



## **PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

### **INAUGURAL SPEECH**



**Mrs Lisa Anne Munday, MLA**  
(Member for Dawesville)

Legislative Assembly

Address-in-Reply

Tuesday, 4 May 2021

*Reprinted from Hansard*

# Legislative Assembly

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## ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

### *Motion*

Resumed from 29 April on the following motion moved by Ms L. Dalton —

That the following Address-in-Reply to His Excellency's speech be agreed to —

To His Excellency the Honourable Kim Beazley, AC, Governor of the State of Western Australia.

May it please Your Excellency —

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign, and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

**MRS L.A. MUNDAY (Dawesville)** [8.01 pm]: Madam Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I make this, my inaugural speech, to the Legislative Assembly of the forty-first Parliament of Western Australia. I would like to also join everyone in congratulating you, Madam Speaker, on your appointment as the first woman Speaker of the Legislative Assembly. You are probably a bit tired of hearing that!

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mrs L.A. MUNDAY:** I would like to acknowledge the Whadjuk Noongar people, the traditional owners on whose country we meet—always was, always will be. I acknowledge their connection to this country and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I would also like to acknowledge the Bindjareb Noongar people of my region. I recognise their rights and obligations to care for their land and the ongoing spiritual and cultural relationship with our waterways, and I deeply respect their sacred sites and areas of cultural significance.

I speak to you today as the first Labor member for Dawesville. The Dawesville electorate was created in 1994 and some 27 years later, Labor holds this seat for the first time. I am humbled and determined to be the best representative to the people of the Dawesville electorate. My area also encompasses the suburbs of Dudley Park, Erskine, Falcon, Halls Head and Wannanup.

First and foremost, I would like to thank Carolyn Smith and the United Workers Union officials and members. I appreciate each and every one of you and I am proud to be a UWU member. I want to acknowledge all the Labor members who assisted me on my campaign, gave me advice and also the opportunity to represent them. I would like to acknowledge my husband, Steve, who is my champion and my love; and my two sons, Alex and Frazer, who worked so hard. Steve, Alex and Frazer balanced work, study and caring for my mum and dad, and generally just made sure the world kept on spinning. I love you all, more than you will ever know, and everything we have achieved is because of each one of you. To my brother, Mark, sister-in-law, Tracey, and their girls, Holly and Sophie, thank you for all your love and support and for being here tonight in the public gallery. To Mikayla, Frazer's girlfriend, who is also here tonight, thank you for your help and also for getting me the best work bag any new member of Parliament would be proud to carry!

A second marriage can often be difficult when attempting to blend families; however, I am one of the lucky ones. Steve's kids, Wesley and Taylor, welcomed us into the fold, and over the last

10 years we have morphed into the imperfectly perfect family. I would also like to acknowledge Steve's first wife, whose name is also Lisa Munday and lives in my electorate. She is Lisa the first and I am Lisa the second! She doorknocked with me every weekend and ran a booth on election day. It was great to have her support and encouragement.

In my profession as a psychologist, my passion is positive psychology, which is mostly due to Dr Michelle McQuaid's incredible work on human flourishing. I do a lot of work on character strengths, of which there are 24, and these all present themselves differently for each person. During my campaign, I often spoke about these character strengths when I was with my campaign team, and as I record my debt of gratitude to them, I will describe them in their top strength.

Thank you to Dominic Rose, my campaign director, who has the top strength of honesty, something I feel that some people in this chamber have been on the receiving end of! Dom called me out of the blue one morning towards the end of June last year and explained that he was the national political coordinator for the United Workers Union and wanted to discuss something with me. My first thought was, "If my union is ringing me, I've got to be in trouble." I never imagined that he would ask me to think about running for the seat of Dawesville. Dom promised to be at my side for the whole journey, and he lived up to that promise time and again, especially when things got tough. Dom's honesty was of great benefit to me. I knew I could call him anytime of the day or night and ask any question. I knew that I would get a no holds barred, honest answer. Dom is a realist; he likes to deal in facts. When I would continually give him the glass-half-full picture or explain I was focusing on the positive, he would just smile that faraway smile, and I would often wonder whether he was lamenting his decision to make the call on that day.

Zoey was my campaign manager. A complete opposite to Dom, her strength is one of love. She worked like a Trojan. She was my wingman for the entire journey. I cannot begin to add up the number of hours she put in to volunteer for my campaign—the days and weeks of doorknocking with me. She checked in every day to see how I was going. Thank you, Zoey, for your love and support. Andi was my field manager. Her top character strength is perspective. For a 23-year-old, Andi has an incredible knack of being able to step into other people's shoes and see life from another's perspective. Thank you, Andi, for all your hard work and for helping me get through all those 40-degree days. You have the greatest future ahead of you. To Gemma, who has the strength of creativity: I can only imagine the hours you spent creating material, working off the out-of-focus, badly positioned or shadowed iPhone pictures that we would all send through at the last minute for you to work on. To my new awesome team of Vickey Payne, Jessica Smith and Angela Samiotis in my electorate office, I know we will do ourselves proud by creating positive change in our community.

I want to thank the many people who offered me their support and guidance during the campaign. To my ambo colleagues and all my friends, new and old, who worked tirelessly week in and week out, thank you. To Senator Sue Lines and Fiona Bennett, who have been my guiding light, and to all my fellow MPs who supported me, especially those in my UWU family, thank you. A very big thank you to Tim Picton and Ellie Whiteaker from the party office for their very professional and amazing campaign. I am so very grateful.

I would also like to congratulate the *Mandurah Coastal Times* and the *Mandurah Mail* for providing fair and impartial coverage of the election campaign. I look forward to continuing a great working relationship.

I also acknowledge my predecessor Zak Kirkup and thank him for his commitment to the people of our community over his four-year tenure. Although he did not make my campaign easy for me, he always treated me with respect and warmth, and I wish him all the very best with his future career and endeavours.

I am a country girl. I was born and raised in Harvey. My parents, David and Pam Nabbs, bought an old three-bedroom asbestos house in Eighth Street, and that is where they stayed for the next 50 years. My father worked as a meat inspector in charge of the local meatworks. My mother spent most of her years with the hardest job of all, keeping myself and my two brothers in line! As I remember it, we did not have a lot of money as a family, and while we never had the trendy clothes, we never went without either.

I have always said to anyone who will listen that I believe Harvey is the centre of the universe—everyone has either been there, is related to or knows someone from there. I have some examples of this. I sit with two other members of Parliament who have ties to Harvey. One is the member for Forrestfield and Deputy Speaker, Stephen Price, whose mum, Margaret, and my mum are best friends. The member for Collie–Preston, Jodie Hanns, also grew up in Harvey and was at the local high school at the same time as my younger brother. The first member for Dawesville, the late Arthur Marshall, who held the seat of Dawesville from its inception in 1996 to 2005, also has ties to Harvey. Mr Marshall and I met decades ago when he was my tennis coach in Harvey, and even though he played at Wimbledon twice, let us just say that I do not think that I will be remembered for my tennis prowess! Another example of happenstance is that the Mundays have already been in Parliament. Steve’s mum, my mother-in-law, Jill Munday, worked at Parliament House in the dining room from 1981 to 1988.

Politics was never really a conversation we had at our dining table. However, my brothers, Darren and Mark, and I grew up in a community-minded family. My parents were in Apex WA and then Rotary International, so we were always collecting stuff, cooking stuff or dropping off stuff. The Rotary ethos, “Service Above Self”, rang loud in our home.

I was an average student at Harvey Primary School and Harvey Senior High School. My reports often said that I talked too much and was easily distracted, and in my younger years I often spent a bit of time outside the classroom being asked to think about what I had or had not done.

I just want to take a minute to express to any person, young or old, who happens to come across this speech in years to come that if they want to do something in their life, I have found the answer. It is not about being smart or talented; it is about being consistent and disciplined, and being okay with failure. Failure is just life showing you that you are at the wrong door, and that you need to step back and seek some advice. Good people who have already succeeded on your chosen path will happily show you the way.

I have had four different careers over my 50-plus years. I was a bank officer in my late teens and early 20s for the R&I Bank, now Bankwest, where I learnt the value of hard work. In my late 20s I worked as a base room supervisor for Swan Taxis, and so began my first taste of night shift. It was here that I got my opportunity to apply to be an ambulance officer, when I overheard someone in the call centre talking about it.

Making the cut to join the ambulance service was an incredible break. I was one of 30 people chosen from 1 000 applicants. I never stopped to think whether I was suited to the job; I just saw the opportunity to be making a full-time wage working two days of 10 hours and two nights of 14 hours, with four days off—perfect for a mother with two young children.

My first 24 weeks of on-the-road ambulance life was like nothing I could have ever prepared myself for. When people say to me, “You must see some terrible things”, they really have no ability to comprehend what we do see. My strength of kindness and hope drove me to keep going.

Fast forward nearly 15 years to when I was 45 years old. The job had certainly changed me. I became a lot more aware of the value of life and what was important. My first marriage became a casualty of my job. I was divorced and a single mum to two young boys, then aged six and eight. That was for the best part of six years. During this time, my boys were both diagnosed with high-functioning autism, and although they were extremely bright educationally, their social

interactions, planning and executive formatting were such a struggle. I watched them struggle to make friends and find their place in society. They were and still are each other's best friend, and I will be forever grateful for this deeper than brotherly bond that they share. I realised I was making a difference one day when Frazer said to me, "I actually like being different, mum. I have superpowers!" Our motto is: show me something great a normal person has ever done—nothing! Despite their individual challenges, they have gone on to graduate from university with degrees.

Steve's family has always had ties to Falcon through his family's home, so when we decided to move in together and blend our families, the boys and I shifted to Halls Head; then, once we were married, we moved into our renovators' delight in Falcon. Night shift was starting to take its toll. I was getting older and was watching the mental health situation of our young people in the community starting to change. I was accepted at Murdoch University as a mature age student and studied a bachelor's degree in psychology. After gaining my honours, I started an internship at a private psychology practice in Halls Head, where I completed my psychology registration. I was all set to start my own positive psychology business called Two Curious Birds with my friend Jess, who is a yoga master. We were going to combine strength and resilience techniques with movement. But then opportunity knocked again, or rang, and I answered the call from Dom Rose that would set my life on yet another course at the age of 52.

The Mandurah region has been well represented and looked after for over 20 years by the member for Mandurah, Hon David Templeman. I have a tremendous amount of appreciation for the kindness David shows me every day, and I look forward to working with him as we continue to serve the Mandurah–Dawesville region together. Robyn Clarke, the member for Murray–Wellington, has also been an integral player in supporting me through my campaign. Thank you so much, Robyn, for your guidance and support along the way.

The area of Dawesville is home to some remarkable people. Paddi Creevey is an exceptional role model who has been awarded the Order of Australia for her social work and service to our region throughout her life, and for creating and chairing many organisations that offer a voice to those who cannot speak for themselves. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to Paddi for her kindness and ongoing support. I am excited to be working with her into the future.

Rhys Williams, the Mayor of Mandurah, also lives in Dawesville. He has done an incredible amount of work over his young life for the Mandurah community. Watching Rhys speak at public functions, I was struck by his warmth and genuineness. I am looking forward to forging a new relationship with Rhys and the Mandurah City Council as we work together in delivering the Transform Mandurah initiative in what I think is the most beautiful part of Western Australia—the district of Dawesville.

The McGowan government has made WA jobs its top priority. Moving forward into this forty-first Parliament, it is so uplifting to be part of a government that will continue to invest billions of dollars in regional projects such as the Transform Peel initiative, which is a long-term vision through to 2050 that encompasses the Peel food technology facility, the Bushfire Centre of Excellence and the Peel integrated water initiative. Our waterways are an extremely important part of our Dawesville community. The *Peel–Harvey estuary protection plan (Bindjareb Djilba)* is a 10-year plan that the McGowan government is undertaking in conjunction with the local and federal governments, industry and the community to effectively manage and highlight the needs of our estuary.

I am deeply proud of the McGowan Labor government's commitment to end privatisation of health services and to bring Peel Health Campus back in-house. As a former frontline paramedic, I know the very real difference this will make in our community, and that public health, not private profit, must be at the centre of our health system. The promised \$152 million upgrades will ensure that the hospital is able to serve the needs of the Peel region.

Education and early intervention are essential to tackling complex mental health issues, especially amongst our young people. It is exciting to see how our innovative Peel health hub's unique model of care, with its collaborative approach to medical, mental health and job support organisations, has been so successful. It has a client-centred, no-wrong-door policy. I am excited to be a voice working with the Peel Development Commission, other stakeholders and all three levels of government to continue to build on this model.

It is imperative that the people in our Peel region who need extra support, irrespective of age, ability, gender, culture or religious beliefs, feel included and heard. It will be incredible to join forces with the members for Mandurah and Murray–Wellington to continue their hard work to put systems in place and create the change that we need.

I love the area in which I live. It is a diverse place that offers the best of both worlds, being so close to a city and all the services it has to offer as well as the sleepy country fishing village that it used to be. The Dawesville electorate has fantastic family friendly beaches; an estuary that offers paddle boarding, boating, fishing and crabbing; and some of the best cafes and restaurants in WA. Thousands of visitors come to enjoy this area that I am fortunate enough to call home. I intend to also focus on promoting local businesses and creating more tourist attractions further south from Mandurah.

I have been an ambulance paramedic for nearly 20 years of my life. It has been part of my identity for so long that I struggle to see myself as anything else. My experiences as an ambulance paramedic have made me the person I am today. I have sat with people in my community during the worst times of their lives. Unfortunately, I see many of my former colleagues in similar situations. When I say “colleagues”, I am referring to my regional brothers and sisters—our 000 call-takers in the State Operations Centre, volunteers and those in patient transport. One of the issues I hope to raise and work through during my time in government is who is supporting and taking care of our first responders. We have had numerous reports into our ambulance service here in WA that have highlighted the issues and trauma that our first responders face both internally and externally. I have seen firsthand the burnout, fatigue, acute stress disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, poor physical and mental health and even suicides within our paramedic workforce. Why does this happen? Research has shown that ambulance officers are three times more likely to be diagnosed with PTSD than any other worker. We have limited opportunities for any downtime, and debriefing is difficult when there are jobs outstanding in the community. People need us, so we just keep going. Some of the worst-affected areas are our country regions. Those officers work 24/7. I worked regularly over a number of years as a relief community paramedic in one of the most remote areas of WA, in Wyndham. I felt firsthand the stress of realising that just a simple car accident would push my resources to the limit, with only a single ambulance available in a 100-kilometre radius. A community paramedic does not get to take a break because there is no one to hand the work phone to. As long as I have the honour to serve in this Parliament, I pledge to be a voice for my ambulance colleagues and to work with our ministers and departments to make sure that we deliver for them and the community they serve.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mrs L.A. MUNDAY:** The current evidence shows that getting the right treatment at the right time is paramount in ensuring the best possible recovery from psychological injury such as PTSD, yet too often our first responders are left languishing, with debilitating symptoms, while they try to prove to insurance companies that their current condition is attributed to their work. PTSD can result from cumulative exposure to traumatic events. It will always be difficult to pinpoint one specific incident as a direct cause of PTSD—a fact that can be easily and unfairly manipulated by insurance companies under the current workers' compensation system. This needs to change. I am also very grateful to Premier Mark McGowan for listening to the long

campaign by United Workers Union ambulance members such as myself and committing to introduce a rebuttable presumption that ambulance officers suffering PTSD have developed it in the course of the intensely traumatic work they do every day. I am confident that this change will reduce the stigma associated with work-related psychological harm and PTSD claims by removing barriers for our first responders seeking assistance and getting them the right treatment. It will protect those who protect us, when they are at their most vulnerable.

I am looking forward to working closely with Minister Dawson as Minister for Industrial Relations; Mental Health to get this change done as soon as possible to stop the potential suffering of our ambulance staff.

Opportunity, resilience and hope have been the underpinning message of my inaugural speech tonight. Each of these words has had an incredible impact on the reason I am standing here today. A quote that sits with me is —

You can't stop the waves, but you can learn how to surf.

Dr Michael Ungar, a specialist in the field of resilience research, made the observation —

It's all very well to learn how to surf the waves of life and emotions, but not everyone has access to a surfboard, a lifeguard or even a beach.

Resilience is about resources: what physical, psychological, social or spiritual resources can we draw on? It is not lost on me how privileged I am to be here today, and the opportunities afforded to me will be paid forward whenever and wherever I can during my time as a member of Parliament. It is my intention to be that external resource—that lifeguard—and to help as many people as possible to surf those waves.

I do not come with an ego or sense of entitlement. For the grace of God, we are all here today and it comes as a timely reminder that many people outside these walls are not as fortunate as we are.

I also recognise that I am here on the back of the hard work already completed by Premier Mark McGowan's government and the members and ministers in cabinet of the fortieth Parliament.

As we learn to live with managing COVID in this new world, and our young children and adults look towards us for direction on how to act, it could be a timely reminder that as the forty-first government, we need to be seen to be the best we can be, to show a level of kindness and empathy to our opposition who have an incredible task ahead of them. I think if we all ask ourselves at the start of every day, "Is what I am about to do or say going to make me a better person and does it serve the community we are all responsible for?", that will stand us all in good stead. Thank you.

[Applause.]