thank the people who made generous contributions.

I listened to previous members’ contributions. I found that Hon Colin Holt’s contribution made a lot of sense. This issue has been around for a long time and no government is going to find a silver bullet to cure this issue and get rid of it. If there were one, we probably would have found it already. All parties, the government and the community sector, need to take a collaborative approach. I think playing politics with this issue is not the way to go.

In addition, time and again in the past few weeks, I have heard certain members in this chamber starting to have a go at the media and certain journalists and certain media organisations. That is not right. They are not here to defend themselves. Have a go at us; that is fine. I will have a go at the opposition when I hear things that I do not think are right, but having a go at the media is not the way to go. The media doing its job and holding all politicians to account is a fundamental pillar of our democracy.

Hon Alison Xamon interjected.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I did not interject when Hon Alison Xamon made her contribution. I respect the honourable member's right to say what she wants to say, but I expect the same courtesy.

I have made at least 12 speeches on this issue since I came to this place in 2017. I have raised the issue as part of my speeches on CEO Sleepout activities, various government strategies and initiatives, and homelessness and employment issues for veterans. In 2018, I spoke in response to the government's strategy on veterans. I was shocked when I heard the statistic that one in 20 homeless people has a military background, especially because Australian Defence Force members would be enormously employable when they step away from their military life and enter the civic world. I find it unbelievable that a lot of veterans who leave full-time service with the ADF are in employment transition for a long time. Inevitably, that contributes to their difficulties with their housing situation and, as we hear, one in 20 are homeless people have a military background. That is very, very sad.

I am enormously disappointed by the second and third limbs of this motion. As I was saying at the beginning of my contribution, politicising homelessness is not the way to go. Hon Colin Holt has the right approach; we need to take a collaborative approach. I want to thank the member for pointing that out. All members of this Parliament and of the community need to be more constructive, rather than standing on the side and throwing rocks. That is not the right way to go and it will not solve the problem. If I may say, this issue has been around for a very long time. I have now lived in Perth for more than 20 years, and this issue has been around for a very long time, through many, many governments. It is no single government's fault. This has not become an issue all of a sudden; it has been around. What have members been doing?

Hon Tjorn Sibma: You're the government.

Hon PIERRE YANG: It is a bit cute for the member to say that. Again, people are politicising this issue. I find that really extraordinary.

The only country in the western world that seems to have arrested the growth of homelessness is Finland. It has an approach that is working, but the rest of the world is struggling. Who here was expecting that we would have a pandemic in January this year? We issued a strategy in December. Again, it is so easy to throw rocks from the side. Let us be constructive, let us work together and stop playing politics.

Hon Peter Collier: You have said it about 20 times, we heard you.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I do not think the member has heard it enough. I am going to keep repeating myself until he gets it.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Adele Farina): Order, members! Hon Pierre Yang has the call.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I think the Leader of the Opposition needs to be reminded of the facts.

Hon Peter Collier: Read the standing orders about repetition.

Hon PIERRE YANG: The Leader of the Opposition has not heard what I am about to say, so he would do well to listen to me.

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members! You are not helping the situation. We have other members who would like to speak to this motion.

Hon PIERRE YANG: Thank you, Madam Acting President. It is a very good ruling.

Back in 2016–17 during the transition from the Liberal–National government to this Labor government, the funding for homelessness was \$86 million, and there has been an increase of 18 per cent from that time to 2019–20. That increase is against the backdrop of the Liberal–National government wrecking the state's finances, which skyrocketed —

Hon Peter Collier: I thought you were not going to make it political.

Hon PIERRE YANG: That is a fact, Leader of the Opposition.

Hon Peter Collier: You said you were not going to make it political.

Hon PIERRE YANG: I cannot understand why that is political. I am trying to give the Leader of the Opposition facts so he does not live in a snapshot of the world, but looks at the history of the situation so he understands it better.

From 2014–15 to 2016–17, which was in the period of the last government, there was only a 10 per cent increase in investment, so the government of the day, this government, has increased investment in addressing this issue. The former government wrecked the finances, let us not forget about that. We now have a pandemic. Hon Tim Clifford, who I really respect, said to park the issue of COVID-19 to the side. I am sorry, but we cannot park it. It is happening. Look at New South Wales and Victoria. We cannot park this issue; it is all part of the world. I just cannot understand why members would say that as if we are living in a world in which there is no pandemic. We cannot have international travel. Our international trade is severely affected by this pandemic. Look at the world around us, look at Europe: the situation is dire. Because we have kept Western Australians safe, we can deal with issues such as homelessness.

The minister has released a number of strategies and initiatives and the government has taken action. I will not seek to repeat it. I will try to do the right thing by Hon Tjorn Sibma, who is seeking the call. I want to conclude by saying that homelessness is an issue for all in the community. It is not an issue that should be politicised in the lead-up to the election. Madam Acting President, I appreciate the opportunity to put forward my views and I invite all parties to work together.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [3.03 pm]: I made a commitment to the mover of the motion that I would keep my remarks very, very short, which will come to everybody's relief. I support the motion in the terms that have been put—all three elements. The first two elements have been proved by fact, and I think are conceded by the government. The issue that the government seems to take objection to is the inclusion of the word “condemnation”. I am sorry, but the government has to accept that as part of the responsibility of government. It cannot govern without criticism.

May I address the issue. The government cannot dismiss the intention of the mover or the substance of this motion by categorising it as an act of political opportunism or cynicism. There seems to be a double standard. If the government adopts a certain position about any piece of legislation, any policy and, dare I say, its response to and management of the COVID-19 pandemic, that is just the government being responsible, and anybody who dares criticise the government's performance is being a political opportunist. I am sorry, it does not work that way, and no member can seriously make this claim, not about this issue, bearing in mind the track record of the individual members, at least of the Greens party, who have been speaking about homelessness for the last three and a half years of this term—they are people of integrity—and Hon Colin Tincknell for One Nation. It is not just me and the Liberal Party saying it and it is not just the individual members of this chamber, it is some of the government's political fellow travellers in the Western Australian Council of Social Service. I will quote from this document, its state budget submission 2020–21.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Member, I am sorry, you are not going to be able to quote from the document, because your time is up. Under the temporary standing orders, I am required to give the call to the mover of the motion for an opportunity to reply.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [3.05 pm] — in reply: Thank you, Madam Acting President, and I am disappointed I was not able to hear further from Hon Tjorn Sibma. Hopefully, he might use his member's statement time to avail us of his contribution.

I thank all members who have spoken. It is clearly of great importance to this Council to deal with the issue of homelessness, as it should be, because it is a huge problem in this state. As I have indicated already, rates of homelessness were already going up before we had the COVID-19 pandemic, as rates of social housing were going down. COVID-19 has simply made that worse.

I need to respond to a few things that have come from the government members. The first thing is that I am hearing back directly from homelessness services. This is not me just spouting my ideas. I am talking directly to the services and going to those services, and they are making it very clear that the increased numbers of people going through their doors is not a sign of success; it is not a sign of how well service delivery is now occurring. They are saying it is a sign of increased demand, that it is a problem and that they are concerned about the sheer number of people going through their doors. I point out to the government that every single time it sends out yet another press release, particularly one on exactly the same initiative it has already announced once, twice or three times before, the government is politicising the homelessness debate. It is not quietly and studiously getting on with the business of government; it is turning everything into a political announcement. That is the nature of what the government is doing. If anyone is politicising homelessness in this state, it is this ALP government, and it is doing so without any challenging questions from many corners of the media. I tell the government who is concerned and that is the people delivering those services on the ground. I know that because they talk to me, as I know they talk to other members of the opposition. They have expressed their frustration and distress that this government is getting away with its announcements without being questioned or challenged when they know what is coming on the table is wholly inadequate.

Extract from Hansard

[COUNCIL — Wednesday, 16 September 2020]
p5933b-5951a

Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Stephen Dawson; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon Tim Clifford; Hon Charles Smith; Hon Colin Holt; Hon Pierre Yang; Hon Tjorn Sibma

I am disappointed that the minister was unable to listen to what I was saying about some of the basic things that need to occur to turn this around. Obviously, the minister would like to hear even more from me in this chamber, so I am quite happy to assist in that regard and ensure that at every opportunity I will stand up over and over again. I am sure all members here are quite happy to hear from me even more!

The first thing is that the departments need to start talking to each other. The police and the Department of Transport are out of sync with what the Department of Communities is trying to do. They need to get on the same page. The other thing is that agencies within Communities itself need to get on the same page. The department of housing is so wildly out of whack with what the other good people in the Department of Communities are trying to do it is not funny. The Communities experiment has failed, and that needs to be sorted. That is the first thing.

The other thing is that the government needs to stop evicting people who have mental health issues, which is causing the behaviours leading to the problems. Stop it! The government cannot say on the one hand it is trying to deal with homelessness while at the same time continuing to evict these people, and they are being evicted. I gave the government facts and figures, and I am sorry it was unable to hear them, but the facts do not lie. The government also needs to start developing culturally appropriate responses, particularly for First Nations people who are homeless. The feedback we are getting is that what the government is doing at the moment is not working. It is not enough to turn around and say, “People don’t want the support.” They want the support, they want the housing, but what the government is offering is not working. How about talking to First Nations people and getting their feedback? It is not just about dollars, but it is of course always about dollars. It is also about replacing what the government has initially taken out, and it is about working with those people and services, and not expecting them to always have to stand next to ministers while they do press conference after press conference. They are feeling compromised. They are feeling as though they have been shut down. They feel worried that if they raise those concerns directly with the media, they are going to be denied funding opportunities. The record of this government has been that people feel as though that is exactly what will occur.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Tell us who said that.

Hon ALISON XAMON: I will not tell the minister that, because if I tell him, they are concerned they will not get funded. Try listening, for a change!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Order, members!

Hon ALISON XAMON: I am bemused to hear this government thinking that the Greens are here to do anything other than to hold it to account. We will hold it to account, as we will hold any Liberal–National government to account when it is here. I stand in this place day after day raising these concerns and I will continue to do that.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting President (Hon Adele Farina) casting her vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (17)

Hon Martin Aldridge
Hon Ken Baston
Hon Robin Chapple
Hon Tim Clifford
Hon Peter Collier

Hon Colin de Grussa
Hon Nick Goiran
Hon Colin Holt
Hon Rick Mazza
Hon Michael Mischin

Hon Simon O’Brien
Hon Robin Scott
Hon Tjorn Sibma
Hon Charles Smith
Hon Aaron Stonehouse

Hon Colin Tincknell
Hon Alison Xamon (*Teller*)

Noes (9)

Hon Stephen Dawson
Hon Sue Ellery
Hon Adele Farina

Hon Laurie Graham
Hon Alannah MacTiernan
Hon Martin Pritchard

Hon Samantha Rowe
Hon Dr Sally Talbot
Hon Pierre Yang (*Teller*)

Pairs

Hon Donna Faragher
Hon Dr Steve Thomas
Hon Jim Chown
Hon Jacqui Boydell

Hon Kyle McGinn
Hon Matthew Swinbourn
Hon Darren West
Hon Alanna Clohesy

Question thus passed.