



**PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

**INAUGURAL SPEECH**



**Mr Nathan Morton, MLA**  
(Member for Forrestfield)

**Legislative Assembly**

**Address-in-Reply**

**Tuesday, 16 April 2013**



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## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

### *Motion*

**MR N.W. MORTON (Forrestfield)** [3.16 pm]: Thank you, Mr Speaker, for the opportunity to address the chamber today. I would like to commence by congratulating you, Mr Speaker, on your appointment. I also extend my congratulations to the members of Parliament here today who have been re-elected and especially to those members who have been elected to the Legislative Assembly for the first time.

Can I also acknowledge the former member for Forrestfield, Andrew Waddell, for his service to this house and to the electorate of Forrestfield. I wish him, his wife and his daughter all the very best for the future.

To the Premier, congratulations on your emphatic electoral victory. This is a clear and concise endorsement by the people of Western Australia of your strong leadership and clear vision for this state.

[The Deputy Speaker took the chair.]

**Mr N.W. MORTON:** There are a number of people I would like to thank publicly for their assistance, hard work and belief in me. Madam Deputy Speaker, with your indulgence, I would like to commit them to the public record: the extremely hardworking, the dear friend and now parliamentary colleague, Hon Alyssa Hayden, MLC, Lynnie Butler, Allison McNee, Jarod Lomas, Ben Allen, Hank Loohuys, Peter Stewart, Amanda Robideau, Charlie Donovan and Sam Matyear, as well as many other significant people; and the members of the local branches, the many volunteers and the people of the Hasluck division, all of whom have supported me, not just throughout the last 12 months but for many years. Can I also acknowledge the federal member for Hasluck, Mr Ken Wyatt, MP, for all the days spent doorknocking together over a long, hot summer. I am most grateful.

I would also like to acknowledge my team from 2008. As many of you would know, my journey here has been a journey over several years. The team of 2008 was and is just as important as the team of 2013; and, most recently, I also acknowledge the wonderful Margaret Jackson for agreeing so willingly to assist in setting up my office. Again, I am most grateful. These people shared a belief in me and gave so graciously of their time and knowledge to assist me in the pursuit of becoming the member for Forrestfield.

I would also like to thank the large number of my parliamentary colleagues who have been so willing to assist me over the last couple of months. I should also mention at this time the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly and his staff for their assistance over recent times.

I would also like to extend a sincere thankyou to the good people within the electorate of Forrestfield. I wish to thank them for the great honour that they have bestowed on me. I am genuinely humbled. I hope that I can repay with interest the investment that they have made in me. I will be working with dedication and integrity to ensure that I represent their issues and concerns within these walls.

There is obviously one group of people I am still to thank, and without them I would not be standing here today—of course, this is my family, and, fortunately, many of them are here

today. To my wife, Amanda, I cannot thank you enough for your dedication, support and commitment. I am truly lucky to have someone who not just lends me so much support and love but shares her counsel with me as well. To our boys Dylan and Lochie, thank you for all your understanding and support over a long period. To my parents, Margaret and Collin, and my brothers, Ben, Linc and Josh, thank you for your assistance, support and understanding.

Our family has a long tradition of service to the community. My great-grandfather joined the Australian Army at the age of 18. He served his country and was wounded in battle. In fact, he was left for three days until a truce was called, when he was discovered in a bomb crater with severe shrapnel wounds to one leg. He returned to Australia and walked with a cane for the rest of his life. But he was not done with yet. He went on to become a radio pioneer in Western Australia, starting one of the first radio stations, broadcasting music to the people of Perth on 6WP. He broadcast his music into homes across Perth from 1927. My grandfather served in the Australian Army during World War II and my father served very proudly for 20 years in the Royal Australian Air Force, with 10 of those years being served in Canberra in the VIP Squadron, serving a number of Prime Ministers from the great Sir Robert Menzies to Malcolm Fraser. He also served other dignitaries such as members of the royal family. I remember stories of trips to the New Guinea highlands with Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and visits to Fiji with His Royal Highness Prince Charles of Wales. My point is that service to the community is something that is strongly embedded in my family and has been demonstrated over several generations. I have been fortunate to serve our community through education over the last decade of my life and now, with great humility, I have the opportunity to serve the people of the Forrestfield electorate and, more broadly, the people of Western Australia. That is a great privilege and not a role that I take lightly.

The Forrestfield electorate is an eclectic constituency. It contains three main urban hubs in Kenwick, Wattle Grove–Forrestfield and High Wycombe–Maida Vale. These hubs are interspersed with semirural areas and complemented by two main industrial areas in Maddington–Kenwick and Forrestfield. The electorate has a strong focus on the fly in, fly out workforce, with the third highest concentration of FIFO workers in the state. In addition to this strong focus on the mining and resource sector, a lot of mining, mining logistics and transport-associated companies are based in the electorate. In many ways Forrestfield serves as a staging post for the rest of the state.

The electorate is also undergoing rapid urban redevelopment. Areas such as Wattle Grove, Forrestfield and High Wycombe are being developed with great speed as people begin to rediscover the eastern suburbs and, in particular, the foothills of Perth, which make up a large part of the Forrestfield electorate. These suburbs are only 20 minutes from the city, close to the airport and access major arterial roads such as the Roe and Tonkin Highways. They also sit on the doorstep to the Perth hills, and the Swan Valley is just next door. This is an exciting time to be a resident in the electorate of Forrestfield, with projects such as the Gateway WA project and the Perth Airport rail link planned for the area. This will transform the east into a modern, fast-moving place to live.

In my time in the thirty-ninth Parliament, I will also be ensuring that all other commitments made to the area are delivered. As a first-term member of Parliament, I will obviously have a strong focus on my electorate but there are other things that I am deeply passionate about. Firstly, I have been a teacher for the past 10 years and I have a sincere interest in the quality of our education system. I am extremely cognisant of the significant role that education plays in ensuring that all our children are best prepared to meet the challenges of their life beyond the compulsory years of education. It is essential that we acknowledge the unique requirements of each and every one of our students, regardless of where they live, their socioeconomic background, their culture and so on. With this in mind, I have been particularly impressed with

the introduction of the independent public schools—or IPS—system by the Liberal–National government. The IPS system provides local school communities more control over their own destiny. It removes the one-shoe-fits-all approach to resourcing of schools. Independent public schools now have the capacity to select staff and direct resources into the areas that are most appropriate to meet the unique needs of their school community. Local schools in their local contexts controlling their individual needs is a truly Liberal philosophy to deliver significant reforms in education. The IPS system allows choice, flexibility and freedom—core values for which I stand. It is incumbent upon the government of the day to ensure that all of Western Australia’s young people have access to quality educational opportunities. This is what will set us apart and allow Western Australia to continue to be a leading force as we tap into more of the Asian market. With this said, I am extremely supportive of the extension of the IPS system to every school in Western Australia that has the desire to adopt this innovative system of school governance.

Secondly, we need to ensure that our next generation of community and business leaders have the capacity to seize opportunities, think with uniquely Western Australian ingenuity and broaden our economy base. As a state, we need to continue to encourage investment in our mining and resources sector, but we also need to ensure that we are not just counting on this alone. Now is the time to embolden investment into other industries and ensure that our young people are well positioned to take advantage of these new opportunities.

For someone whose family is, and has been, involved in small business for the last 30 years, I realise that as a government we need to enable these people; we need to support people who are willing to stand up and take a risk to create wealth, employment and opportunity. By supporting these people we grow our state and all of the community can share in the benefits of this.

Finally, while engaging with my local community over the last 12 months, law and order has been centre stage of serious concern to a significant number of our residents. We need to ensure that the vast majority of our community who go about their business without inflicting fear in or harm on others are protected by the state. It is important to remember that the people do not elect magistrates or judges; they elect members of Parliament. As a result of this, we, the members of this chamber, have a responsibility to the people of Western Australia. We need to ensure that if an element in our community is causing harm to others, it is dealt with in a decisive manner. This is a great state and the people who live here deserve the best, and this includes community safety.

As I begin to conclude my address, I wish to reiterate that it is a great honour and I am deeply humbled to stand in the same chamber that so many great Western Australians have stood in. I am an optimist. I am optimistic about our future; I am optimistic about the future of Western Australia and its people. I am confident that a bright future awaits us. Western Australians, generally, are optimistic people. It is burdened upon us to ensure that we assist in delivering that future, and I would like to once again extend my thanks to the people of the Forrestfield electorate for giving me this opportunity.

I have mentioned much about my family here today, and I would like to close with a quote from an ancestor of mine, the great Abraham Lincoln, who said that the best way to predict your future is to create it. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker, for the opportunity to address the chamber.

[Applause.]

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