



# Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
2021

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, 5 May 2021

# Legislative Assembly

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**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** took the chair at 12 noon, acknowledged country and read prayers.

## GERALDTON BYPASS

### *Petition*

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.02 pm]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Legislative Assembly. It contains 1 443 signatures and is couched in the following terms —

To the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia

We, the undersigned, object to Government proposed Dongara to Geraldton bypass, which will result in the demolition of the Moonyoonooka Store and other businesses and homes in the area.

The Moonyoonooka Store, located on the Geraldton–Mount Magnet Road, has serviced the Moonyoonooka, Narra Tarra, Eradu, Bringo, Northern Gully, Kojarena, Airport Precinct and the Nangulu industrial area for 100 years providing a Post Office Agency servicing 200 post boxes, Newspapers, Fuel, Liquor, Food and Drinks and employing 5–10 staff. The store is the only place trucks can stop heading east from Geraldton and the closest store to many businesses in this area. There are many lifestyle properties in this area with a growing community around Moonyoonooka.

We implore that the services currently provided are allowed to continue uninterrupted and without termination.

[See petition 1.]

### *Nonconforming Petition*

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I also advise that I have a nonconforming petition on the same subject containing 1 658 signatures that I will be giving directly to the minister.

## GOSNELLS POLICE STATION

### *Petition*

**MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River — Parliamentary Secretary)** [12.03 pm]: I have a petition that has been certified by the Clerks containing two signatures and couched in the following terms —

To the Honourable Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

**We, the undersigned, support Terry Healy's plan to extend weekday opening hours at Gosnells Police Station from 4pm close to 7pm close.**

[See petition 2.]

### *Nonconforming Petition*

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I also have hundreds of signatures on a nonconforming petition couched in similar terms that I will hand directly to the minister.

## CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2019–20

### *Correction — Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [12.05 pm]: On 4 May 2021, I received a letter from the Corruption and Crime Commissioner requesting that an erratum be added to the *Corruption and Crime Commission annual report 2019–20* that was tabled on 24 September 2020. The erratum corrects information contained in tables on pages 109 and 111 relating to the CCC's measurement of effectiveness indicators. Under the provisions of standing order 156, I authorise the corrections to be attached as an erratum to the tabled paper.

[See paper [197](#).]

## ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEFENCE AND VETERAN SUICIDE

### *Statement by Minister for Veterans Issues*

**MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Veterans Issues)** [12.05 pm]: Thirteen veterans have died from suicide in the first three months of this year, with an average of one veteran dying by suicide every two weeks. In the face of these grim statistics and what they mean for veterans and their families, I wish to update the house on the Western Australian government's contribution and ongoing commitment to the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

I welcome the Prime Minister's announcement about the establishment of this royal commission. Prior to the announcement, state government officers met with the interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, Dr Bernadette Boss, CSC, to discuss these important issues and ways to address these terrible statistics and improve veterans' lives. Today, I met with Hon Darren Chester, the federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs, and fellow state and territory ministers via videoconference to discuss the commonwealth's plans for the royal commission. A public consultation process is underway to inform the draft terms of reference for the royal commission. The McGowan government is supporting the commonwealth's consultations by facilitating WA-based veterans and stakeholders to have their say. Key stakeholders from the Western Australian veteran community, along with members of the Veterans Advisory Council and staff, will participate in a round table facilitated by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, the results of which will inform our state's input into the draft terms of reference. Consultation on the terms of reference closes on 21 May 2021. I encourage all interested Western Australians to provide feedback either by emailing Defence West in the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation or directly to the Department of Veterans' Affairs or the federal Attorney-General's Department through its website.

The royal commission is expected to be conducted in collaboration with states and territories, and Western Australia is moving ahead with the preparation of letters patent to allow our state's full participation. The McGowan government is committed to focusing on services to prevent and reduce veteran suicide. Much remains to be done to close the gap between the federal government's policy intentions and the resources available to support veterans to access frontline services. The McGowan government is very keen to make progress in the fight against veteran suicide and will continue to work closely with the Department of Veterans' Affairs and veterans' stakeholders to improve veterans' lives.

### TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BILL 2021

#### *Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

#### *Second Reading*

**MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Treasurer)** [12.09 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to increase the Treasurer's advance limit for 2020–21 to \$1.439 billion, an increase of \$750 million on the currently approved limit of \$689 million. The Treasurer's advance allows for supplementary funding of annual appropriations for unforeseen and extraordinary events during the financial year, as well as short-term repayable advances to agencies for working capital purposes. The annual Treasurer's advance limit is set automatically by the Financial Management Act 2006 and is calculated as three per cent of the amount appropriated in the previous financial year. For 2020–21, this equates to a Treasurer's advance limit of \$689 million. Under the FMA, if this automatic limit proves insufficient, parliamentary approval for an increased limit must be sought by way of a Treasurer's advance authorisation bill.

This bill seeks to increase the Treasurer's advance limit by \$750 million to \$1.439 billion as the 2020–21 *Pre-election financial projections statement* forecast that the amount to be drawn against recoverable advances, excesses and new items in 2020–21 is \$786 million, exceeding the \$689 million limit for 2020–21. The main items of expenditure contributing to the \$786 million forecast to be drawn against the Treasurer's advance are COVID-19-related costs for additional health spending, reductions in agency own-source revenue, additional cleaning for schools and public transport, the \$500 small business and charity electricity tariff offset, and costs associated with the extension of the commonwealth's HomeBuilder grant scheme. Other expenditure items include a \$100 million contribution for the Perth City Deal, and \$50 million to enable the Department of Justice to meet higher custodial services spending.

Since the release of the *Pre-election financial projections statement*, additional spending has emerged, such as the cost of delivering the Western Australian component of the national COVID-19 vaccination program and the forecast impact of election commitments to be delivered in 2020–21 that will further support the community and invest in the state's economic and social recovery from the pandemic. It is anticipated that increasing the Treasurer's advance by \$750 million will provide sufficient capacity for the government to respond to emerging issues for the remainder of 2020–21, including further potential initiatives that may be required to support businesses and households, and keep our state safe and strong. As authority for the release of excess funding needs to be in place before any such funds can be drawn during the remainder of the 2020–21 financial year, there is a need for this bill to pass through this Parliament as quickly as possible. Given the urgent nature of this bill, we will give notice tomorrow of our intention to suspend so much of the standing orders next week as is necessary to facilitate the debate and passage of the bill without delay.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

**SUPPLY BILL 2021***Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr M. McGowan (Treasurer)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the Treasurer.

*Second Reading*

**MR M. MCGOWAN (Rockingham — Treasurer)** [12.13 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks supply and appropriation from the consolidated account for recurrent and capital purposes during the 2021–22 financial year of \$15 108 098 500. Each year through the budget process Parliament grants authority to agencies to spend public funds for the coming financial year through the passing of appropriation bills. In addition, the Financial Management Act 2006 provides two months of automatic supply to the end of August. This would usually provide sufficient time for the appropriations bills for a May budget to be passed by the Parliament, ensuring uninterrupted supply of consolidated account funding for the new financial year. However, due to the timing of the state election in March 2021, the 2021–22 budget has been deferred to September to provide the government with sufficient time to undertake a comprehensive budget process. As a result, the period of automatic supply under the FMA will not provide sufficient time for appropriation bills for the 2021–22 budget to be introduced and passed by Parliament by the end of August when automatic supply will expire. In this regard, it is anticipated that the 2021–22 budget will not complete its passage through the Parliament until late in 2021; therefore, a supply bill is required to ensure that government services can continue until such time as the 2021–22 appropriation bills are passed by the Parliament. This includes the uninterrupted provision of crucial public services such as health care, public education and policing.

The \$15.11 billion provided for in the Supply Bill 2021 is based on 50 per cent of the appropriations approved by Parliament for the 2020–21 financial year, which includes funding for recurrent and capital services, and central funding approved by other statutes. This is the same approach adopted following the 2017 state election and the deferred 2020–21 state budget, delivered in October 2020. The bill prescribes a general monetary limit on the drawings against the consolidated account. By so doing, it overcomes the problems that otherwise could arise by prescribing monetary limits in respect of individual appropriations as usually detailed in the estimates of expenditure.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

**COVID-19 RESPONSE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT  
(EXTENSION OF EXPIRING PROVISIONS) BILL 2021**

*Introduction and First Reading*

Bill introduced, on motion by **Mr R.R. Whitby (Minister for Emergency Services)**, and read a first time.

Explanatory memorandum presented by the minister.

*Second Reading*

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Emergency Services)** [12.17 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

Western Australia, and indeed the rest of the world, is continuing to face an unprecedented emergency. This bill is vital to ensure the safety of the community of Western Australia. It supports our emergency management personnel who are doing an incredible job on the front line managing the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis. This is the first time Western Australia has experienced an emergency of this scope and magnitude. In November last year, this house urgently moved to ensure the state continued to have access to the necessary powers to manage the COVID-19 pandemic, which is continuing to pose a risk to our community. It is integral that we ensure that our legislative framework to deal with the COVID-19 emergency continues into the immediate future. We must urgently pass this bill to ensure that the state can respond to the challenges that we are facing.

By way of background, in April 2020 urgent amendments were passed by this house to enhance the state's capacity to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and safeguard the health and safety of the Western Australian community. The amendments included those made by the Emergency Management Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020 and the Criminal Code Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020. I will refer to these collectively as the COVID-19 response amendment acts. These amendments have been vital to the state's management of COVID-19. The amendments strengthened our legislative framework and have allowed Western Australia to effectively respond and deal with the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 emergency. The COVID-19 response amendment acts introduced measures to respond to the pandemic and included sunset provisions to limit the measures to the pandemic hazard. The amendments introduced by the COVID-19 response amendment acts will cease to operate on 4 July 2021.

Members, COVID-19 is still a risk to the community, as we have seen recently with our three-day lockdown. Due to the fast-evolving situation and the possible threat, we introduced measures when two positive COVID-19 cases emerged. Since then, we have introduced measures to limit and reduce the risk of spread from another group of infections. This bill will extend the operation of the provisions of the COVID-19 response amendment acts by a further six months to 4 January 2022.

Before turning to the bill itself, I will outline the provisions that are subject to sunset clauses and explain why it is important that they are extended to ensure that the state can continue to respond appropriately to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Emergency Management Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020 introduced, among other things, section 72A into the Emergency Management Act 2005. Section 72A provides a catch-all power that enables a hazard management officer or authorised officer to effectively manage the response to an emergency. It includes the ability to direct a person or class of persons to take any action that the officer considers reasonably necessary to prevent, control or abate risks associated with the emergency. Section 72A also contains important information-gathering powers.

Over the course of the past year, a large number of directions have been made in reliance or partial reliance on this section. Those directions include, but are not limited to, current versions of the Contact Register Directions, Controlled Border for Western Australia Directions, Safe Transition for Western Australia Directions, Isolation (Diagnosed) Directions, Quarantine and Isolation (Undiagnosed) Directions, Gatherings and Activities Directions, Face Covering Directions and Presentation for Testing Directions.

Pursuant to sections 2(c) and 10 of the Emergency Management Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020, as amended by the COVID-19 Response Legislation Amendment (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Act 2020, section 72A will be deleted from the Emergency Management Act 2005 on 4 July 2021. The intent of this sunset clause was to ensure that the section 72A powers were applied only to the circumstances of an appropriate emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic. On the sunset date, any existing directions that rely solely on section 72A will no longer be valid as there are no transitional provisions to continue the operation of those directions. Further, it will not be possible to rely on section 72A to make any new directions.

Ensuring that these provisions endure in the act for a further six months is vital. Extension of the state of emergency will continue to be based on expert advice from the State Emergency Coordinator and the deliberations of the State Disaster Council. However, it is essential that every tool that has served our state so well to this point remains available to keep us safe in these difficult and uncertain times. The powers under section 72A have been vital to effectively direct the isolation and testing of people arriving in Western Australia from overseas, and we must have the capability to continue to make such directions. Australians located overseas are still returning home. Many are returning from countries that are severely impacted by the pandemic. It is important that we effectively manage that risk.

Over the past year, we witnessed some states and territories grappling with community outbreaks of COVID-19 and the devastating impact on those communities. In response to these specific outbreaks, Western Australia issued directions which were supported by section 72A powers. Even with open borders within Australia, we need to be able to respond to outbreaks in other jurisdictions and require this power to put restrictions in place as required. It is important that, based on the current health advice and Western Australia's susceptibility to a COVID-19 outbreak, we have in place measures to manage our borders if required and ensure that appropriate strategies are in place. The powers under section 72A have supported our border management and the issuing of directions to present for health testing, isolate or attend hotel quarantine. They have been and continue to be critical to this strategy.

Section 72A powers are also essential for the government's implementation of physical distancing measures appropriate to the health advice. This has supported the easing of restrictions for social venues such as theatres, concert halls and cinemas and the need to strengthen restrictions as and when required. As we move forward, and in the event the state of emergency continues, section 72A will continue to be relied on to facilitate community-based events in a COVID-safe manner, while having the agility to swiftly respond to any need to put in place temporary restrictions.

One of the key directions for using the section 72A information-gathering powers is the Contact Register Directions. Contact information records and the continued use of the SafeWA app are integral to the state's ability to efficiently respond to and control ongoing pandemic risks. We only need to look at our recent three-day lockdown to see the importance of contact tracing in being able to rapidly respond to and isolate the risk of spread within the community. The government's decisions in responding to and managing the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to be based on the best available health advice. Directions relating to contact tracing and quarantine that rely on section 72A are integral to any ongoing scenario. Section 72A will ensure our emergency management personnel have the powers available to continue to help us overcome this pandemic and maintain the responsible and flexible framework that has served the state so well to this point.

I will now turn to the Criminal Code Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020. The Criminal Code Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020 amended the Criminal Code to increase the maximum penalties for the offences of

serious assault and threats committed in the context of COVID-19. The increased penalties reflected the seriousness of such assaults and threats against public officers, including frontline workers, in the context of the pandemic. Our frontline workers have been outstanding during this state of emergency. These amendments sent a strong message of support to these officers for their sustained efforts in such challenging circumstances.

The amendments to the offences under sections 318 and 338B of the Criminal Code were made in response to several concerning reports of people here, across the country and internationally claiming they had COVID-19 and deliberately coughing, spitting or worse on public officers doing their jobs. This was happening or at risk of happening to frontline essential staff who work tirelessly to keep our community safe and to stop the spread of this disease. The increased penalties reflected the seriousness of this unacceptable conduct and conveyed that the government and the Western Australian community do not accept such conduct.

The Criminal Code Amendment (COVID-19 Response) Act 2020 as amended by the COVID-19 Response Legislation Amendment (Extension of Expiring Provisions) Act 2020 has a sunset date of 4 July 2021. Unless extended, the increased maximum penalties for the offences committed in the context of COVID-19 will be deleted. As we continue to live with COVID-19 and rely so much on our frontline essential staff, it is critical that people who assault or threaten to infect them with COVID-19 can be dealt with appropriately. The bill before us today will extend the operation of the respective sunset clauses under the COVID-19 response amendment acts for a further six months, with a new effective sunset date of 4 January 2022. It will ensure that the powers under section 72A of the Emergency Management Act 2005 will be available should the state of emergency in respect of the COVID-19 pandemic continue and will ensure that higher penalties continue to apply to serious assaults and threats against public officers committed in the context of COVID-19.

Members, we are facing uncertain times as we continue to respond to and manage the pandemic. This bill will help us maximise certainty that we have the tools in place to do everything we can to protect our state, our people and our economy with both the short-term response to any risks and the long-term strategy as the world continues to grapple with COVID-19.

It is vital that the bill is passed before the sunset date of 4 July 2021. Any gap in these laws in response to the COVID-19 pandemic will potentially present an unacceptable risk to the health, safety and financial security of Western Australians.

I commend the bill to the house.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

## LEGISLATION BILL 2021

### *Second Reading*

**MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General)** [12.29 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

A bill with substantially the same content as this bill was introduced into the Legislative Assembly in June 2018 and was passed without amendment by the Legislative Assembly in October 2018. It was introduced into the Legislative Council in October 2018, and was awaiting a second reading when it lapsed.

An important responsibility of government is to provide public access to accurate, up-to-date and reliable versions of legislation in a timely and efficient manner. This responsibility stems from the principles that everybody is presumed to know the law, and that ignorance of the law is no excuse. Neither of these principles can operate fairly and effectively if the law is not made publicly accessible. In Western Australia, this responsibility is carried out by the Parliamentary Counsel's Office and the government printer. Individual acts as passed and bound volumes of acts passed each year are published in hard copy. Subsidiary legislation as made is generally published in full in the *Government Gazette*, which is published in both hard copy and electronic forms. Reprints of acts and subsidiary legislation—that is, with their amendments incorporated—are prepared by the PCO under the authority of the Reprints Act 1984 and printed and published under the authority of the government printer.

The WA legislation website provides public access to WA legislation in electronic form. Previously hosted by the State Law Publisher, the website is now hosted by the PCO. The work of maintaining and updating the collections of material on this website has always been undertaken by the PCO staff. Under current law, generally only hard copy versions of acts and hard copy versions of the *Government Gazette* in which subsidiary legislation is published have official status. Electronic versions on the WA legislation website and the electronic version of the *Government Gazette* have no official status.

Demand for printed copies of WA legislation has steadily declined over recent years. People have come to rely on the availability of the WA legislation website as a means of accessing legislation. Usage of the WA legislation website continues to increase, in line with the trend in other Australasian jurisdictions. Hard copy reprints are produced only periodically, while the electronic consolidations on the WA legislation website are updated each time an enactment is amended. This means that hard copy reprints can quickly become out of date and potentially misleading, while the electronic consolidations provide up-to-date access to current law. The number of subscribers

to the *Government Gazette* also continues to decrease. It is a reasonable assumption that most people who want to access WA subsidiary legislation do so by looking at the electronic version of the *Government Gazette* in which it appears or the versions on the WA legislation website. Many other jurisdictions no longer require that subsidiary legislation be published in full in their gazette. Instead, the making of an item of subsidiary legislation—along with details of where it may be accessed—is merely notified in the gazette or on a legislation website, and the full text of the item is included in the collection of legislation made available on a legislation website.

A general decline in the demand for printed copies of legislation and an increased demand for electronic legislative material has had a further consequence. Most other Australasian jurisdictions have reduced or discontinued entirely the production of printed versions of legislation, and have given electronic versions official status. Electronic versions of legislation now have official status in the commonwealth, New South Wales, Queensland, the ACT, Victoria and New Zealand. In those jurisdictions, people wanting their own official versions can simply print these from the electronic versions available on the relevant websites. For those people who want access to commercially printed and bound legislation, some jurisdictions have moved, or are moving, to a print on demand service.

The current processes for publishing WA legislation have a number of disadvantages. First, electronic versions of legislation lack official status. Under WA legislation, only printed copies of WA acts and subsidiary legislation are given evidential status in judicial and other proceedings. Electronic versions of WA legislation and the *Government Gazette*, which is the format in which most people access this material, have no official status. This means that the current processes for the publication of WA legislation, particularly the publication of subsidiary legislation in the *Government Gazette*, are unnecessarily expensive, inefficient, and inconvenient for users.

Second, the current editorial powers available under the Reprints Act 1984 are unnecessarily limited in nature and scope. That act confers power on the PCO to make formal amendments in reprints—such as updating drafting styles, correcting certain inconsistencies, errors and anomalies and changing outdated references. These changes would otherwise have to be made by way of amendments enacted by Parliament which, given their minor nature, would not be an efficient use of parliamentary time. It is also very difficult for Parliament to find time to consider and enact Statutes (Repeals and Minor Amendments) Bills, which would otherwise be the usual vehicle for making these kinds of amendments.

I note that there is an important restriction on the exercise of these editorial powers. They must not alter or otherwise affect the substance or operation of any written law. Currently, the editorial powers can be exercised only in the preparation of hard copy reprints. They cannot be exercised in the preparation of the electronic versions of legislation made available on the WA legislation website. This deprives users of legislation of the benefits of the timely exercise of editorial powers to maintain the quality and accuracy of material on the WA legislation website. It also adds unnecessary complexity and inefficiency to the PCO's electronic legislation updating processes. The current editorial powers are also much more limited than those available to the PCO's equivalents in other Australasian jurisdictions. Some of the current editorial powers have also been found to be uncertain in scope. This means that changes that can be made under editorial powers in other jurisdictions can be made in WA only by way of parliamentary amendment.

The bill proposes to modernise the processes for publishing WA legislation. It will enact a new Legislation Act that sets out the responsibilities for publishing WA legislation, provide for the official status of both hard copy and electronic versions of WA legislation and give the PCO a more useful set of editorial powers so that WA legislation can be kept up-to-date, modernised and simplified, and errors corrected, without the need for the changes to be enacted by Parliament. Important restrictions on the exercise of those editorial powers will remain. The Reprints Act 1984 will be repealed. In line with conferring official status on electronic versions of WA legislation, the electronic version of the *Government Gazette* also will be given official status.

A number of benefits will flow from these proposals. It will improve public access to subsidiary legislation. Unlike WA acts, currently published versions and consolidated versions of WA subsidiary legislation must be accessed through two different channels—the *Government Gazette* and the WA legislation website. It would be more convenient for users if it were available in one place on the WA legislation website.

It will bring the legal status of electronic versions of legislation into line with hard copy versions. Given that electronic versions are increasingly being more widely used than hard copy versions, the current difference in legal status is difficult to justify. It will also help allay any concern about the accuracy and reliability of the electronic version compared with the hard copy version, and promote confidence in its use. It will bring the legal status of electronic versions of WA legislation into line with that in the majority of other Australasian jurisdictions and many other overseas jurisdictions.

It will enable the editorial improvements currently authorised by the Reprints Act 1984 to be delivered to users of legislation sooner. Necessary or desirable changes to the most up-to-date versions of legislation on the WA legislation website that require the exercise of reprint powers will not need to wait for the next available hard copy reprint. This will also make PCO's electronic legislation updating processes simpler and more efficient. It will significantly improve the quality of reprints and their usefulness to users, and save parliamentary time, because a greater range of editorial changes could be made.

The current restriction on the exercise of editorial powers will remain. They must not be used to alter or otherwise affect the substance or operation of any written law. Some of the proposed additional powers are as follows: to update references to the laws of other Australasian jurisdictions where the citations of the laws have been changed; to change expressions indicating gender to conform with current drafting practice, which is to draft in gender-free terms; to number or renumber provisions; to update references to things that have been replaced, such as statutory bodies; to change grammar, spelling or punctuation to conform with current drafting practice; to omit obsolete or redundant provisions of WA legislation; to incorporate validation, saving, transitional or similar provisions, where contained in amending legislation, in the legislation to which the provisions relate; and to make format or layout changes to ensure conformity with current drafting practice. In this respect, I note that a minor change has been made to the 2018 bill since it was introduced in the previous Parliament.

Clause 33(2) relates to definitions that begin with a definite or indefinite article, and permits the article to be deleted or the appearance of the text changed so that the article is not formatted as a definition. It is no longer PCO drafting practice to include or format definite or indefinite articles as part of definitions. The Reprints Act 1984, section 7(5)(d), confers a similar power. The power in clause 33(2) was not expressly included in the 2018 bill, but has now been included for clarity and certainty.

The bill will introduce greater efficiencies in the availability of printed copies of WA legislation with official status. The production of hard copy reprints will cease, and users of WA legislation will be able to print their own copies from electronic versions of legislation on the WA legislation website or order commercially printed and bound versions. It will enhance the status of the version of the *Government Gazette* that most people access, and also enable the *Government Gazette* to move to online-only publication in the future as the continuing decrease in demand for the hard copy version eventually makes publication in that format uneconomic.

It will make the processes for the publication of subsidiary legislation more efficient and cost effective. Publishing subsidiary legislation on the WA legislation website will provide significant cost savings to government and other agencies. I note that PCO proposes to take a staged approach to the implementation of the proposal to change the way in which WA subsidiary legislation is published. The material that PCO drafts will be moved from the *Government Gazette* to the WA legislation website as a first step. PCO will also undertake consultation with other agencies responsible for the subsidiary legislation that PCO does not draft, such as local laws. This consultation will be designed to determine whether this material should continue to be published in the *Government Gazette*, moved to the WA legislation website or published in some other way.

I note that the bill will not alter the processes for the development and passage of legislation through Parliament; nor will it change the way in which acts are handled under the existing publication regime. The bill will introduce a significant change to the way in which subsidiary legislation is published. The Parliament of Western Australia performs a close supervisory function with respect to subsidiary legislation, particularly through the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation and the disallowance power vested in each house by section 42 of the Interpretation Act 1984. No change is proposed with respect to that function.

PCO has consulted extensively on the changes that are proposed to be implemented in the bill. In 2015, PCO wrote to key legal stakeholders affected by the proposals to modernise the processes for publishing WA legislation and sought their feedback. All those who responded supported the proposals.

In relation to the proposed enhancements to editorial powers, PCO issued a public discussion paper in December 2016 seeking submissions on those proposals. The discussion paper was made available online, and responses could be made by way of an online survey, email or letter. Emails inviting submissions on the discussion paper were also sent to a large number of legal stakeholders and others considered to have an interest in the proposals. Twenty-one submissions were received on the discussion paper. An overwhelming majority supported the proposed enhancements. There was some feedback on the proposals to enhance the current editorial powers. PCO currently takes a very careful and conservative approach to the exercise of the editorial powers available under the Reprints Act 1984, and this approach will be adopted in relation to the enhanced editorial powers. If there is any doubt about whether the exercise of an editorial power would change the law, PCO would not exercise the power. Any change would then have to be made by Parliament in the normal way, principally through a Statutes (Repeals and Minor Amendments) Bill.

On the introduction of the 2018 bill, I noted that the changes proposed in the bill would not have a direct impact on the way in which crown copyright in WA legislation was administered. I indicated that the approach in WA was quite conservative and restrictive compared with other jurisdictions, and that I intended to give consideration to relaxing the approach to copyright in WA legislation. Since then, creative commons licences for the WA legislation website and hard copies of WA legislation have been granted. I made a statement to the Legislative Assembly about this on 13 November 2019. As a result of the granting of these licences, WA joined other jurisdictions, such as the commonwealth, Queensland, South Australia, New Zealand and the UK, in taking a more open approach to the re-use of legislative data. The adoption of this approach in WA is also consistent with the WA government whole-of-government open data policy, which seeks to ensure that the state's data and information resources are shared widely across government and the community, and these resources are able to be used to improve government, encourage innovation and develop new business and employment opportunities.

The bill supports the government's objectives to make its processes more efficient and cost effective through more effective use of technology, and to improve the provision of its services to the public. The bill will create administrative efficiencies across government and also reduce costs to all government agencies. In one sense, the proposals in the bill are also about managing, maintaining and enhancing a vital state asset; that is, its collection of its legislative data. The bill will enhance public accessibility of WA legislation. In enhancing access to legislation, the bill will improve access to justice, which is a key priority of this government.

I commend the bill to the house.

**The SPEAKER:** That is one of the most soporific second reading speeches I have ever heard and I did not have to call anyone to order!

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr P.J. Rundle**.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

##### *Motion*

Resumed from 4 May 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.

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Opposition)** [12.50 pm]: Madam Speaker, may I start once again by congratulating you on your elevation to the role, and also to the member for Forrestfield for his election as Deputy Speaker. As we noted on the opening day of Parliament, it is an auspicious moment to have a woman take the role for the first time in our Parliament's history. I would also like to extend my congratulations to the Premier and to his newly elected government. Congratulations to those ministers who have taken their place in the cabinet. To the members who have taken their place for the first time in this house, also congratulations. It is a privilege that few experience to stand and speak on behalf of a constituency and to fight for them and be their voice. There is always a sense of renewal and reinvigoration to listen to newly elected members of Parliament outline their aspirations and commitment. To those of you who have delivered your first speech, congratulations. I make it a habit to make sure that even if I am not in the chamber due to other parliamentary business to read the first speeches of each and every one of you. I congratulate those who have already done it, and good luck to those who have it ahead over the coming week.

I now turn to those members who form the opposition in the Parliament of Western Australia for the next four years. Madam Speaker, there is no denying that this election campaign was gruelling for those of us in opposition, but the people of Western Australia have spoken, and the government has been handed a significant majority. I have said many times that great responsibility accompanies this majority. Complete control of both houses of Parliament demands that the government should tread carefully when it comes to significant reforms and be judicious in its application of power.

The election that delivered this result followed a year like no other—I am sure everyone agrees. The spectre of COVID-19 has shadowed our state and our nation, and the world. It has undermined our sense of safety and interrupted our daily lives. It has disrupted world trade. Our businesses have flexed and bent to accommodate the constantly changing environment. Our families have learnt just how important our schoolteachers are, our medical experts have worked tirelessly to respond to an invisible threat, and our community has looked to their leaders to work together to keep us together. I am not being dismissive of the result in any way by noting that elections contested in such circumstances rarely deliver a change of government, added to which in Western Australia we have not seen a change of government after one term since 1974, but there is no doubt that the sheer scale of the swing towards Labor is significant and worthy of note.

The Nationals WA lost two members of the Legislative Assembly and did not attain a sufficient quota to return a member to represent the Mining and Pastoral Region to replace outgoing MP Hon Jacqui Boydell. We welcome Shane Love, MLA, member for Moore and Deputy Leader of the Opposition; Pete Rundle, MLA, member for Roe; and Vince Catania, MLA, member for North West Central, back to the Parliament to continue on their good work. I pay tribute to Hon Terry Redman, MLA, the former member for Warren–Blackwood, and Ian Blayney, MLA, the former member for Geraldton. Terry was 16 years as a member of Parliament, eight spent in opposition and eight in government. He was a leader of the Nationals WA and a minister for eight of those years. He is an individual of the greatest integrity and made a significant contribution to our state, in particular as the Minister for Regional Development and Minister for Agriculture and Food. On behalf of our National Party team, I congratulate him on his remarkable career and contribution to our party and this Parliament, and I wish him and Marie the very best as they embark on the next stage of their journey together.

**Mr R.S. Love:** Hear, hear!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Thank you.

As Terry did not get the opportunity to pay thanks to the people who supported him in his role, I did ask him to provide me with some short comments. These come directly from Terry —

I'd like to thank my Electorate staff Jeanette Trent, Debbie Rice, Julie Ross and Beverley Mulvihill. There were many supporters, but special mention to Ed and Carol Valom (Manjimup), Ross and Pam Thornton (Denmark). I'd also like to thank the very talented Ministerial team from 2008 to 2017. Finally, thank you to Marie my wife, for the sacrifices she made to support me.

Ian Blayney came to the Nationals midway through the last term of Parliament. His sincere dedication to his electorate, and his thoughtful approach to legislation and the issues that were important to him and his constituency, made him a very valuable member of our team. I would like to personally thank Ian and his wife, Barb, and his electorate team, for their service to the Parliament and the people of Geraldton. I did the same for Ian, as he also did not get the opportunity to make thanks to those who supported him, and he gave me these words —

I'd like to thank Isabelle Scott who was my electoral officer for the whole time I was a Member (twelve and a half years), my wife Barb for her unfailing support and help in the electorate, the lay members of both conservative Parties who helped me—in particular Len Carroll, Gordon Thomson, Rod O'Conner, Julie Boschetti, Jane Pearse and Natasha Colliver. I'd also like to thank Lachlan Hunter, Shane Love, Martin Aldridge, Colin de Grussa and Mia Davies for the extensive help during the last campaign.

I would like to congratulate our returning MPs in the Legislative Council, Hon Colin de Grussa and Hon Martin Aldridge, and welcome James Hayward as he takes on the role as a member for South West Region. James will step into the role as Hon Colin Holt steps out and onto new challenges when the forty-first Parliament is sworn in at the end of May. I also pay tribute to Hon Jacqui Boydell, who after 30 May will also step out and onto new challenges. Both Colin and Jacqui have played a significant role in this Parliament and our party and I wish them the very best as they pursue a life away from politics. That is the Nationals WA parliamentary team that we take forward for the next four years as a result of this election. We may be small in number, Madam Speaker, but that has never stopped us from doing the work we know matters, and it certainly will not now.

While I have got the time, I would like to acknowledge the Nationals WA team that helped us contest this election—first and foremost, our candidates. They are the people who stepped up to represent their community. They felt so strongly about the direction of our state and the future of their town and region that they were prepared to put their lives on hold to contest an election, as we all did in this place. They did this in an election in which it was almost certain they would not be forming government. They did it in the midst of a pandemic and at a point in the electoral cycle at which the headwinds were strong and we were kicking against the wind, but they understood how important it was to have people to fight on, even when the odds were stacked against us. My sincere thanks to Delma Baesjou, Codee-Lee Down, Wayne Sanford, Patricia Leake, Rowena Olsen, Millie Hills, Constantin Ortheil, Leonie Lemmey, Scott Bourne and Peter Gordon who contested seats in the Legislative Assembly. My thanks to Natasha Colliver, Rob Horstman, Steve Blyth, Ian Hanna, Nick Fardell, Lionel Quartermaine, Tony Crook, Kieran Dart, Mark Young, Tessa Daly, Louise Kingston and Rod Pfeiffer who formed our Legislative Council team tickets.

[Interruption.]

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Was that some form of *Star Wars* Vader situation that I could hear? That is very disconcerting.

They were a diverse group of people—small business owners, banking executives, pastoralists, a former *Australian Idol* contestant with a seriously impressive musical talent and community connection, a child protection officer, a proud Bunuba–Kija woman from Halls Creek, a couple from the mining industry, local government, and a town planner. They are all linked with a passion for regional WA, marked by their desire to give back and help their community thrive. You have my heartfelt thanks and gratitude and that of our party.

To Lochie Hunter, our campaign director, and Jack Mallick, our state director, you did an exceptional job in challenging circumstances. To our campaign committee, state executive and state council, election years make huge calls on our volunteers and their time, and I thank you for your contribution. To Steve Blyth, our immediate past president, and Tori Castledine, vice president, thank you for your leadership. To my team in the leader's office, who worked so diligently to support me and our parliamentary team, headed up by Mr Josh Nyman—Josh, you have given it your all in whatever role asked of you by our party, rising through the ranks to my chief of staff, but maintaining the attitude that nothing was ever beneath you. You have an outstanding work ethic and a keen mind, and, most importantly, you believe in our team and what we stand for. Finally, a special mention to Shane Love, the Nationals WA deputy leader, thank you for your hard work and support.

Before I go on, as Leader of the Opposition I do have a little more time to make my thanks. I generally do not get a lot of time to thank my electorate in these Address-in-Replies, given the time that we have available. I would like to make a personal thankyou to the voters in the electorate of Central Wheatbelt, who have returned me for a third time as their local member and for the fourth as a member of Parliament. The electorate stretches from Northam to Southern Cross, Boddington to Beacon and Mukinbudin to Kulin and covers more than 100 000 square kilometres.

In a difficult election, and against the trend, my primary vote increased ever so slightly, resulting in a 60.7 per cent two-party preferred result. The Labor Party was the major beneficiary of the almost complete collapse of the One Nation vote—minus 9.6 per cent—and the collapse of other minor party votes.

I acknowledge Rob Forster from the Liberal Party, Michelle Nelson from the Labor Party and the other candidates who contested the electorate. Elections are supposed to be a contest of ideas, and I always welcome the challenge of new candidates and their enthusiasm and what they bring to the campaign trail. A huge thanks to my electorate office team—Kath Brown, Rhonda Lawrence, Michelle Alvaro and Wendy Chambers—you do amazing work in our community and I am so very lucky to work with you all. To my local campaign team and supporters, who are led by the amazing Rob Tinetti—there are so many of you, too many to list, but you have my gratitude and you know who you are. Last but by no means least, even after 12 years in this place, thank you to my mum and my family. My mum has endured two politicians in her life; first my father and now me. She is a loyal, supportive and strong woman and I admire her enormously. Her resilience, determination and fierce love of family is ingrained in both her daughters. So many speeches in this house speak to family. We make the choice to enter this life and, as a consequence, they share us with the public and the people we serve. I am thankful to have my mum and my sister and brother-in-law and their two beautiful kids, Harry and Ella, in my life as my number one cheerleaders.

Madam Acting Speaker, you would have noted that last Thursday, I advised the house that the Nationals WA and the Liberal Party have formed an alliance in opposition, which will be known as the National and Liberal Alliance. The two parties have not formalised this type of arrangement since 2005, when a coalition in opposition was agreed. I offer my sincere thanks to the member for Cottesloe, Dr David Honey, the Leader of the Liberal Party; Libby Mettam, the Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party; and their team for their genuine engagement to form this new partnership. The alliance agreement recognises that although we are two separate parties, we have a common purpose and duty to provide effective opposition. I would like to offer some reflection on this arrangement if for no other reason than to have it recorded in *Hansard* for posterity.

As we enter into this next term of Parliament, I am once again afforded the privilege of leading the Nationals by my colleagues in the party and, as a result of the election, I am also the Leader of the Opposition. It is the first time that a member of the Nationals WA has held this role since 1947. I take neither role for granted. First, as Leader of the Nationals WA, I note it is a party that has been a part of our political landscape here in Western Australia since 1913. To mark our 100<sup>th</sup> year, a book collecting our history was published, a labour of love driven by the inimitable Wendy Duncan, the party's first female president and former member of state Parliament. In the introduction, Wendy outlines our origins, musing over the fact that support based on geography has delivered the party considerable influence in the Parliaments of Western Australia over the last century. She writes —

The draw of location rather than the political leaning has delivered supporters from across the political spectrum and continual debate on matters that determine where the Party should sit on key issues that define left and right in the political spectrum.

If we go right back to our beginnings, we might understand why. The party's supporters in the earliest days of our formation represented old money, new money and no money. Formed under a tree in Kellerberrin, which is just a stone's throw from where I grew up, this is a party that has adapted and evolved, grown and consolidated but it has never lost its purpose. Advocacy for the people who choose to live and work in the country, those who contribute significantly to our state and nation's economy, is a worthy calling and purpose. That task does not change for our party, official opposition or not.

I turn to our role as the opposition. During the time I have been involved with the Nationals WA, I have experienced our party in opposition standing alone, in opposition in coalition and in an alliance in both government and opposition. It has been a perennial debate for our party—coalition or crossbenches, alliances or standalone? How best do we deliver for our constituents? How best do we progress this great state of Western Australia for everyone? There is never one answer to this question. It is a mix of circumstance, numbers, personality and political will. In this Parliament, with these numbers, with the challenge ahead and with the people who sit beside me, we work together with our colleagues. That is our commitment to the people of Western Australia.

It should surprise no-one that our alliance agreement includes a commitment to royalties for regions. Both the Nationals and the Liberal Party agree that the McGowan government manipulated and misused this fund in its first four years. We both agree that the integrity of this fund should be returned. We know that this government is short-changing the people of regional Western Australia. This government committed to royalties for regions. It said the words. It told the public that it supported royalties for regions, yet it has stuffed the fund full of spending that is ordinary, everyday government spending and business. That is a disgrace. It is a mark of arrogance that government members continue the deceit of claiming that it still exists when it has been stripped bare.

I have noticed that the government has accused us of creating a city–country divide. Nothing could be further from the truth. Our party exists to reduce that divide. This alliance exists to reduce that divide, and that is exactly why we fight for programs like royalties for regions and why we will fight the government's electoral reform agenda to reduce the number of regional representatives in the Legislative Council. Let me be very clear: the opposition is not opposed to sensible reform to address the unusual outcome of the election of a Daylight Saving Party candidate

in the Mining and Pastoral Region with just a handful of votes, and others have been elected to this Parliament like that. We have never been opposed to that. We have participated in committees and contributed to debate that considered those very factors in the last term of government. But that is not the issue at hand. The Premier was asked repeatedly before the election in March whether his government would pursue electoral reform, specifically, one vote, one value in the Legislative Council. He used weasel words to avoid answering the question again and again and again. Pressed by the media specifically on this matter, he said it was “not on our agenda”. On Tuesday, 9 March, just four days before the state election, the Premier was asked by Dan Mercer of the ABC in Albany that exact question. I quote the Premier’s answer —

“It’s not on our agenda—I’ve answered this question many times ...

...

“This is just another smokescreen by the Liberals and Nationals.

You were deceitful then, Premier, and you were disingenuous answering the question we asked yesterday in this place—arrogant, in fact. You knew full well that the question we were posing was in relation to one vote, one value. You knew full well that the issue is not to do with reform to ensure that we do not have a repeat of the election of members with such a low primary vote in the Legislative Council. You knew full well that you misled the people of Western Australia before the election.

We think it is the first of many incidents of overreach that we expect to see from a government that will become drunk on the power of its massive majority. The government was always going to do this and it should have come clean with the people of Western Australia before the election. The Labor Party holds the mantle of the architect of reducing regional representation in this state. In 2008, it abolished country seats and moved them into the city. The Labor Party should have taken its reforms to the election. People in regional Western Australia and our state deserved to know what its plans were for their representation before the election. It is as simple as that. It should have done the right and honourable thing. I am intrigued by the fact that the government has regional members in its cabinet and caucus who now will be supporting legislation that will disenfranchise their voters, their constituents. Member for Kalgoorlie, member for Pilbara, member for Kimberley, members in the Mining and Pastoral Region and the South West Region, you represent some of the most disenfranchised communities and individuals in our state. They are remote from decision-makers and government agencies and support and now the plan is to further disenfranchise these people.

An academic argument of equality fails to recognise the real gaps we see in equitable access to quality health care, education and aged care. It fails to recognise the cost of travel in our region and it ignores the fact that many of our communities have substandard communications infrastructure. How could reducing the number of representatives these people have to advocate for them and raise their issues in this place, this most important place where decisions are made, help to reduce these gaps? Why is this the first order of business for a government that has been beset by rolling health crises, hotel quarantine management issues, management of the COVID-19 pandemic, housing shortages and worker shortages? I do not think that there is an answer the Premier can provide that does not include self-interest. This is an ideologically driven academic argument that does not stack up when we look at the size of our state and the challenges we face. The Premier can play politics. He can quote the numbers that he quoted in this place yesterday and continue that deception and he will win the vote in this chamber and in the Legislative Council. The Premier will be remembered in regional Western Australia, just as Mr McGinty is, for decimating regional representation. The legacy of the Premier and every regional member of Parliament in this house and the Legislative Council will be to make it harder for people living in regional WA to access their member of Parliament and raise the issues that we know need to be debated in this important place. That is the case we will make to the so-called independent committee of experts. With the exception of Hon Malcolm McCusker, the committee has been hand-picked to deliver the outcome that the Premier and the Attorney General want.

Is the Premier aware of the letter that was signed by Associate Professor Martin Drum, Associate Professor Sarah Murray and Professor John Phillimore, sent to MPs outlining the issues that a future state government needed to address in relation to electoral reform? Number one on their list was the malapportionment of the Legislative Council. This letter was sent to MPs before the election. Our electoral affairs spokesperson at the time, Hon Martin Aldridge, did them the courtesy of responding. He ended his correspondence by offering to host any of the co-signatories to spend time with him or his colleagues in regional constituencies. He also offered up the views of two other highly qualified experts on why some weighting of regional votes in the Legislative Council has merit. I will read those quotes, because they are from people with whom members in this chamber will be familiar. The first was from April 2005 and was a comment made during the debate on the one vote, one value legislation in the Legislative Assembly. It is from Professor Greg Craven, executive director of the John Curtin Institute of Public Policy. He was a professor of government and constitutional law at the time. He said —

I would respectfully argue that, once the Lower House of the Parliament is constituted on a more or less strict One Vote One Value basis, the case for constituting the Upper House differentially as a Chamber where regional interests receive moderately enhanced regional representation, is strong. This follows from the necessity to ensure that the diversity of interests contained within the State are adequately reflected in Parliament.

In the same vein, Dr Harry Phillips, known to many of us in this place, Parliamentary Fellow and Adjunct Professor at Edith Cowan University and Curtin University of Technology at the time, also said that in Western Australia, the interpretations of the Canadian courts have tended to be used as support of the one vote, one value argument. However, the Canadian courts have given thrust to a broader concept of effective representation. The latter provides scope for deviation, sometimes substantial, from voter parity. He said that if one sought to do so, he thinks there would be scope to argue that in many settings, other factors such as geography have to be considered for effective representation to prevail.

The Premier yesterday refused to rule out rejecting any recommendations that seek to diminish regional representation. This government has made up its mind already and is preparing to apply its absolute majority to achieve it. The first act of this new Parliament will be to disenfranchise some of the most disenfranchised people in our state. Shame on you.

As the Governor noted in his address to open this Parliament, the beginning of 2021 has been marked by the twin natural disasters of the Wooroloo bushfires and ex-tropical cyclone Seroja. We are indeed fortunate that there was no loss of life, but there is still real pain being felt in those communities that were impacted. After the immediate flurry of activity and media attention passes, there are families, businesses and communities that will take many months, if not years, to recover and, sadly, some will choose to leave the communities because the grief and the strain is too much.

I would like to commend all our first responders and emergency service volunteers. You are true heroes in the eyes of these communities. The members for Moore and North West Central have been a constant presence in their electorates in the aftermath of ex-tropical cyclone Seroja. I have also visited communities in the area that have been impacted. Put simply, the impact has been devastating. In the immediate aftermath of Seroja, it brought a sharp focus on two issues that our team has long argued needed attention: our communications and the supply of power, which became a challenge. I commend the Western Power workers, the crews from the Water Corporation and all our other service workers for their efficient and tireless efforts. However, the reality is that if there had been a significant flooding event or any major continuing issue in the immediate aftermath, there would have been no way to communicate this to the emergency services. People in remote farming communities and even those in the towns found it incredibly frustrating and distressing. Unfortunately, this is not a new challenge for regional Western Australians. It is the twenty-first century. We talk of technology and the advances that bring us closer together. No doubt during the electoral reform debate there will be discussions around improvements in technology that will allow us to more effectively represent our constituents, but I can tell members that that gap is still significant. Many people living in regional WA are denied opportunities that technology offers—a twenty-first century standard telecommunications structure and a twenty-first century power structure—because that connectivity is substandard, and it simply is not good enough.

As the opposition, our focus will be on getting the basics right in this state. With the Treasury coffers awash with dollars, it is inexplicable that we seem to have crises on all fronts. Our health system is breaking at the seams, we have a housing crisis, homelessness is on the rise, and more and more people are without even the most basic of things—a roof to shelter over their head. The housing and social services sectors are at fever pitch calling for greater investment, support and understanding for a growing cohort of Western Australians who have never, ever needed to reach out for support. There is a massive task at hand for the newly minted Minister for Housing. As we sit and listen to member after member in this house talk of their values, which I absolutely agree are genuine, and of fairness and equity, I wonder how that correlates with taking action to address the burgeoning social housing list, the homelessness crisis and the lack of accommodation for our key workers and government staff support workers across our state. These worker shortages are challenges that existed well in advance of COVID-19. Indeed, the housing situation existed well in advance of COVID-19 becoming a reality, but it has now been exacerbated by closed international borders.

It is a real challenge when we look at key sectors outside the mining industry. Our agricultural and horticultural sectors are reliant on workers. There was a refusal, it seems, in the run-up to the election for any action to be taken to try to have a sensible or sustainable approach with the federal government in relation to bringing in workers from overseas in a safe manner to ensure that we had the capacity to make sure that our key industries could continue to operate. It seemed to fall on deaf ears. I understand that efforts are slowly being made now to try to address that, and certainly it is something that we will follow very closely, because in our travels across the state, it is not only the constituents who are directly impacted, but also our agricultural sector. Two things drive this state's economy: small business and the agricultural and horticultural sectors, notwithstanding our food security issues and the mining sector. We must always keep in mind the workforce availability. Those sectors are crying out for support. Four years after the McGowan government swept to power saying that our state's economy required diversification and that it was the government to achieve it, we are still heavily dependent on the fortunes of the mining and resources sector. It is a remarkable industry that provides many, many jobs for many, many Western Australians, but it cannot be our only calling card. I think that this government has failed to achieve its own goal that it set at the beginning of its term in 2017 to pursue a diversified economy. We are now, more than ever, reliant on the mining sector, at both a state and federal level.

When it comes to major projects like Metronet, the headline act of the McGowan government, the public deserves to know whether the government is keeping or breaking its promises. The government does not get a blank cheque from the people of Western Australia, no matter how popular the project or the government. The Minister for Transport and the Premier; Treasurer should expect these questions. After all, for four years in opposition, the Minister for Transport turned up to this place and asked me questions as Minister for Sport and Recreation in relation to Perth Stadium along just those same lines. If the government makes claims about completion dates but misses them, or if the government promises a station, a railway line or a certain amount of local content, and if the government's costings have blown out, we are here to ask questions on behalf of the Western Australian public, because they deserve to know whether the government is spending their hard-earned dollars efficiently.

Every dollar that blows out on this project is a dollar that we cannot spend rectifying the situation we see emerging in our health system, our housing crisis and all the other challenges we will be faced with as we come to the new normal in the wake of this pandemic. That is why we will continue to ask questions around Metronet, and we will do it without fear or favour. That is not because we do not think that the Perth metropolitan area deserves a first-class public transport system; we just think that the promises that have been made need to be upheld and that the money that is being spent is spent appropriately. I want to talk about what happens if we get that wrong. It means that we have a stranglehold on a budget. In my view, there is nothing more important for a state government to turn its mind to than issues of health, and that is where I turn my attention to now.

We have a minister who has repeatedly refused to utter the word "crisis" about the situation our health system finds itself in. It simply defies logic when we look at the situation we face that this is the minister's view. Let us go through the list. Staff shortages were already stretched prior to COVID-19. It was entirely predictable that additional pressure would come into the system from a staffing perspective. When people are told to go home and not go to work when they are sick, we almost need an entire new staff to come in and be available in health services. We have record-breaking ambulance ramping at our tertiary hospitals. Calls from the Australian Medical Association, the Australian Nursing Federation, the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, frontline staff and patients for the government to hold a crisis summit were ignored. A total of 21 serious incidents were recorded at Perth Children's Hospital in 15 months, and there was the death of seven-year-old Aishwarya in the emergency department of Perth Children's Hospital. More than 100 mental health workers went on strike in March in an effort to secure more funding for child mental health services, along with delays in the completion of the promised step-up, step-down facilities in Kalgoorlie and Karratha, ongoing investigations into the toxic culture of Bunbury Hospital after explosive claims from the AMA that this is impacting patient care, reports into hotel quarantine that were shrouded in secrecy, and recommendations that still have not been put into effect, and we have seen the government dragging its heels to implement mandatory vaccinations for staff and security guards working on the front line in hotel quarantine, despite being told that this was necessary.

I am afraid that this is a minister who cannot keep across his brief that is expanding every day. He has been on the job for four years. He had the role of shadow Minister for Health. I think there is evidence that there has been mismanagement and he has been asleep at the wheel. At the very least, given that this is such an important issue for our state, there should be a complete focus by this minister on the health portfolio. The Premier might consider relieving the health minister of his other portfolios to allow him to focus on that very important issue. This government was elected on a promise to keep Western Australians safe. It was a catchy line for an election year. My questions are: Will it deliver? Will it prioritise some of that huge surplus that it has amassed to provide a lifeline to the frontline workers we see under distress and upon whom we rely?

*Amendment to Motion*

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I move —

That the following words be added to the motion —

but regret to inform His Excellency that the McGowan government has failed the people of Western Australia in its mismanagement of the state's health and hospital system, which is now in crisis

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party)** [1.22 pm]: I would like to speak to this worthy amendment moved by the Leader of the Opposition that states —

but regret to inform His Excellency that the McGowan government has failed the people of Western Australia in its mismanagement of the state's health and hospital system, which is now in crisis

From the outset, I will be speaking about a range of different issues facing the health system. This morning I was made aware of some comments made by the Minister for Health that I hope he can clarify in his response to this motion. They relate to the glaring gaps that we have already seen in our hotel quarantine system that have put returned travellers and staff at risk. I understand that the Minister for Health said in a media conference today that the vaccination rate for hotel security guards is around 60 per cent. I would like some clarification on that. Under its watch, we have seen the McGowan Labor government certainly drag its feet in the management of hotel

quarantine and in learning from other states to ensure that returned travellers and staff are safe. The opposition has been calling for mandatory vaccination for hotel quarantine staff. If the rate is that low, we would like the government to explain why it has dragged its feet on this issue and why such a lacklustre response has been given, when in New South Wales, for example, the vaccination rate for hotel quarantine workers was 100 per cent by the end of March.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister for Police!

**Ms L. METTAM:** It is important to get that clarification on the record because it would be good to know what will be happening by the 10 May deadline when it was promised that all hotel quarantine workers would be vaccinated.

The motion relates to our health and hospital system. As the Leader of the Opposition has stated, the health system is obviously in crisis. It is extremely disappointing that the Minister for Health has failed to acknowledge that, and the Premier has ignored that. We speak to this motion in support of our health workers who are overwhelmed. They are stretched and exhausted in a health system that is certainly under-resourced. We also speak on behalf of patients who feel let down by a health system in a state that is otherwise experiencing a resources boom and a record surplus. We also speak on behalf of families who have seen their family members unnecessarily suffer when they present to emergency departments as patients or when waiting for elective surgery—a significant result of the mismanagement of the hotel quarantine system.

From the outset, the health crisis in our hospitals can be best explained by the record levels of ambulance ramping that we have seen in this state. In fact, a new record for ambulance ramping was reached in January this year, with 4 111 hours of ambulance ramping recorded. When in opposition, our current Minister for Health described 1 100 hours of ambulance ramping as a crisis level, yet in January 2021, we saw ambulance ramping levels reach more than 4 000 hours. Just recently, in the month of April, we saw over 2 700 hours of ambulance ramping, which is five times the April figure of the previous year.

The Premier and the Minister for Health have been caught red-handed misleading the people of WA on ambulance ramping with a litany of excuses for it, such as ambulance cleaning, respiratory strains and the like. They have not only misled people about the real issues with ambulance ramping, but also tried to hide the available statistics from the public. It was certainly worthwhile and helpful that St John Ambulance provided this data and made it easily accessible online. During the first four months of 2021, we have already seen 14 000 hours of ambulance ramping. We also know that taxpayers now have to pay St John's for every hour that ambulances are ramped. I would like some clarification from the Minister for Health about how much the first few months of ambulance ramping this year has cost the taxpayers of Western Australia, given that we have already seen 14 000 hours of ambulance ramping in the first four months of 2021.

This represents a system in crisis. There is no other way of spinning it. Those comments are from not only the opposition, but also the broader health community. In fact, the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine WA chairman, Dr Peter Allely, said that doctors were not providing First World care to patients because there was no space in Western Australian hospitals. He likened emergency departments to refugee camps and said that people should not be ramping in one of the wealthiest states in one of the wealthiest countries in the world. Those comments are reflected by not only our health professionals, but also the public. We are often asked, and members will often hear comments on talkback radio about, why this is happening given the record revenues that we have in this state. It is insulting that the Minister for Health fails to acknowledge the crisis that we are seeing in our health system and that the government continues to deny that the health system is in crisis.

There have also been a range of issues regarding code yellow emergencies. We have seen not only a record level of ambulance ramping in our hospitals, which has been often referred to as the canary in the coalmine when it comes to the real internal issues facing our hospital system, but also a record number of code yellow internal emergencies. I understand that there has been at least 17 in the last year.

I refer to an article on 24 March of this year in which the Australian Medical Association's WA president stated that emergency departments were being forced to "MacGyver their way out of" dangerous situations because of the burgeoning crisis in the state's health system. He made those comments on a day when both Royal Perth Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital were declaring code yellow internal emergencies, which means that their emergency departments were so full that they were unable to take in new patients. I quote from Dr Miller —

"These may be people who are very, very sick, who might not have had long to live, but that doesn't mean they don't deserve the dignity of a first-world health system."

He stated that he had no doubt that people had died because of the "breaking point" issues in the metropolitan health system as well.

These are significant issues and there are also a lot of very sad stories surrounding the experiences that we are seeing from patients who are presenting to emergency departments.

WAtoday's Aja Styles wrote of a breastfeeding mother who was forced to spend an excruciating 13 hours in a wheelchair in a Perth emergency department with a 25-centimetre blood clot in her thigh. She was so shocked at how busy the staff were that she used a Zimmer frame to go to a woman who was calling for help from her hospital bed. The article states —

In an email to Liam Bartlett's *Mornings*, Pam Couglin described how her 92-year-old father recently spent 9.5 hours ramped in an ambulance after his doctor ordered him to go straight to hospital since an X-ray showed he had Bronchial Pneumonia.

...

"The paramedics, who we have nothing but praise for, advised us to go home as he will be ramped for at least 6–8 hours," she said.

This is certainly not good enough. This is certainly not what the taxpayers of Western Australia expect from our health system. Quite obviously, we are seeing a health system that is in crisis and in dire need of being resourced properly. It also reflects some significant systemic issues in our health system.

Pointing to the month when we had those issues with the code yellow emergencies, we have seen a disgraceful figure of only 31 per cent of patients who were admitted to Royal Perth Hospital being seen within the four-hour period. That is an extraordinary figure. Royal Perth Hospital has the target to manage 90 per cent of its patients within four hours. For the month of March, 52 per cent of people attending the emergency department were treated within the first four-hour period, but 31 per cent of patients were admitted within that four-hour period as well, and that certainly falls well short of this government's promise at the election that it would keep Western Australians safe and strong.

I also point to the issues with elective surgery. We have seen elective surgery waitlists balloon out under the McGowan Labor government's watch. The waitlists for elective surgery patients have grown 40 per cent, from nearly 20 000 patients to over 28 000 patients since the McGowan government was first elected in 2017. King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women postponed non-urgent elective surgical cases over a two-week period during the April school holidays, which clearly illustrates a system under extreme stress and a government that would rather put its head in the sand than acknowledge that the health system is in crisis, with the flu season just around the corner.

I have been in contact with a number of patients who have experienced the frustration of having elective surgery delayed. I note that the government delayed elective surgery for some category 2 and category 3 cases in response to COVID-19. I have spoken to a father, Trent Wearne, whose five-year-old son, Isaac, was scheduled for surgery last week at Perth Children's Hospital, but in response to COVID restrictions, he has had his surgery delayed. I understand that the Department of Health has rescheduled that surgery for this Friday and I certainly hope that it goes ahead. The situation for Isaac Wearne is certainly very concerning.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Because, Minister for Police, this young boy has been waiting two years for this surgery.

**Mr P. Papalia** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk):** We cannot really hear through the mask in any event, so I would desist.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Acting Speaker, she mentioned my name.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I think you are now canvassing my ruling. Member, please proceed.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I would at least hope that the Minister for Health takes this situation more seriously. Young Isaac has been waiting for over two years to have surgery for severe sleep apnoea, which means that he wakes 30 times every hour every night and falls asleep in the late afternoon after school because he is so exhausted. As I have stated, young Isaac Wearne has been waiting for two years for this surgery. It was delayed again last week in response to COVID restrictions. I understand that his surgery has now been rescheduled for this Friday and I certainly hope that that surgery goes ahead. But it does highlight the fact that when a government under-resources a health department and when it allows an elective surgery waitlist to grow in such a manner, it has a significant impact on the lives of Western Australians. Quite obviously, Trent and Isaac and their family have witnessed something that no Western Australian should witness, and that is the significant challenges that not being able to have that very simple procedure has caused.

I have touched on a number of things and I will allow the Minister for Health to provide a response before we get to question time, but, quite clearly, the McGowan government's ministerial mismanagement and failure to invest in the health system has resulted in a situation of comprehensive blowouts in ambulance ramping, elective surgery waitlists and emergency wait times, and the list goes on. What really concerns me is that the flu season is around the corner. The government has had every chance to improve the health system in the last four years, yet the system has gone backwards, despite record iron ore revenues. Even if the Minister for Health could convince the Premier to provide desperately needed additional funds to support the health system, which the minister has been unable to achieve so far, it will take a very long time to attract and train staff and put in place the necessary beds and

resources additional to those already committed to by the minister. The Minister for Health has heard us raise these issues before—not only the current opposition, but also the opposition in the previous Parliament. These issues are not new. They have been raised and well-versed by the Australian Nursing Federation, the Australian Medical Association and many constituents around this state who have experienced situations that illustrate the failures of a health system in crisis—in our emergency departments and hospitals. The minister has had every chance to get this right, yet we see ongoing issues in the Department of Health and a government that has failed to address the issue. It is clear for all to see that the minister has dropped the ball since making the commitment to make Western Australia safe and has shown grave errors in judgement and leadership, resulting in arguably the worst health crisis in the state’s history.

**MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe)** [1.41 pm]: I fully back the words of the Leader of the Opposition and Deputy Leader of the Liberal Party. Under the heading “Recommendations for optimised response and maintaining public trust”, *The transparency report: Current status of WA Health’s COVID-19 response preparedness* published in September 2020 states —

... it is vitally important for the people of WA—and the strength of our overall community well-being and trust in the public sector—that WA’s health planning and response measures are transparent, proportionate and well-informed by the latest global data on disease prevalence and severity ...

Minister, we want transparency. We want to know what is going on, and it does not seem to be happening. I agree with the Leader of the Opposition that the Minister for Health has too many portfolios and needs to focus on Health. In 2016, when the minister was the opposition health spokesperson, he said that the health system was in tatters. I can assure the minister that ambulance ramping and the like is much worse now. I do not know the minister’s explanation, but it is quite concerning that the minister said that in 2016 and we are now in a much worse situation. As of today, there are 294 positions advertised vacant in Health WA, and 104 of those vacancies are in regional areas. I think the health minister was lulled into a false sense of security when everything closed down last year—the hospitals were empty and the Department of Health did not think about employing people. There was no category 2 or 3 surgery, and now when all of a sudden everything has come back onstream, the health system does not have the employees to get the job done. As I said, there are 294 positions vacant in Health WA. I think there is an opportunity for the government to use its \$4 billion surplus, which is coming up, to employ people in some of those positions and to pay them properly.

I will add that, along with the member for Vasse, I have been contacted by several distraught families about the rule that fathers and partners cannot stay together after the birth of their babies. Obviously, from the minister’s attitude in question time yesterday, he is not that concerned about it. But I can assure the minister that much trauma is occurring over that rule and many of our constituents are very upset about it. I think that the minister needs to recognise this issue. The minister sent many thousands of people into the regions on the Anzac Day long weekend —

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, you have just walked between me and the member speaking.

**Ms L. Mettam:** I apologise.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Fathers cannot see their partners or their babies but there was no problem sending thousands of people to the south west and further north and the like over the Anzac Day long weekend.

Minister, I am really concerned that Andrew Miller has to come out and defended our doctors and nurses and that we still have empty COVID wards in our hospitals. Finally, when things are going well, we see the Premier and the health minister standing out front, as they did leading up to the election, but when things are not going well, the Chief Health Officer is wheeled out. The Chief Health Officer bears the brunt when things are not going well. It is about time that the government started tabling the health advice for all the people of WA to see.

**MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central)** [1.46 pm]: There are a few members left in this chamber who remember the old “Good News Geoff”. We are now seeing the Premier following his idol “Good News Geoff”, because when there is trouble, when there are problems with the health system or the government, “Good News Mark” is not there. Where is he? You look back and he has gone. I know that the Minister for Health looks back and says, “We better get the Chief Health Officer because the Premier is not here.” Under the Premier, this government is a one-trick pony. The government is full of rhetoric, but does not deal with the issues, such as the record number of code yellows in the last term of government that are continuing in this term and ambulance ramping that is at its highest point ever. We have a health crisis that “Good News Mark” and the Minister for Health fail to acknowledge. We have a mental health crisis in this state. Drug and alcohol systems in regional Western Australia are not working. The Royal Flying Doctor Service, which the health minister’s idol Jim McGinty called an interest group back in the day when he was health minister, is in crisis. We have a crisis when RFDS is having to pick up the lag of a failing health system in not only the metropolitan area, but also regional WA. We do not have nurses in Yalgoo and Cue, and sometimes in Mt Magnet, when we have people wandering out yonder. Those towns do not have a nurse to offer the basics for not only those communities, but also visitors and the transport industry on those major roads.

In my electorate, Coral Bay is a tourism mecca, but it relies on volunteer ambos to pick up the slack and service visitors from the electorates of the Minister for Health and many other members in this chamber.

There is no plan for COVID-19 lockdowns. We get 24 hours of misinformation—one coming from “Good News Mark”. Then we have the Minister for Health —

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Point of order!

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk):** It is all right; sit down, minister. I am aware of your point of order. Member, you have been around long enough.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I withdraw.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** When the Premier only trots out to give good news, because he is following his idol Hon Geoff Gallop, and the Minister for Health is there, it sends the people of Western Australia mixed messages. It took 24 hours to get details on what people could do.

There is no plan. This Labor government is swimming in money. This reminds me of when, prior to 2008, we heard a lot of talk but saw no action on the ground. This state government is not keeping pace with what is happening in this state, especially when it is blowing the boom and has \$4 billion coming from the resources sector in the regions. That is providing an opportunity for this government to fix this ailing health system, which prior to 2008 was in the same position. The Minister for Health is following in the footsteps of his idol, Hon Jim McGinty, and the Premier is following in the footsteps of Geoff “Good News” Gallop, but when the pressure is on, he chops someone else out. Shame on you, Labor government, shame on you! Start spending that money that you are getting and put that \$4 billion into the health system so that you can protect Western Australians.

**MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health) [1.50 pm]:** I thank everyone for their contributions—some of passion, some of ignorance. Nevertheless, I will take some time to deal with the range of issues that have just been discussed, even those that were sprayed by the member for North West Central.

We have one of the best health systems in the world. In fact, we have one of the best in the country that has one of the best results in the world. Because we have such great doctors and nurses working in world-class facilities, we have some of the best emergency department times and performances in the country. That also goes for elective surgery and other aspects of our system. Take the emergency departments, for instance. We have a four-hour rule, with a Western Australia emergency access target of 74 per cent. That is the best result in the country, against an average of 69 per cent. When people get up and say that the system is failing, I think that it is a failure rate that many people in the rest of the country would love to have. In addition, we have one of the best median waiting times for elective surgery in the country. When we came to power, the elective surgery median wait time was 39 days; it is now 36. That improvement now sees us amongst the best in the country—the second best state, I think it is, for elective surgery waiting times. The member for Vasse quoted long about the length of the waitlist, but the length of the waitlist does not matter. What matters is the speed with which people get off that waitlist. Our median wait time is the second best in the country. This is something to be proud of. I thank the member for Vasse for raising these issues as it has given me the opportunity to talk about the great work of our doctors and nurses, who are doing an outstanding job on behalf of the community.

It is true to say that we had to pause non-urgent category 2 and 3 operations through much of the lockdown. It is true to say that we also had to do that in just the last week. But because of the \$36 million extra investment that we made in the back end of 2020, we were able to catch up on all those people who had their operations postponed, to the point at which, in December last year, everyone who had to have their surgery rescheduled was able to be put on track. In fact, in terms of our over boundary wait percentages, they were at comparable levels to what they were before the COVID-19 outbreak. This is actually a success story for the Department of Health and for all our health service providers right across the state. They have done an outstanding job working overtime to make sure that we can catch up. I want to thank everyone who has done that work to make that happen.

It is true to say that it is a system under pressure because of not only that catch up, which we had to do in the back end last year, but also the volume and acuity of those presentations, particularly in mental health. WA is no orphan in this; this is going on right around the country. I think I said in this place yesterday that I met with the state health ministers last Friday. Each talked about the very same problem—that when they came out of the COVID-19 crisis, there was a step change in the number of presentations to our emergency departments and hospital wards, and of that increased volume, the acuity was much higher and there was a much bigger proportion of acuity in mental health presentations. This is a demand pressure that all our hospitals around the country have to respond to. That is what we are doing; we are responding.

Much has been made about the “crisis”, and whether what we have in Western Australia represents a crisis. Contrast that with my statements when we discussed ambulance ramping in those days when I was in opposition. There is

a very big difference between ambulance ramping when I was in opposition and the situation we have at the moment. When I was talking about ambulance ramping in opposition, the Liberal–National government said, “We give up. We do not know what is going on with ambulance ramping.” It did not have the commitment, the capacity or the resolve to make sure that getting to patients more quickly and getting them better health outcomes was a priority. It was not. That is the difference we see here today. A crisis is a situation in which there is no plan. We have a plan and we have been working on it since the back end of 2020, looking at all the measures we need to put in place to make sure that we can respond to the demand pressures impacting our system at the moment. They are across a range of areas. Firstly, it comes down to emergency department expansion, making sure that we have greater capacity to meet all those patients that present to our EDs. Before the election, we had a program to expand our emergency departments right across Western Australia by 75 new beds or bays, including, I might add, the expansion of the Peel Health Campus ED—the first major redevelopment of the Peel hospital development since, as the member for North West Central said, my idol, Jim McGinty, was the Minister for Health. Nothing was done at Peel during the Barnett government years. Nothing was done! What we were able to do at the same time as expanding that ED was to announce a \$150 million redevelopment of that hospital as part of our commitment to the people in the Peel and Mandurah area.

In addition, we will bring all the privatised services at the Peel hospital back in-house so that we can make sure that the hospital is integrated into our health system and will continue to make us proud into the future. No-one else has made that sort of commitment to Peel hospital, but no other government has made such a commitment to expanding our EDs. Following the election, once we build in the commitments made by the Labor Party in the election campaign, we will expand the number of bays and beds in our EDs by 95. There will be an increase of 12 bays or beds at Joondalup Health Campus, which is happening as we speak; a \$19 million upgrade to the ED at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital; a 10-bed mental health emergency care centre at Rockingham General Hospital; an extra nine beds as part of the mental health emergency care centre at Armadale Health Service; and a range of other hospital upgrades in our EDs.

Of course, as everyone knows, an ED is only as good as the patient flow that backs it up. That is the reason why we put so much focus on expanding the number of beds in WA hospitals. Members are all familiar with WA Labor’s commitment to our hospital expansion program that will see a further 300 beds developed as part of the big growth in the number of beds at Peel, Joondalup and other hospitals. In addition, we are bringing in an extra 117 beds to make sure that we have better patient flow in our hospitals.

I have just come from Royal Perth Hospital, where we announced the opening of the first 26 of those beds as part of Royal Perth’s contribution to the 117-bed expansion. It includes an extra 10 beds at Osborne Park Hospital, which have opened; an extra 23 beds at Fremantle Hospital, which opened just this week; and an extra 10 beds at St John of God Hospital in Mt Lawley, which will soon open. Another ward will open at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital in July, bringing the total to 117 extra beds, which will obviously make a big difference. We are working on that at the moment. We hope that we will see less pressure on our emergency departments and that we will see our transfers of care rates increase and our ambulance ramping times come down, which we can see only because of the McGowan Labor government’s commitment to transparency.

**Mr V.A. Catania** interjected.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I am wondering how pleased the Leader of the Opposition is to see the member for North West Central back here! I really wonder. I can imagine that on election night she would have been thinking, “Poor old member for North West Central, he’s gone; but at least the member for Warren–Blackwood is still with us”, only to find, to her shock, dismay and disappointment, the situation was reversed. The person who did the heavy lifting in the Nationals, the member for Warren–Blackwood, is no longer with us and has been replaced by an amazing, wonderful new member of the McGowan Labor team, Jane Kelsbie.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 215.]

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### CORONAVIRUS — HOTEL QUARANTINE

#### 23. **Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the announcement on 28 April that the state government would no longer use the three highest risk hotels identified in the Glossop Consultancy report for hotel quarantine for overseas travellers.

- (1) Prior to 28 April, had the government commissioned any reports or been advised of any hotels that would be better suited for hotel quarantine than any of the hotels in the Glossop report?
- (2) Is the minister aware of any hotels in the Perth and Peel regions that would be better suited for hotel quarantine than the 10 identified in the Glossop report; and, if so, when did the minister become aware of them?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

(1)–(2) On 16 April, the government became aware of advice from the Chief Health Officer on hotels that were the subject of the analysis by Glossop Consultancy and other consultants. That report made a specific finding that all the hotels were suitable for hotel quarantine, but that some of them were better suited than others; that is, they required less mitigation in engineering and other mitigation methods, such as the movement of staff, the use of HEPA filters in rooms with positive cases and so on. That report was into the hotels that we were using at the time. As the Premier said in a recent announcement, upon further reflection we decided to retire the Four Points by Sheraton Perth, the Mercure Perth and the Novotel Perth Langley because of the circumstances relating to the incidents at the Mercure hotel. I stress that none of the hotels were considered unsuitable for hotel quarantine but some were better than others.

In his 16 April advice, the Chief Health Officer said that the Four Points and the Novotel Perth Langley could still be used, but the Mercure should be used for low-risk travellers such as seasonal workers who were being brought in to support the horticulture and agriculture industries and also offsidars, which is industry language for people leaving merchant vessels when they have done their tour of duty, for want of a better description. I am not aware of any other hotels that have been put to us that we should have been using, because I do not think the reports went into hotels that were not commissioned. We have to remember that at the time, and it remains the case, other hotels had guests so they did not necessarily want them to be used as quarantine facilities. I want to place on the record my thanks and appreciation for the management and owners of all the hotels that are in service at the moment and providing an incredibly important service on behalf of the people of Western Australia.

We are investigating other hotels and other solutions. We would expect any government that is in charge of a critical program such as this to be open and aware of what other opportunities exist out there. But at the moment, we will be retiring from service the Mercure, the Novotel Perth Langley and the Four Points and we will continue to do an important role on behalf of the commonwealth government, which is exercising its quarantine powers under section 51 of the Constitution. We will continue to play that role because that is a commitment that the Premier has made as a member of the national cabinet. We will continue to do it competently and in a manner that keeps the people of Western Australia safe.

There may have been other elements that I missed. The member can remind me.

## CORONAVIRUS — HOTEL QUARANTINE

**24. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Health:**

I have a supplementary question. When did the government start doing the work to investigate other potential hotels to be used? When did the government commission and start that work?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

As the member would be aware, we have a quarantine advisory panel, which at all times has been undertaking an ongoing quality assurance and improvement process. That panel keeps us advised and apprised of any developments about how we can improve what we are doing. This is going on around the country as states share information with each other. We are particularly informed by the Australian Health Protection Principal Committee, which is the national body of all the Chief Health Officers, and we continue to be advised about different work that is going on. We have not commissioned specific work, but we are continuing to make sure that we are aware of what new opportunities exist for us. We will not use any hotel that is not safe and we will not use hotels that do not meet our high level of quality and safety to ensure that we do not put any of our passengers and, more importantly, the staff and members of the WA public at risk.

## HOUSING — BUILDING BONUS SCHEME

**25. Mr T.J. HEALY to the Premier:**

I acknowledge the students from Kennedy Baptist College in the gallery today.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts in driving the state's economic recovery and supporting local jobs. Can the Premier outline to the house what the government's unprecedented support for WA's housing industry, including its building bonus grants, has meant for business and jobs in the building and construction industry?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

Before I answer the question, I acknowledge Mattie Turnbull and the planning students from Curtin University who are in the public gallery today. Thank you for coming.

I thank the member for Southern River for the question and congratulate him on his return to Parliament with a 44 per cent swing over two elections. Well done, member. Obviously, he is doing a terrific job.

We have seen unprecedented activity in the housing construction industry since we put in place our building bonus program. That has been a \$390 million program with over 21 000 applications received, and today's Australian Bureau of Statistics figures have shown a record increase in the number of building approvals in Western Australia. In Western Australia, there was a 134.6 per cent increase in the number of approvals in the March quarter 2021, compared with the March quarter of 2020; that is the strongest growth of building approvals on record. In annual terms, building approvals grew by 59.4 per cent and nationally they grew by 13.7 per cent. In other words, Western Australia is leading the country when it comes to building approvals.

In the past 12 months, the construction of 23 100 new homes has been approved, which is the most in at least five or six years. That shows the success of our building bonus program, which we brought in very quickly in May last year following the impact of COVID on the building industry in Western Australia. It has secured the positions of 65 000 people in the industry. In housing finance, commitments for the construction and purchase of new-build homes is up 100.9 per cent in average annual terms, which is the fastest rate of growth in the last 20 years and the strongest growth in the country by a long way. National growth was 53.9 per cent; in other words, we are double the national growth. According to the ABS, investors have increased by 34 per cent in annual average terms, the strongest growth in 14 years.

The figures that have come out of the ABS today are great news. They show that the measures that we put in place, and which we got the commonwealth to support, have certainly secured the jobs of many people in the building industry—that is, apprentices, trainees, tradies, people who work in the building companies, and small businesses all over Western Australia. It was obviously a very dire time back in March, April and May last year, but the measures we have put in place have secured those positions, and that is terrific news.

#### CORONAVIRUS — INDIA

#### 26. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:

I refer to calls by the federal Labor leader, Anthony Albanese, and former leader Bill Shorten to bring home Western Australians, because we all have an obligation and responsibility to bring home fellow citizens during a time of crisis.

- (1) Can the Premier confirm that he was the first state leader to single out India for border closures so that Australians, including Western Australians, are prevented from coming home in their hour of need?
- (2) Does the Premier admit that he got it wrong, and will he now agree with the position of Bill Shorten and Anthony Albanese?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please! I would only like to hear from the Premier at this point in time, thank you.

#### Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(2) Just wow, Madam Speaker! What a strange question. I think it is the Leader of the Liberal Party's first question to me. It is very, very unusual and very strange.

Obviously, we are dealing with an unprecedented set of circumstances. Both myself and the Western Australian government, and I think all Australians, are very, very sympathetic to the position of India in particular. The people in India are going through a very traumatic time.

Yesterday, we announced a grant program of \$2 million to support initiatives that will support India. That will be dedicated towards local community groups that are providing on-the-ground assistance of whatever type, whether it is ventilators, masks, personal protective equipment or oxygen—whatever it might be. We want to get that out as quickly as we possibly can and do our bit to assist India. I actually have recommended to all the Premiers and the Prime Minister that they do the same. I know the commonwealth has a program. Indeed, I think some supplies went today. I understand there were Indian Air Force aircraft at Perth Airport today picking up supplies from Western Australia. Certainly, the Western Australian government and the commonwealth government have provided some support. I would urge other states to do the same in this environment.

There are no easy answers here on what is going on. Obviously, we have enormous sympathy. I have seen those images of mass cremations going on in India. It is absolutely appalling and shocking. On the other hand, we have to manage a hotel quarantine system that has proven very problematic. I understand from media reports, actually today, that the commonwealth is looking at flights to come back from India at some point—I think in 10 days' time or so. Obviously, the commonwealth will need to source some places to stay for people on those flights who are coming home or coming back to Australia. It did it last year with Wuhan, and I think also Japan, when it used existing commonwealth facilities to fly people out and put them into places where they could stay that could be properly managed and properly quarantined. I would urge the commonwealth to do it again.

## CORONAVIRUS — INDIA

**27. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. Rather than improving Western Australia's hotel quarantine system, why did the Premier single out India when he did not call for border exclusions from the United Kingdom, the United States or China when Australians were being flown home from Wuhan?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

The commonwealth government closed down flights from China last year; it closed down flights completely from China last year. What we found is that most of the people coming into hotel quarantine, unfortunately, are coming out of India. As I indicated last week in response to questions, nearly 5 000 people have gone to India in recent months. It, obviously, has been an error by the commonwealth to allow people in large numbers to go to India in the middle of the pandemic that is causing huge, huge problems—terrible problems—in India. So, some of those problems perhaps could have been avoided, but that was not within our control.

All I would say is it is a very difficult situation. We are currently managing as best we can. We are providing support to groups to provide support through to India to deal with the issue as best we can. I would urge other governments around Australia, and indeed around the world, to do the same to manage a very difficult situation. I just give you some advice, Leader of the Liberal Party, not to try to exploit it.

## HOSPITALS — DEMAND RESPONSE PLAN

**28. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the unprecedented demand on health systems right across the country. Can the minister advise the house how the McGowan Labor government's demand response plan will bring additional beds into the system, including at Royal Perth Hospital, and can the minister outline to the house how this plan will support the continued delivery of world-class health care and put patients first?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

I thank the member for Mount Lawley, the parliamentary secretary, for joining me today at Royal Perth Hospital to announce the opening of the first 20 beds at Royal Perth Hospital as part of our 117-bed hospital expansion plan.

Can I first of all start by acknowledging that today is International Day of the Midwife. Once again, I am sure that I join all members in acknowledging midwives right across our great state and country and the wonderful work they do, in particular at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, where we are experiencing similar demand at the moment. I am not quite sure what was happening eight or nine months ago, Madam Speaker, but King Eddy's is very busy at the moment! We are recruiting more midwives and doing our best to make sure that they have all the equipment that they need to work.

As I have said recently in this place, all our hospital systems right across the country are suffering from an increased step change in demand. This is represented in the volumes of people coming in, the acuity with which they come, the increase in mental health patients and also the impact that long-stay patients, particularly those waiting for NDIS assessments and referrals, are having on patient flow. All our hospitals right across the country are suffering from a huge increase in demand. The McGowan government's demand response plan is all about making sure that our hospitals have the equipment and the staff they need to make sure that we can adapt to this new environment.

We have 95 new emergency department beds that are either under construction or soon will be, as part of the biggest expansion of emergency department capacity in the state's history. This includes an election commitment for two new mental health emergency centres and behavioural assessment urgent care clinics, at Rockingham of 10 beds and at Armadale hospital of nine beds. Our ED expansion plan also includes beds at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital and at the Midland and Joondalup emergency departments. Of course, as the members for Mandurah, Murray–Wellington and Dawesville will tell us, in Peel the newly expanded ED that opened in February adds a fast-track triage area, new waiting room and seven-bed short-stay unit.

Along with EDs, we are increasing our inpatient hospital beds, with more than 500 new beds being added to our WA public hospitals, 95 in emergency departments, as I mentioned, and 117 extra beds from existing stock across the Perth and Peel area. Today, as I said, I opened 26 of these beds at Royal Perth Hospital. Last week, 24 beds were opened in Fremantle Hospital, and new beds at Osborne Park Hospital and Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital will open in July, in addition to the more than 300 beds coming online as part of our significant health infrastructure program, which includes Geraldton Health Campus, Bunbury Hospital, Joondalup Health Campus and Peel Health Campus with, as I said, a \$152 million development.

Beds alone are not the answer. We need staff to run those beds, nurses to stand by them and doctors to treat patients. Over the past year of COVID-19, which has hindered our efforts to attract staff from abroad and outside Western Australia, we have been working tirelessly to make sure that we increase that number. The McGowan government is providing positions for an extra 600 newly qualified nurses at WA hospitals over the next two years.

This includes 400 registered and enrolled nurses announced as part of our election campaign. More than 200 of these nurses are already in the wards today, working in both general and mental health areas. This will mean that we will have 1 000 new nurses this year, in 2021, and 1 000 new nurses in 2022, not only providing an important boost to our health system, but also making sure that we provide great careers and opportunities for young people coming into our health system. We have been working hard on this program since the back end of 2020, when we saw a significant change in the way that people are presenting to our hospitals as we came out of the initial stage of the pandemic. We have a plan and we are working to that plan. We can see that plan starting to work. The McGowan government will continue to put patients first.

#### QUARANTINE ADVISORY PANEL

#### 29. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to recommendation 1 of Professor Weeramanthri's interim advice from 4 February, calling for the establishment of a Quarantine Advisory Panel tasked with asking the difficult strategic questions and identifying program gaps and risks. Given that the Premier received that advice more than 90 days ago, I ask him to outline to the house answers to the following questions.

- (1) Who is on the advisory panel?
- (2) How many times have they met and reported?
- (3) What difficult strategic issues and program gaps has the panel identified, and what actions have been taken as a result?

#### Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

- (1)–(3) Just for the information of new members, ordinarily when a question like this is asked, a bit of notice is given so that the minister can provide details when that sort of detail is asked for. That is the normal practice in this place. For all the new members, that is what would normally occur.

Member for Vasse, the Quarantine Advisory Panel was established. My understanding is that Professor Weeramanthri is the chair. The panel is examining a range of issues, but in particular it is looking at whether other locations or facilities can be used for quarantining purposes. That is obviously an ongoing process. In terms of quarantine, as I have said many times, we are reducing the number of available quarantine positions. We want to reduce the risk within Western Australia. Up until now, we have been taking the most per capita of any state in Australia. The Northern Territory has been taking more, using a commonwealth-run facility, but we have been taking the most per capita of any state in Australia. Clearly, in light of recent events, we are going to reduce the numbers, which means that if the commonwealth wants flights to come back from India, which is entirely reasonable, it will need to stand up facilities exactly like it did last year when flights came in from Wuhan and Japan. It stood up facilities straightaway to deal with that. They were actually purpose-built quarantine facilities, not hotels repurposed for this purpose. Our position is very clear: if the commonwealth wants to bring flights back immediately, which is entirely reasonable, it will need to stand up facilities to meet that demand.

#### QUARANTINE ADVISORY PANEL

#### 30. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Part of the task of the Quarantine Advisory Panel was to look at alternative models for hotel quarantine. Can the Premier outline to the house what alternative models the panel has identified, and will he table the advice?

#### Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Another piece of advice to new members is that before they ask a supplementary question, they should listen to the answer and not just read out what is put in front of them.

Madam Speaker, I just outlined that. Clearly, there is an alternative. Facilities are available, such as RAAF Base Curtin, Christmas Island and other commonwealth facilities. They are all over Australia and they are currently unoccupied—they are not being used. Most of the commonwealth people who say that they cannot be used have never been to them and have never stayed at one of them, so they would not know. They just do not want to do it because they know it poses a risk and it is difficult and hard. That is why they do not want to do it. We, as a state, have been doing way above our per capita share, but we are not going to do that anymore. I will be advising the Prime Minister soon on the number of people we will take. At the moment, we have around 1 900 people in hotel quarantine, but that number will reduce because last week we sought and received a reduction in the cap. The number will come down and, going forward, we will take fewer people who are returning to Australia. The solution here, which will not be easy, is for the commonwealth to once again use the facilities that it used last year for people returning from China and Japan.

**The SPEAKER:** Just before I give the next call, if members have a question without notice that requires a lot of detailed information in the answer, it is better to either put that question on notice or give some notice to the minister, even relatively brief notice, if you want those details provided in question time. I caution members about asking questions that require a lot of detail and perhaps recommend those other options. Indeed, in the past, the Nationals WA have used the technique of giving some prior notice when they have wanted more detailed answers to really good effect.

I give the call to the member for Collie–Preston with her first question in this house!

#### HOMELESSNESS

#### **31. Ms J.L. HANNS to the Minister for Community Services:**

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record funding for homelessness services across Western Australia, including the government's \$34.5 million investment in the Housing First Homelessness Initiative. Can the minister update the house on the implementation of the Housing First initiative, including who will be providing the services, and will the minister outline to the house how this investment will help to support those who are sleeping rough?

#### **Ms S.F. McGURK replied:**

I thank the member very much for the question. I look forward to working with her to address these issues in her electorate as well as around the state.

It is important for people to know that when we came to government in 2017, there was absolutely no strategic approach to homelessness in Western Australia. The system was in a complete mess. Funding was given to services on an annual basis, just year to year, and there was absolutely no government strategy on how to address homelessness and how to end it in the long run. We set about consulting with the community sector. More than 500 organisations were consulted in the development of our 10-year strategy on homelessness in Western Australia, which has been described by the sector itself as a first-class, world-class strategy. It is something that I am proud of. At the centre of that strategy is the Housing First approach, which is to give people the right sort of accommodation while, at the same time, giving them supports for as long as it takes for them to maintain their strategy. For instance, the 50 Lives 50 Homes initiative in Perth, which is led by a consortium of community organisations, including Ruah Community Services, revealed that 80 per cent of those who had been rough sleepers and chronically homeless were still in accommodation three years later. We are now investing, as the member said, \$34.5 million in this evidence-based approach. I am very proud that we started to roll out that funding late last year and early this year. That started with Ruah having the backbone system; we made sure that the structures were in place, that people understood what the model was and that we had an evaluation of the effectiveness of the work that was being done.

We have also started to give contracts to a number of community organisations. Wungening Aboriginal Corporation, St Patrick's Community Support Centre in Fremantle, the Aboriginal Housing First support services Noongar Mia Mia and Ngalla Maya Aboriginal Corporation, Anglicare and Doors Wide Open have all been given contracts in the Perth metropolitan area and Bunbury. The contracts are worth \$6.9 million in the metropolitan area and \$2.5 million in Bunbury. I was very pleased to be in Geraldton this morning to announce funding of \$2.4 million to Centacare Family Services, which will be delivering the Housing First work in Geraldton. It will employ outreach workers who will develop relationships with people who are street present, get them accommodation and start to do that important work. As I said, when we came to government four years ago, there was no such strategy. There was no significant approach to homelessness except to hand over money to the community sector, renew those funding arrangements year after year and leave the community sector to its own devices. We have drawn the sector together, consulted with it and drawn on the best evidence internationally for a strategic approach which, as I said, the sector itself acknowledges is world-class, and now we are investing new money in it.

I also took the time in Geraldton this morning to go to the Northampton relief centre. They are doing fantastic work there, including those from the Department of Communities. For instance, I met Regina and Gordon, who have come over from Queensland as volunteers for the Australian Red Cross. Red Cross had asked for volunteers to go there. Some 60 to 100 people are coming into that relief centre each day. It is important for that community to know that we are still with them. We are thinking of them and are conscious of the needs on the ground.

The Premier might be interested to know that I met 91-year-old Edith Blood, who lives in Northampton and was in her house during the cyclone. She said to pass on her regards to you. She said she is quite fond of the Premier, so there you go.

#### CORONAVIRUS — MEDIHOTELS

#### **32. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:**

Is the minister aware that South Australia uses medihotels with purpose-built ventilation systems to house COVID patients, and can the minister confirm that his failure to complete the construction of the three medihotels that he promised at the 2017 election means that the Western Australian public is at greater risk of COVID outbreaks and snap lockdowns?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

The medihotels in Western Australia are for patients, predominately country and regional patients, who are coming into our hospital system or who are not yet ready to leave but have an opportunity to convalesce in a more appropriate care environment. They are not in any way related to our COVID-19 response. They are completely different things. They share the same name, but that is South Australia's prerogative to call its COVID-19 facility medihotels; we choose to use them for a different purpose. In relation to medihotels, we have one functioning at the moment at Royal Perth Hospital, and it is going very well. A lot of country patients are really appreciating the opportunity to be able to use it when either coming in or going out on their patient journey, and it has been very successful. At the moment we are developing another big one at Fiona Stanley Hospital. That has taken longer than we wanted. That is being done in partnership with property developers down there and with private healthcare providers in a hybrid model that will produce some great outcomes, but has caused a delay.

Medihotels are used differently in Western Australia from South Australia. What South Australia refers to as its medihotels are used for what might be called COVID-positive passengers. South Australia places all its COVID-positive people in that particular facility. That has not been the approach that we have had in the past. The Chief Health Officer in the past has made it very clear that every time a COVID-positive person is moved, it represents a risk. Let us say we have a COVID-positive person at one of our hotels and we wanted to move them from one hotel to another hotel. That would require us to take that person through the hotel, exposing the person to the staff and other people in the facility. They would then have to be put in an ambulance, exposing the ambulance crew to that person, and then they would have to be taken to the new facility. Again, that is another transfer. The best option always has been to leave someone in the room in which they are in so that they can resolve their disease and, ultimately, leave the hotel unable to transmit it. That is the advice that we have had in the past. I noticed, for instance, that Queensland takes a different approach. It transfers all positive COVID-19 patients into a hospital. That led to an outbreak. We are not particularly in favour of that approach either. It also uses up important hospital beds. But these are all questions that continue to be examined and re-examined as we go through the process of making sure that we have constant improvement of the processes around our management of COVID-19.

There is, of course, a better solution, one proposed by the Premier, and that is that the commonwealth government accepts its role under the Constitution to take care of quarantining facilities, which it has always done historically and which it did in the case of the people who were evacuated from China and Japan. A myth is being perpetuated by some in the media and elsewhere that the state governments stepped up and took on this role; we did not. We took on the role because initially we needed a public health response to those people who needed to isolate away from vulnerable relatives. That is the reason that we went into the hotel quarantine business. We have since, by virtue of the commonwealth's lack of action, had to go into this other process of actually looking after quarantining international arrivals, which, unsurprisingly, is covered under the Constitution as a commonwealth responsibility. It is what it is. We will do the best that we can. But the last thing we need is a commonwealth government that continues to critique the states from the sidelines. The last thing we need is an opposition that continues to undertake guerilla political tactics to criticise. We need people to stick together and acknowledge that over 45 000 people have come through our hotel quarantine system, with five incidents. They are doing a great job under difficult circumstances in a non-fit-for-purpose facility in an imperfect world. They are doing a great job. We stand by them and thank them for their commitment to working in difficult circumstances. We should all be very proud of what they have done.

## CORONAVIRUS — MEDIHOTELS

**33. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Health:**

I have a supplementary question. What is the time line and when will we see the completion of this 2017 election commitment to medihotels? And given that —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member, a supplementary is only supposed to have one question and one part and relate to the first part of the question. I ask the Minister for Health to respond as he sees fit.

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

Is the member talking about a medihotel as in what we believe is a medihotel —

**Ms L. Mettam:** Your election commitment.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** —or is the member talking about a COVID-response medihotel?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Mr R.H. COOK:** As the Premier pointed out in his last response to a supplementary, it is important that the supplementary actually builds on the information that needs to be provided rather than repeats it, so let me repeat it: we have already opened the medihotel at Royal Perth Hospital and it is performing a great service. We are constructing the other medihotel at Fiona Stanley Hospital. That construction is taking place at the moment. We

are awaiting further updates in terms of when it will be ready, but it will be a 60-bed facility. It will be an exciting, new, integrated development at Fiona Stanley Hospital. That is the sort of vision that the McGowan Labor government brings to health services.

#### NET ZERO EMISSIONS — 2050 TARGET

#### 34. Ms C.M. COLLINS to the Minister for Climate Action:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's investment in creating new green jobs for Western Australians and the work it is undertaking with all sectors to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Can the minister update the house on how the McGowan Labor government is not only delivering new green jobs, but also supporting communities across Western Australia through innovative carbon abatement projects?

#### Ms A. SANDERSON replied:

I thank the member for Hillarys for the question and congratulate her on her election to this place and on her excellent inaugural speech last night. I note that in that speech the member listed climate change, as a number of members have, as one of the pressing issues facing governments at every level all over the world. The Western Australian McGowan government is committed to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. In doing that, we see opportunities for communities and jobs in Western Australia. As a resources state, we are well positioned to be a climate leader and work with industry to avoid emissions, capture and store carbon, and invest in groundbreaking projects that will offset those emissions that otherwise cannot be prevented. Where industries operating in Western Australia cannot avoid emissions, they will need to offset. We want to make sure that they are offsetting those emissions by actually investing in WA projects and WA carbon abatement projects. There are huge opportunities for jobs in WA and investment in the regions. There are also considerable conservation and land productivity benefits with carbon conservation projects. To date, around 5.6 million Australian carbon credit units—ACCUs—have been issued to projects registered in Western Australia alone, and that represents around \$100 million worth of investment at today's prices.

There is still a lot of untapped potential in Western Australia, particularly in the southern rangelands, where there is the potential to sequester tens of millions of tonnes of carbon. To promote sequestration, the McGowan government has allowed carbon farming on pastoral leases and it has established a \$15 million land restoration and carbon farming program to open up these projects. We will continue to open up carbon sequestration as part of the Plan for Our Parks and on the conservation estate. These projects will also help improve the health of some of our pastoral areas.

We are also developing our policy frameworks around supporting the use of savannah fire management in the northern part of the state and working hand in hand with Indigenous Australians, understanding and respecting their deep understanding of the land and how savannah burning can contribute to carbon abatement.

#### *Point of Order*

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I wonder whether the minister could table the document that she is reading from rather than put us through the lengthy answer.

**The SPEAKER:** That is not a point of order. I can see the minister's notes from here. She has her own highlighted sections on it and so forth. I do not require her to table it.

#### *Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Ms A. SANDERSON:** We have already seen about 1.2 million tonnes of abatement through these practices. This could open up the southern Kimberley to significant new investment around savannah burning. One of the challenges we face in WA right now is that not enough methods of carbon abatement that are accredited by the commonwealth are suitable for Western Australia. One of the announcements made recently by the federal government related to a \$100 million blue carbon fund. I recently wrote to the federal Minister for the Environment, Minister Ley, to request that since WA has the largest amount of coastline, it should be in receipt of some of those funds so we can look at developing blue carbon initiatives in WA.

If we are going to expand the offset market, which we need to in Western Australia to help reach net zero emissions, we have to support research and innovation. The McGowan government is delivering on its commitment to spend \$15 million on new carbon innovation grants to fund research and innovative trials across the state.

In my new role, I look forward to working with industry to support research and piloting programs, reducing, abating and storing carbon so that we can all reach net zero emissions.

**Mr V.A. Catania** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for North West Central, I hope you are not going to interject continuously as well.

#### CORONAVIRUS — QUARANTINE ARRANGEMENTS

#### 35. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I refer to the Premier's calls, restated today, for RAAF Base Curtin, near Derby, to be used for COVID-19 quarantine. Can the Premier confirm that any outbreak in the Kimberley would have a devastating impact on remote Aboriginal communities that are more susceptible to COVID and have limited medical facilities, often remote from where they live?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

Obviously there is a trend amongst members of the current opposition to undermine all our efforts on COVID. That is what is occurring. We have gone through 14 or 15 months as one of the most successful jurisdictions in the world in dealing with this. The whole way along, we were undermined and attacked by the Liberals and Nationals. We had an election that produced a result that showed that our actions and measures when it comes to COVID were endorsed by the public. The current opposition of six members continues to undermine all our efforts.

It is important that commonwealth facilities be used now. We have the situation that has emerged overseas, in particular in India. As I advised during my press conference today, there is some talk of emergency flights coming home. There are only certain options available to us. There is an airstrip and a quarantine facility nearby. There are not many. Technically, there are about two or three in Western Australia. One of them happens to be Curtin. In other states, they are out there as well. We put in place measures to protect Indigenous communities in Western Australia over the last 14 or 15 months that have been remarkably successful in protecting Aboriginal communities, and that will continue. Those measures would stay in place. Obviously, we would do everything we can to protect Aboriginal communities. There are only certain answers out there. We can say that no Australians or other people return to the country, and that is one measure. We can say they can return and then we have to provide facilities for them to stay. Hotels were never built for this purpose. The state agreed to take it on for the reasons the health minister outlined early last year. We will only do what we can safely manage. That is why we are reducing the numbers. There are only certain other options. If the Deputy Leader of the Opposition can come up with other options, please put them forward.

There are facilities—that is what the opposition is not getting! There are secure facilities that are there. They are currently sitting there. Honestly, all we get from the opposition—it is starting again; it did four years of this—is silly and ridiculous questions. It has not changed.

## CORONAVIRUS — QUARANTINE ARRANGEMENTS

**36. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. The Premier still has not answered the question. Exactly how would the Premier be able to contain and treat a COVID outbreak in the Kimberley, given the lack of resources that exist up there at the moment?

**Mr M. McGOWAN replied:**

Last year there was a positive case in Halls Creek in the Kimberley—it was a doctor. There was also one in Broome that the state managed. We did not have an outbreak. The measures we put in place have prevented outbreaks across the state. As I told the member a moment ago, despite the recent issues that we have had, we are one of the most successful jurisdictions in the entire world in managing this issue because we have been prepared to take measures that were necessary for the times in which we live, and that is what we will continue to do.

## POLICE — FRONTLINE OFFICERS

**37. Mr M.J. FOLKARD to the Minister for Police:**

Madam Speaker, this is the first time I have stood in this new Parliament. Congratulations on your new role.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to keeping Western Australians safe and putting more police on our streets. Can the minister update the house on this government's commitment to recruiting an additional 950 frontline police officers?

**Mr P. PAPALIA replied:**

Member, I congratulate you on your combined 35.5 per cent swing over two elections—not as good as the member for Southern River, but you are getting there!

Much has been made by the new member for Collie–Preston and many others with respect to the size of the shoes that she has to fill. Despite the absolute fact that the member for Collie–Preston confronts a significant challenge, I feel very sensitive to the fact that my predecessor in the role of Minister for Police probably achieved more than any other incumbent of that portfolio in the history of the state. Congratulations on ascending to your current role, Madam Speaker. You delivered body armour and body cams, took the police force into the digital age, ensured that section 8 was no longer used to retire medically unfit police officers, implemented the redress scheme, committed to police compensation, and also this particular commitment: the biggest ever step-change increase in police numbers in the state in one term of government, with 950 police officers. You made that commitment and commenced it. I can confirm to the house that it is going very well. The delivery of that particular commitment has seen 350 police officers recruited this financial year. A total of 150 of the 950 are already out there, with many going to the regions.

**Mr V.A. Catania interjected.**

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** Incredible!

**The SPEAKER:** Member for North West Central, it is disorderly to interject.

**Mr P. PAPALIA:** In many cases, many of the police officers are young, straight from the academy, out there to experience policing in the regions. We may not see them back. That often happens—those police officers get out there and enjoy it so much, they stay there. It is continuing. I can confirm that right now in the academy, some 265 police officers are in training. Next financial year, there will be another 200; the year after that, another 200; and then the year after that, another 200, totalling 950. These are the biggest numbers ever. Can I just ask that all members go back to their electorates and encourage people to consider the police force as a career path. We need more good people to join our police force and continue to deliver the magnificent service that we are receiving from our police officers at the moment.

**The SPEAKER:** Thank you, Minister for Police. That was the best answer that I have heard so far—impartial as I am!

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — AISHWARYA ASWATH

**38. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:**

These questions are asked on behalf of advocates for and the family of Aishwarya Aswath.

- (1) Is a coronial investigation being held, or to be held, into the death of Aishwarya Aswath?
- (2) Will the Attorney General ensure that a coronial inquest is held into her death by directing an inquest under section 22(1)(d) of the Coroners Act 1996; and, if not, why not?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

- (1)–(2) There is a coronial investigation underway at the moment and the coroner has not made her decision yet. It is a very tragic circumstance and the government, once again, offers our deepest condolences, and I offer my personal deepest condolences, to the parents. But the coronial investigation is underway at the moment and once a report has been received by the coroner, a determination will be made about an open inquest.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — AISHWARYA ASWATH

**39. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:**

I have a supplementary question. Why will the Attorney General not remove all uncertainty, directing a coronial inquest —

**Mr J.R. Quigley:** Sorry?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please! We will hear the question in silence, please.

**Ms L. METTAM:** — especially given that he told the family of Cohen Fink that once the coroner has decided not to hold an inquest, the Attorney General cannot direct one to be held?

**The SPEAKER:** Member, I caution you not to use argument in a supplementary question, and just ask a brief, to-the-point question. I will give you that option again, if you would like, to ask a brief, concise question to the Attorney General as a supplementary.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Can the Attorney General confirm that he will still be able to ask or request an inquest following the advice of the coroner?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

I can always request the coroner to hold an inquest. Ultimately, the coroner will make her determination on the evidence before her about whether to conduct one. If there is not one conducted and any parties are aggrieved by that decision, there are other avenues of appeal against that decision. But I cannot direct the coroner, at this stage, to hold that inquest.

**The SPEAKER:** That concludes question time.

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY STANDING COMMITTEES**

*Portfolio Responsibilities — Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [2.52 pm]: Before I go to government business orders of the day, I have a couple of brief notices to read in.

Under standing order 287, the Speaker is required to determine and table a schedule showing the portfolio responsibilities for the standing committees. I table a copy of the determination for the forty-first Parliament.

[See paper [198](#).]

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER AND COMMITTEES — ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

*Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [2.52 pm]: The commencement of a new session of Parliament is an opportune time to remind members of practices and protocols regarding the use of electronic devices in the chamber

and committees. Although members are permitted to use smartphones, laptops and tablets in the chamber on sitting days and during committee proceedings, these devices must be switched to silent mode and be used unobtrusively. Phones may not be used to take calls; nor can devices be used to take photographs or to film proceedings. As a general principle, devices should not be used in a way that disrupts proceedings or detracts from the dignity of the house.

With respect to members using electronic devices to comment on chamber or committee proceedings on social media, it should be noted that such communication is highly unlikely to constitute a proceeding in Parliament and, therefore, would not be protected by parliamentary privilege. Social media provides a valuable tool for members to engage with the public and to communicate useful information about the work that Parliament undertakes, but, like all forms of communication, it should be used responsibly.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

##### *Amendment to Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Minister for Health)** [2.55 pm]: Prior to question time, we were talking about ambulances, and it would be important to note that Western Australia has the best ambulance response times in Australia. Although there are issues with transfer-of-care times at the moment, as a result of the pressures on our emergency departments, our patients get collected up quicker than anyone else. I might add that they are admitted to the hospital immediately if they are a category 1 or a critical or trauma patient. Ambulance ramping has a regrettable impact on our system, but our EDs continue to perform the best in the country with the fastest ambulance response times. This is an important point for people to note: they do an extraordinary job. I focus more on transfer of care because that is the statistic that is held with and recorded by the Department of Health and so it sits on the Department of Health website. I note that ramping is 30 per cent lower than what it was last month and that is pleasing. Obviously, we need to continue to see that trend go down, and we will continue to monitor the transfer-of-care times to make sure that we see improvements on that. Maybe it is because some of the measures that we are putting in place now are starting to work; maybe there are other factors involved. When I recently met with the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine, it said that the problems are probably multifactorial, but we continue to look at all these things that we need to do to help our EDs work better.

I will counsel the member for Vasse not to compare ambulance ramping times in April 2021 with April 2020 because I do not know whether you were aware of what was going on in April 2020, member for Vasse, but there was a worldwide lockdown, and so there was not a lot of ambulance activity at all! This month, as I said, is 30 per cent lower than what it was last month. That is very pleasing and we need to make sure that continues into the future.

I had plenty of opportunity in question time to expand on the issues that, obviously, impact on this debate. That includes our response with the expansion of EDs. The significant expansion of beds we are seeing at the moment include the 117 beds that we are bringing on. There is the significant recruitment of staff, including midwives at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women, as well as the extra 600 people. As a result of efforts by the Department of Health and the Labor Party's election commitments, we will see an extra 1 000 this year in 2021 and 1 000 next year in 2022 as part of the recruitment process.

All our hospitals are under pressure at the moment. That is a phenomenon that is taking place right around the country, but we have a plan to fix it and we are implementing that plan. We look forward to continuing to invest heavily in our hospital system to make sure that we can continue to provide world-class health care. As I said, our EDs are the best in the country. In elective surgery, we are the second best in the country. We should be proud of the work that the doctors and nurses do in our hospitals, and they do it every single day under difficult circumstances. I greatly respect their commitment and professionalism.

We will oppose this amendment. The amendment is inaccurate in its description and it is simply unnecessary in its intent. From that point of view, we will oppose the amendment.

**MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley — Parliamentary Secretary)** [2.59 pm]: I rise to also speak in opposition to this ridiculous amendment that has been proposed by the opposition and to echo the sentiments of the Minister for Health. Managing a complicated world-class health system is simply beyond the capability of this opposition. Over the last four years, we have seen that this health minister is part of a united team capable of delivering on election commitments and capable of delivering a world-class health system. Immediately after the election, the McGowan government took the necessary steps to implement a sustainable health review. Good financial management underpins the effective operation of our health system, because the ballooning costs that we inherited when we were elected to government in 2017 were, frankly, unsustainable. Immediately, the necessary financial management was put in place and the Minister for Health organised the sustainable health review. Not only that, we have also seen an innovative approach to delivering health services.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** There is a lot of background noise going on, members. If you want to have a conversation, take it outside. Carry on, member for Mount Lawley.

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** Thank you, Deputy Speaker, and congratulations on your elevation to that role.

There has been an innovative approach to the delivery of health services over the past four years of the McGowan Labor government. The new medical research portfolio has been established. Telehealth is being deployed wider, and world-class, cutting edge community mental health facilities are now in place. The minister is driven by an empathic and compassionate approach. There is a new emphasis on palliative care and end-of-life care. I highlight to the member for Albany the announcement of the \$13.1 million oncology unit at the Albany Health Campus. Other hospitals such as Bunbury Hospital and the Peel Health Campus have been upgraded. The \$13.1 million unit at Albany will deliver 50 local jobs.

While I am on the topic of jobs, I want to talk about the 600 newly qualified nurses who are being recruited to provide the service needed in our system. Emergency department upgrades are being undertaken at Peel and Armadale hospitals. This government cuts through red tape to promote aged-care developments. I compare that with what we inherited when we came to office. The health system is on a sustainable financial footing and is presided over by a minister who knows precisely what he is doing and has the necessary whole-of-government response to make it a priority to put patients first. The government has achieved all of that in the face of a global pandemic. The member for Roe criticises us because our COVID-19 clinics do not have any patients in them. I would class that as a mark of success, but not according to members opposite; they never get it right on COVID.

Lastly—I would like to come back to this point—this is the state of the hospital system. Members should compare that with the hospital system we inherited. The previous government could not even finish building Perth Children’s Hospital, which had asbestos in the ceiling and lead in the water. This is a ridiculous amendment, and I for one will be voting against it.

#### *Division*

Amendment put and a division taken, the Deputy Speaker casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

#### Ayes (6)

Mr V.A. Catania	Dr D.J. Honey	Ms L. Mettam
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr R.S. Love	Mr P.J. Rundle ( <i>Teller</i> )

#### Noes (48)

Mr S.N. Aubrey	Ms M.J. Hammat	Mr D.R. Michael	Mr D.A.E. Scaife
Mr G. Baker	Ms J.L. Hanns	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms J.J. Shaw
Ms H.M. Beazley	Mr T.J. Healy	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms R.S. Stephens
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr W.J. Johnston	Ms L.A. Munday	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr H.T. Jones	Mrs L.M. O’Malley	Dr K. Stratton
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr P. Papalia	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Ms C.M. Collins	Ms E.J. Kelsbie	Mr S.J. Price	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr R.H. Cook	Ms A.E. Kent	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr P.C. Tinley
Ms L. Dalton	Dr J. Krishnan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Ms C.M. Tonkin
Ms D.G. D’Anna	Mr P. Lilburne	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr R.R. Whitby
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr M. McGowan	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms K.E. Giddens	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms A. Sanderson	Ms E.L. Hamilton ( <i>Teller</i> )

Amendment thus negatived.

#### *Motion Resumed*

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [3.09 pm]: First and foremost, I wish to thank the electors in the Cottesloe electorate for having faith in me as their local member and for returning me in the general election. I point out to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum that by some distance I had the lowest swing of any member in our party, something the minister may say is a dubious thing of which to be proud; nevertheless, I am proud.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** What was your swing?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** It was six per cent, minister. Come on—do not talk it down.

Seriously, I thank the electors in the Cottesloe electorate for having faith in me as their local member and for returning me in this general election. I especially thank the many people who helped me with my campaign, including my campaign chair, Mr Angus Murray, and his excellent committee. As members who have been here for some time would know, it is a privilege to be a member of Parliament and have the opportunity to represent our district. I have never taken my electorate for granted and I never will. I work hard to represent the views and concerns of the people in the Cottesloe electorate. That is my primary role and I will always prioritise that duty above my other duties.

I have mentioned many times in this place that Cottesloe is a very diverse electorate, where some of the most privileged people in Australia live almost alongside people who are in the most desperate personal circumstances. I care for them equally and will do everything I can to represent their diverse needs.

I am very thankful to the Liberal Party and my parliamentary colleagues for electing me as the Leader of the Liberal Party. I am conscious that I am following in the footsteps of some remarkable people, such as Hon Sir David Brand,

Hon Sir Charles Court, Hon Richard Court and Hon Colin Barnett, who have made such enormous contributions to the state of Western Australia. I also thank my colleagues who were not re-elected or who chose to retire at the election. Standing for Parliament and representing your community is no small thing. I thank all of them for their service to this Parliament and their communities. On a personal note, I congratulate and welcome the new member for Kalgoorlie, but I think everyone in this place will miss Kyran O'Donnell, the previous member for Kalgoorlie. I will certainly miss his contributions and his company in this place.

The opposition plays a pivotal role in our parliamentary democracy. It is a substantial and important role that has been made all the more difficult by our reduced numbers. On that point, I am very encouraged by the alliance agreement completed between the Nationals WA and the Liberal Party. I hold the Leader of the Nationals WA, Hon Mia Davies, in very high regard, along with her parliamentary colleagues. We have been working closely together and I am confident that we will collectively form a potent team to hold this government to account. We may be substantially diminished in number, but not in spirit.

I intended to begin my speech by quoting the ironic curse “May you live in interesting times.” But a very brief online search revealed that it is incorrectly referenced as a Chinese curse. Apparently, the nearest Chinese expression is “Better to be a dog in times of tranquillity than a human in times of chaos.” Whatever the phrase, we have certainly been through a very unusual election—one unlike any that I have known during my entire involvement in state politics. At the outset—repeating what I said last week—I congratulate the Premier on what will very likely stand as the most resounding electoral victory in the history of Western Australia and, more broadly, Australia. That is a remarkable achievement. It was very clear during the campaign that the election was exclusively conducted as a referendum on the Premier’s handling of the COVID-19 crisis. That was the only theme of Labor’s campaign and advertising. There is no doubt whatsoever that the public overwhelmingly accepted the claims of that campaign and rewarded the Premier with a massive majority for the way that his government has handled the COVID-19 crisis. However, the election result does not give this government any mandate beyond that issue. I have already heard the Premier and other ministers talk about their mandate on various issues. There is no mandate for those issues because few to none in Western Australia are aware of Labor’s other policies.

The government has a clear mandate to continue its cautious approach to managing the COVID-19 crisis; however, government members should be very careful about letting this victory go to their heads. In saying that, very unfortunately, I think that it already has. During the debate yesterday on our amendment to the Address-in-Reply on government accountability and transparency, I pointed out the duplicity of the McGowan Labor government suddenly announcing its electoral reform agenda. There is no mandate for this. The Premier stated repeatedly during the recent state election campaign that electoral reform was “not on the agenda”. The Premier knew that this was a key concern for people across the state, particularly people living in regional areas. The Premier knew that many people who were considering voting for Labor candidates would not vote for them if there was any prospect that Labor intended to reduce representation in regional areas.

Last Friday, the Attorney General made a detailed announcement about a review of the Electoral Act, with a view to reducing regional representation in the Legislative Council. As I pointed out yesterday, no-one doubts the credentials of the appointed head of the committee, Hon Malcolm McCusker; however, the committee is stacked with so-titled “experts” who are all on the public record, as late as January this year, promoting radical reform of the upper house to reduce regional representation. They have already formed their conclusions. The Attorney General knows this, and that is why he appointed them. I have the greatest respect for Mr McCusker, but no respect for the Attorney General misusing such a fine person in this cynical way.

WA Labor knew that it had already won the 2021 election at the start of the campaign, so it did not even bother to provide any economic policy or plan for Western Australia for the next four years and beyond. I doubt that members opposite could name one piece of substantive economic reform that WA Labor intends to deliver in the next four years or beyond, whether that is tax reform, productivity gains, new international markets or product diversification.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** So, are you the one Stooge? You can’t get the Three Stooges together.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Maybe a powerline from Three Springs to Geraldton, minister!

Dealing properly with the COVID-19 crisis is very important; protecting the lives of our citizens must be the top priority of any government. However, the government needs to have other priorities. Foremost amongst those priorities is a need to have a clear economic plan for Western Australia for the future. We can already see the arrogance of this government post-election, with the Premier appointing himself Treasurer, despite having no economic, commercial or financial experience. Imagine, there are 52 Labor Party members in this house, but the Premier has so little confidence in them that he has taken the second most important role in the executive for himself. The Minister for Health, the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Mines and Petroleum are all considered incapable of taking on this critical role. The reality is that the Premier, as Treasurer, has absolutely no clear economic plan for reform for Western Australia over the next four years, nor any long-term economic plan for the state.

Before the election, we heard the Premier promise that there will be no change to regional representation in the upper house, and he has now put the wheels in motion to do that. We know that the Minister for Planning apparently secretly

negotiated a 300-apartment block development on public land in my electorate before the election, but kept it quiet until after the election. In the coming months and years, the opposition will highlight the Premier's and this Labor government's arrogance, complete lack of an economic plan and complete lack of economic, commercial or financial experience. The Premier has been lucky, with massive iron ore and GST windfalls. However, the Premier's and Western Australia's run of good luck cannot last forever. What is the plan when iron ore prices fall, which inevitably they will? For example, what will happen when Brazil gets COVID under control and can lift global iron ore supply? What will happen when Chinese companies develop mines in the high-grade iron ore deposits in Africa? What will happen when China eases off its COVID infrastructure stimulus, reducing global steel demand?

In 2017, WA Labor promised to diversify the Western Australian economy to reduce our reliance on iron ore. It has failed to deliver any significant economic diversification. In fact, the WA economy has become significantly more reliant on iron ore exports and prices. The iron ore boom has masked serious deterioration in major employing sectors impacted by COVID and trade tensions. These include international tourism, international education, the wine and crayfish industries, barley exports and a number of others. I have not seen any meaningful actions or plans from the government to diversify the economy or to provide proper assistance to those impacted by COVID and trade tensions. What new markets is the government opening up to assist those impacted by trade tensions? None. In fact, it seems as though the government is abandoning any hope of market expansion, as witnessed by the elimination of the position of Minister for Asian Engagement and a downgrading of our overseas trade offices—something that has upset and offended our important Asian neighbours. What planning has been undertaken for international students and tourists when it is safe to reopen travel?

WA Labor has also overseen the loss of the BP Kwinana oil refinery, which has very serious implications for Western Australia's fuel economy.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Minister for Mines and Petroleum, it is not a laughing matter at all, especially for diesel.

As a result, Western Australia is now more reliant on foreign fuel supplies and at greater risk from geopolitical instability.

WA Labor was elected in 2017 on the basis of delivering local jobs for Western Australians. It passed the Western Australian Jobs Act to give effect to this policy. Bizarrely, the act defines local industry as —

... suppliers of goods produced, or services provided, in Western Australia, another State, a Territory or New Zealand;

Unbelievably, WA Labor determines "local" as including all states, territories and New Zealand. How can it be possible that New Zealand is local? WA Labor likes to boast about Matagarup Bridge at the same time that it gives massive Metronet projects to foreign companies, including the Yanchep and Thornlie-Cockburn lines to Spanish-owned CPB Contractors, and the Bayswater train station to the Spanish Acciona subsidiary Coleman Rail. New member for Collie-Preston, even a Melbourne company was awarded the contract for the provision of barbecues at Lake Kepwari in Collie. That is complete hypocrisy and hollow rhetoric from WA Labor.

WA Labor promised at the 2017 election not to increase the cost of living. It introduced a number of one-off COVID-19 sugar hits that have long since faded, but the ongoing cost-of-living increases by this government are now an average of \$600 a year per household, year on year. That is \$600 more than in 2017. The government hurt large families and people living on larger outer-suburban blocks by increasing the 500 kilolitre water tariff by 40 per cent in one hit in the 2018–19 budget—this from a party that claims to represent the most vulnerable in the community. In addition to cost-of-living increases, Labor's mean-spirited attacks were worse in regional communities with its attempts to close Schools of the Air and Moora Residential College.

In 2017, the Premier also promised no new taxes or increases to existing taxes. Once elected, he increased payroll tax; introduced a new housing tax, the foreign investor surcharge; and tried to introduce a new gold tax, twice. I know the gold industry is now extremely concerned about what will happen to it once iron ore prices drop, despite the Minister for Mines and Petroleum's assurances, given Labor now has absolute control.

The Premier does not care in any meaningful way about the financial impact of his decisions on struggling Western Australians and Western Australian small businesses. The Premier may have absolute financial security for the rest of his life, but many people in small business struggle daily to make ends meet and forgo personal superannuation in the hope that they can realise a capital gain in the value of their business when they retire. Small businesses need to be properly compensated when there are snap lockdowns due to COVID-19 outbreaks, especially when they are clearly the fault of this government's mismanagement and entirely avoidable. The Premier has made it clear that if there are outbreaks, there will be further snap lockdowns. If that is the case, a clear compensation process needs to be codified that outlines what compensation is available for different stages of lockdown so that businesses have some certainty about the future. This Premier has a Treasury bursting at the seams with riches from the iron ore boom; however, he seems oblivious to the pain he is inflicting on small businesses.

The Premier promised to pay down debt like a mortgage. However, net debt under Labor—I think members should listen to this—has increased from \$31.9 billion in 2017 to a forecast \$40.2 billion. That is an increase of almost

\$8 billion in the first term of the Labor government despite massive windfalls from record iron ore prices and the commonwealth GST fix. This steep increase in debt does not include the \$5 billion outer harbour that not only is unnecessary, given Fremantle port is only at one-third capacity, but also will harm the marine environment in Cockburn Sound. The real question is: where have all the windfall gains gone to allow this debt to increase by \$8 billion? The lion's share of this massive debt blowout has been committed to Metronet projects. The Premier, our new Treasurer, promised at the 2017 election that the cost of Metronet would be \$2.945 billion, a very precise number; however, we now know from the budget that the cost is over \$7 billion and climbing. This is the largest cost blowout in a state government project in the state's history and accounts for more than half of the \$8 billion increase in net debt. That cost does not include the much lauded Metronet stage 2 that was discussed before the 2017 election. The public will remember that the government promised a number of interconnecting circle lines that interestingly wound through the marginal seats of Perth. Has anyone seen or heard the plans for Metronet stage 2 yet? In addition to the cost blowouts, there was the bungled Huawei communications contract that the government had to abandon on national security grounds, at presumably great expense to taxpayers. WA Labor still has not come clean on how much that debacle cost Western Australian taxpayers.

[Member's time extended.]

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Despite all these blowouts, bumbles and a raft of safety issues, Labor still has not delivered a single inch of rail after four years, other than claiming the work of the former government on the Forrestfield line. This Minister for Transport is large on rhetoric and short on delivery. We can expect to continue to see what we have seen over the past four years: plenty of high-vis media events and a continuation of schedule slippage and cost blowouts, overseeing the largest cost blowout of any project in the state's history.

Another major financial impact was Synergy's net loss of over \$650 million in 2018–19.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Listen closely, minister.

To give some indication of the magnitude of this loss, the loss during the dark days of WA Inc, Rothwells and the petrochemical plant issue was only \$408 million.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** A large percentage of the \$650 million loss is the impairment on Muja 5 and 6 Collie coal-fired power stations, which are about to be closed down.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Sorry, what was that? What did you say?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Read *Hansard*, minister.

However, I find it really interesting that the Treasurer does not appear to have made any adjustment to the asset value of the remaining coal-fired power stations. By comparison, the private sector Bluewaters power station has been completely written off because there is no remaining economic value for coal-fired power. This is despite Bluewaters being much younger than the government power stations. It is clear that the government is artificially maintaining the asset value of the power stations, despite them having little or no financial value, so that net debt will be artificially reported as being lower than it should be.

**Mr W.J. Johnston** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** This is hardly the required level of transparency that we should expect from our government.

*Point of Order*

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Deputy Speaker, there are constant interjections from the Minister for Mines and Petroleum. I am sitting right in front of the Leader of the Liberal Party and I cannot hear him. Could you please call the house to order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, member. There is no point of order. The member is actually taking some of the interjections. There is a bit of banter going on between them, which is okay. Carry on, please.

*Debate Resumed*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you.

Another major cost blowout is the ballooning public sector, especially in union-dominated areas. When WA Labor was elected, it promised to save taxpayers \$1 billion by slashing the public sector by 3 000 FTE at a cost to taxpayers of \$300 million. This was known as the voluntary targeted separation scheme. In reality, the McGowan Labor government gave redundancies to many bureaucrats who simply took a break for six months and returned to the public service at the end of their exclusion period. According to the *Western Australian public sector quarterly workforce report*, the government did not achieve a cut of 3 000 FTEs and the public sector has actually ballooned to 117 664 FTE, an increase of 7 769 since March 2017.

**Mr D.R. Michael:** So would you cut the number?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Definitely!

Effectively, there are now 10 769 more public sector workers than Labor promised, despite the government spending \$300 million to reduce numbers. The increase in the wages bill under WA Labor is \$470 million a year and \$1.88 billion over the forward estimates. That is a negative turnaround of \$2.88 billion against Labor's so-called \$1 billion targeted saving. So much for a government that cares about fiscal management in the state of Western Australia!

Western Australia also has a substantial skills crisis that is starting to hurt our economy. Labor's handling of training and workforce development has been woefully inadequate, with apprenticeship completions plummeting every single year under this government. The number of trade apprenticeship completions has plummeted from 6 410 in the last year of the previous coalition government to 3 565 in 2020. That is an unbelievable 44.3 per cent drop in the number of apprentices under the McGowan Labor government. This is despite massive windfall gains from mining projects, which now contribute to the Construction Training Fund designed to train the workers whom Western Australia needs. Despite all the rhetoric about being the party of training, the Minister for Education and Training has simply failed to deliver the skilled workers needed to support this state's economy. WA Labor also has been unable to secure enough seasonal workers for the agricultural, horticultural and viticultural industries, and that has caused unnecessary financial harm. Horticulturalists in our northern suburbs have had to plough whole fields of lettuce and other fresh produce back into the ground because they could not get workers.

These training and workforce development failures are having ongoing negative impacts for Western Australians, especially in the regions. For instance, we have all been told that the residents of cyclone-ravaged Kalbarri may have to wait years to rebuild their homes due to the lack of skilled tradespeople. Co-operative Bulk Handling Ltd has reported that it cannot get last season's crop to port in time to take advantage of seasonally high grain prices. Farmers depend on CBH to take advantage of the price spike to realise the best income from their crop. We have heard that the major iron ore companies are experiencing shortfalls in ore to export because of a lack of skilled workers. We have also heard that the housing industry is expecting cost blowouts and schedule delays because of a shortage of workers. Everyone understands that the COVID-19 crisis has impacted the mobility of workers around Australia and overseas. The important question is: what has this government done to facilitate the safe movement of workers into this state? We have seen arrangements made to suit some of our mining industry. What about other industries? COVID-19 has been with us for over 14 months. The likely effects and the need to facilitate the safe movement of people were well understood. The state Labor government is happy to play a pointscore game with the federal government over who has responsibility for quarantine while ignoring the needs of its citizens. Western Australia does not need cheap pointscore. Our state needs skilled workers to continue to grow our economy. We need to train our young people and, when needed, safely bring other skilled workers into this state.

Western Australia is facing a major housing crisis. Despite the obvious need for more social housing to help deal with this crisis, the McGowan government secretly sold off over 1 000 social houses. I am certain that would interest many of the new Labor members coming into this house. The Labor government did that in its first term without any net replacement of those houses. That has compounded the homelessness crisis, forcing many vulnerable Western Australians onto the streets. Heartbreakingly, we now see people with jobs being homeless; families and mothers with children are living in tents in backyards and on the streets because they simply cannot get a home. Now, with the extremely low rental vacancy rates and the end of the moratorium on evictions and rent increases, we are experiencing a new wave of homelessness. The government knows, or should know, that these vulnerable people are often forced to present to emergency departments for care. This is one of the most significant factors that is contributing to bed block and our ambulance ramping crisis.

Labor's poorly designed housing stimulus package, piggybacking off the commonwealth's housing stimulus package, is also creating significant issues. I suspect that everyone in this chamber supports people being able to own their own home. The issue is that the stimulus scheme is poorly targeted and has created massive overheating in the market, with demand significantly exceeding supply. As a result, the cost of building homes has increased substantially to the point that there are large cost escalations and homebuyers may be in negative equity when the home is finished. People desperately need to get into a home. Those impacted by cyclone Seroja may be forced to wait years to get back into their homes. Another major economic threat is that Labor's poorly designed policy has pulled forward so much demand that once the pipeline of work has been completed in the next couple of years, there will be a significant reduction in home building, starting another cycle of unemployment in the sector.

Another crisis facing Western Australians is our out-of-control crime; gangland assassinations have become a feature in our community. According to WA police statistics, the number of violent crimes in Western Australia has hit a record high. For the year ending 2020, the number of violent crimes in WA reached 48 758 offences. That is an eye-watering increase of 8.7 per cent in just 12 months, during the middle of a global pandemic. Violent crime is even worse in regional WA, with an increase of 9.2 per cent last financial year. The Premier and the Minister for Police try to hide the truth by conflating violent crime with total crime, which includes less serious crime such as theft and fraud. The fact is that under WA Labor, violent crime is truly out of control, especially in the city centre. It is a truly unbelievable statistic. Violent crime in the city in the first term of WA Labor increased by 46.7 per cent—almost 50 per cent. That is unforgivable, and that is why many families and tourists are too scared to visit our CBD.

The COVID-19 crisis has been the dominant issue for everyone in Western Australia over the past 14 months. No doubt this government has done a good job protecting the people of Western Australia from the worst impacts of this terrible disease. The government was recognised and rewarded for that with a historic victory at the state election. While the impacts of COVID-19 are far from over, there is every reason to believe that mass vaccinations against the disease in Australia and overseas will gradually allow a return to normal life. What then? As I demonstrated earlier, besides its handling of COVID-19, this government has an appalling record of failures and mismanagement. We have a government that is big on rhetoric but short on delivery and vision. Massive infrastructure spending by itself does not create lasting jobs in our economy. The iron ore boom will come to an end and the wellbeing of the people in the state of Western Australia will be threatened unless this government develops a genuine vision for the future.

I encourage the government to use its majority to grow our state economy and resolve key issues such as homelessness and the health crisis. However, the speech by the Governor on the McGowan Labor government's priorities gave me no confidence whatsoever that it will resolve these or other key issues facing our state in this term of Parliament.

**MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands)** [3.37 pm]: Deputy Speaker, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your elevation to the office of Deputy Speaker and also join other members in congratulating Hon Michelle Roberts upon her election to the position of Speaker. It is most fitting that we have a woman fill this role in this hundredth year since the election of Edith Dircksey Cowan, MLA.

Today I acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation as the traditional owners of the land on which the district of Churchlands is situated, and I pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging. I am truly in awe of the ancient culture of the Whadjuk people and the thousands of years of their belonging in this special place.

I am privileged to be part of the cohort of new members that includes the 100<sup>th</sup> woman elected to the Western Australian Parliament. For this reason, I honour the memory and contribution of Edith Cowan and that of all the women who have followed her.

About Churchlands: the district of Churchlands is a beautiful place. It includes the important wetlands of Lake Monger, or Galup; Herdsman Lake; and Jackadder Lake. It is very close to Perry Lakes and the adjacent Bold Park, and is also blessed with magnificent beaches. These natural features are treasured by the locals. Lake Monger is a special place for me because I have been visiting it since I was a small child. When we would go to see my grandparents, after a lavish Sunday lunch prepared by my grandmother Margarete Tonkin, we would walk to the lake. Since I now live down the street from the house that was my grandparents' house, I am still going to the lake. It is the place I love most in the world and the place I first visit whenever I return from my travels.

The district of Churchlands includes significant parts of the suburbs of City Beach, Floreat, Wembley and West Leederville, some of Doubleview, and the entire suburbs of Glendalough, Churchlands, Woodlands and Wembley Downs, as well as a little slice of Scarborough. It is always tempting to characterise Churchlands as being part of the leafy western suburbs, but the lived reality of people in Churchlands is something quite different. In fact, the character of the electorate is changing. It contains pockets of extreme wealth, as well as socio-economically disadvantaged areas, and everything in between. It is ethnically diverse and includes people who have come to Australia in recent years as refugees.

Even without much campaigning effort, Labor has achieved respectable swings in past state and federal elections, and now no-one can take the political loyalties of the people of Churchlands for granted, least of all me. I am very privileged to have been elected to represent the people of Churchlands in this place, and I am also conscious that I won by only 408 votes. As such, I will strive to understand and represent the interests of all sections of our community, not only those people who voted for me.

Although I am the first Labor woman to hold the seat of Churchlands, Dr Elizabeth Constable, AM, who held the seat from 1996 to 2013, was the first woman. She was succeeded by Sean L'Estrange, who ably represented the district as a member, a minister and a shadow minister for two terms. I wish him and his family well as he pursues new endeavours.

Upon entering Parliament, Edith Cowan identified herself as an old woman. At the time of her election, she was a mere 59 years old. I am also an "old woman", having had my sixty-fifth birthday two days after election day. I wear the badge of old woman proudly, because I have some experience and perhaps have gained a little wisdom.

Becoming a member of Parliament represents a significant career change for me. In making this change, I am inspired by my aunt, Sister Bernice Tonkin of the Brigidine Community. Bernice had a distinguished career as a teacher and a school principal, and many local people recall Bernice's time as principal at Newman College in Floreat. After retiring, Bernice commenced working with refugees in the United States and Central America, and upon returning to Perth worked with refugees who are the victims of trauma and torture. Bernice grew up in Wembley and continues to reside there. I am proud to be her niece and her local member and to be making a later in life career change like her.

For most of the past 20 years, I have been working internationally in the field of public procurement and on its reform. Having based myself in Brussels while undertaking research, I was offered a secondment from the Queensland government to the Department of Finance in the Republic of Ireland. For a year I worked with 11 civil servants

who had little or no background in procurement, helping them develop their capabilities in modern procurement management and practices. From Ireland, I was recruited by the United Nations Development Programme, where I held a director-level post for three and a half years. While based in Copenhagen, my work supporting UNDP offices took me all over the world. Subsequently, for two years, I worked to establish and make operational the procurement and contract management functions of the United Nations–African Union peacekeeping mission in the Darfur region of Sudan. From there, I took up a post as the director of the Office of Procurement Services at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna. After retiring early from the UN system at the beginning of 2013, I continued my work in public procurement as an international consultant under UNDP contracts in Trinidad and Tobago, Brazil, Eswatini and the Philippines, and for the Asian Development Bank in Papua New Guinea and Bangladesh.

My background in public procurement management gives me some confidence that I can make a useful contribution to supporting the government’s agenda to drive more local content through public sector procurement. Apart from this, my international experience has also taught me many things about working with people from diverse backgrounds and with often very differing and sometimes conflicting perspectives on the resolution of common problems and concerns.

In her inaugural speech, Edith Cowan set out a vision for what could be achieved through the contribution of women. She said —

If men and women can work for the State side by side and represent all the different sections of the community, and if the male members of the House would be satisfied to allow women to help them and would accept their suggestions when they are offered, I cannot doubt that we should do very much better work in the community than was ever done before.

I look to us fulfilling Edith Cowan’s vision of doing very much better work in the community than was ever done before, because we now have close to a gender balance in this Parliament. However, I believe that Edith Cowan was also reflecting a deeper insight—that we work better together when we embrace diversity. Different sections of the community have different insights, aspirations, challenges and resources. When we come together around particular problems or opportunities, drawing upon this diversity provides us with many more options for action and for resolution. As the member for Churchlands, I intend to seek out and embrace diversity within our community, and bring us together to meet the various challenges that affect our quality of life.

During the election campaign, a number of issues were raised and so many people of goodwill have indicated a willingness to work together to address them. There are five issues of particular interest in our community that were repeatedly identified, and I will list them because I think they are important. They are: traffic congestion, traffic flow and road safety; the quality of state school facilities and educational opportunities; the fragile nature of our wetlands and bush habitats in the electorate and its surrounds; issues affecting the quality of life of ageing members of our community; and building constructive and cooperative relationships between the state government and the City of Stirling and the Town of Cambridge around planning and roads issues.

In addition to these very local considerations, two issues with broader community interest were identified; namely, the need for preventive mental health services and support, and climate change, with a focus on green jobs through leveraging technological innovation and local manufacturing. We have invited interested members of the community to come together to plan our actions to address these issues and identify the opportunities that can arise from them. I look forward to supporting the efforts of the working groups that will be formed and doing very much better work in the community than has ever been done before. It is one thing to identify a problem or an opportunity, but it is quite another to invest energy into finding practical options and solutions.

We are very fortunate in Churchlands to have people who are enthusiastic about our community and prepared to make a significant contribution. I would like to acknowledge just a few of these outstanding individuals.

Cory Johnson is passionate about solving some vexed traffic congestion issues in and around the Churchlands area. What I admire so much about his approach is that he would like to work with all relevant stakeholders to find solutions that do not involve shifting the problem further down the road, both literally and figuratively.

Mary Lamb, who is in her 80s, was a nurse. She survived an abusive relationship. Through determination and courage, she raised her children and migrated to Australia from London to provide them with a better life. Mary is one of those characters who lights up your life with her enthusiasm. She helps her elderly friends and neighbours with the same diligence and cheerfulness that she showed when addressing the many challenges that life has thrown at her.

Kane Blackman is the vice president of the Leederville Sporting Club. Kane and other dads from the West Leederville area have become the movers and shakers behind the revitalisation of that club. It has been transformed into a significant community social hub for the Wembley and West Leederville area, with its membership increasing from fewer than 100 to about 450 in the last 12 months.

Samantha Lyon and Paula Kuka of the Lake Monger Primary School P&C are the forces of nature behind the development of a nature playground and outdoor classroom at the school. Many of the children attending Lake Monger Primary come from high-density residential areas and have limited access to outdoor play spaces close to home. The nature playground will make a big difference to the quality of their lives and education.

Ben Jacques is a young man who is passionate about the environment and urgently addressing climate change. He is also very much a friend of Lake Monger, which Aboriginal people call Galup, the place of fire. Ben is keen to work with the community to increase the native vegetation and water quality of the lake, and is moving to form a friends of Lake Monger group for this purpose.

Apart from the immediacy of managing the pandemic, our greatest global challenge is climate change. As Ben often reminds me, concerted action is urgent. Climate change is an issue that is repeatedly raised with me in the electorate. In fact, trust in the McGowan Labor government's ability to take climate action was reflected in a small but significant swing from the Greens to Labor in Churchlands. Climate change is a big topic, with many of the policy levers under the control of the federal government. However, the state government, through its control of the supply, transmission and retailing of electricity, has a major role to play in managing the transition to renewables. The challenge is to not only reduce our emissions, but also remove carbon from the atmosphere. We must therefore transition our state's economy away from its reliance on the mineral and energy resources sectors and into green industries, including manufacturing. For example, instead of exporting minerals, we could be manufacturing green steel and aluminium and transforming these through local manufacturing into the components that become part of sustainable international supply chains.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms C.M. TONKIN:** International companies under pressure from other jurisdictions to reduce their carbon footprints are scouring their supply chains to incorporate more sustainable sources. We must also scour our supply chains under our state's major projects and incorporate into our definition of "value for money" sustainability and local green industry inputs. Amazing fledgling companies in this state are innovating in the green space. Those involved in public sector procurement must proactively seek out and understand the operation of these sustainable local supply markets. This will involve a significant shift in the application of proactive strategic procurement management and practices in the public sector. There are people in Churchlands who are passionate about our state's green manufacturing potential. We will be working hard to play our part in fulfilling the McGowan government's commitment to diversifying our economy and creating green jobs.

I am here today because of the goodwill, generosity, strength of purpose and plain hard work of the many people who supported my campaign. I am especially grateful to the members of the western suburbs, Churchlands, West Leederville and Perth Labor Women's branches, who volunteered their time, energy and resources in the belief that this was the very best opportunity for WA Labor to win Churchlands. In particular, I thank Rob Meecham, who worked with me from the beginning as my campaign manager and director. His depth of experience, constancy and good humour kept me focused throughout. He also made sure that there were no gaps in the campaign efforts in letterboxing and coverage at the pre-polls and on election day. He often did so by filling the gaps himself. Thank you also to John Morrissy and Astrid Serventy, who particularly shared with me the joys and challenges of doorstep conversations. They made this aspect of campaigning an absolute pleasure.

Jeremy Mowe took annual leave to organise our efforts at the polling booths, and his diligence ensured that every booth was covered. Lena Hee of the Churchlands branch organised many of its members to help cover each of the polling places on election day. I must also thank Pauline Meecham, Kate Grayson and John Morrissy, who provisioned our booths, and Nick Mayman and Kate Grayson, who organised the daily setting up of the pre-polling places at the Subiaco and Shenton Park Community Centres. During the campaign, so many branch members, volunteers and family members came forward and participated in the various aspects of the campaign, including letterboxing, doorknocking, hand-delivering letters from me to every elector, handing out how-to-vote cards at the pre-polls and on election day, scrutineering and supporting our fundraising efforts.

Mine was very much a low-key grassroots campaign in which every vote was hard won. For that reason, I am going to mention the names of those good people whose individual and collective efforts counted for so much in a very close election race. Please forgive me if I have inadvertently missed anybody. Thank you to Glenn Ruscoe, Wendy Mayman, Kanthi Perera, Jim Crossland, Chris Rumley, Donna White, Rami Lee-Newman, Ben Jacques, Damian Norvilas, Bec Ward, Peter Norvilas, Kirsten Norvilas, Carolyn Tonkin, Charmaine Tonkin, Kevin Tonkin, Hazel Toutounji, Elaine Tranter, Sultan Hazara, Wendy Lloyd, Joan Broughton, Tony Paxton, Paul Bengough, Liam Costello, Ellis Griffiths, Colleen Prout, Eve Morrissey, Kristan Morrissey, Dong Yu, Richard Tarnow, Jay Weatherill, Melissa Bailey, Neryl Atkins, Angela Perry, Yenly Yenly, Hui Jia, Alison Morley, Qin Wan, Kuen Tsoi, Zhe Li, Kim Morrison, Naomi McCrae, Seda Aygun, Hasnain Ibrahim, Naila Ibrahim, Yew Hee, Tony McDonald, Don He, Anne McCrudden, Kc Liang, Glenice Duffy, Erica Hampson, Alison Morley, Edward Anthony, Leo Li, Steven Zheng, Maxine Isbel, Jincheng Wang, Tuija Heikura, Justin Whitely, Gabrielle Iwanow, Jane Allison, Mike Allison, Mark Reynolds, Eva Chye, Ping Chen and Bev Jowle. I am immensely grateful to all of you.

On a personal note, I would like to say that from the day I was selected as a candidate I had an image in my mind that motivated me throughout the campaign. That was the image of three of our beautiful grandchildren listening from the public gallery to my inaugural speech. Well, today, here I am and there they are. Andie, Louis and Felix, I want you to know how much I love you. I thank each of you for helping make kids' corner at my electorate office a bright, fun and inviting place to visit, and just a gentle reminder that I need more of your colourful artworks for the wall.

Like many families during this pandemic we are separated from our Canadian family. The situation in parts of Canada such as Ontario province is fraught. The health system is overwhelmed because the spread of COVID has been out of control. We have family in Ontario, but our two-year-old grandson, Liam, is relatively safe in Sydney, Nova Scotia. Nova Scotia, as well as the other maritime provinces, have had much less transmission of the virus than the rest of the country because their provincial governments adopted similar measures to those adopted by our own state government. It may be a couple of years before we can give big hugs to Liam again, but until then we can see him grow into a smiling, healthy little boy through regular FaceTime sessions.

My mum, Irene Tonkin, who was 92 years of age, died just a few days before the election. I had not told her that I was running for Parliament because mum's politics were conservative. However, on the day that mum chose palliative care, my brother, Kevin, announced that I was running for Labor. It cheered mum to hear this, and for the next two weeks whenever I visited, mum was interested to hear about the latest twists and turns on the campaign trail. What seemed to amuse her the most was me updating her on my betting odds. I would tell her that there was very serious money to be made backing me for the win, and she would smile! On Sunday evening, 7 March, I was on my way home after delivering some items for the election day kits when I decided to call in to see mum. I was with her when she died about an hour later. I was grateful to be there and I am sure that she knew that I would be elected, and I know I had her blessing.

[Applause.]

*Distinguished Visitors — Hon Kay Hallahan, Janine Freeman and Andrew Waddell*

**THE DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price)** [4.05 pm]: Before I give the call, I would like to acknowledge a few past members of Parliament who are here at the moment. We have Kay Hallahan, AO, former member for Armadale; Janine Freeman, former member for Mirrabooka; and upstairs is Andrew Waddell, the former member for Forrestfield. Welcome to you all. It is great to see you here.

This sounds like a really unusual call, but I now give the call to the Labor member for South Perth.

*Debate Resumed*

**MR G. BAKER (South Perth)** [4.06 pm]: I rise for the first time in this Assembly as the first Labor member for South Perth. I want to first acknowledge the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, who are the traditional owners of this land on which the Parliament was founded and on which we meet today. I recognise and respect the cultural beliefs and relationship with the land that remains important to the Noongar people today, and I pay my respects to elders past and present. We recently achieved a significant milestone as the state of Western Australia finalised the south west native title settlement, which has been described as Australia's first treaty. This settlement stems from the very overdue acknowledgement in this place that the Noongar people are one of the oldest surviving living cultures on Earth. Despite the violence they have experienced, their connection to this land remains strong and unbroken.

I also congratulate Madam Speaker on her appointment as the first woman in this role. The work of righting the wrongs of the past is ongoing, but I am proud to be a member of a new government that has achieved one more important milestone on the journey towards gender equality.

In this recent election, the voters spoke as clearly as they have ever spoken. They voted for good government. They voted for a government that is keeping them safe from the pandemic, keeping the economy strong and protecting jobs. It could not be plainer. I have campaigned for Labor for 30 years and I have never before experienced such willingness to engage in political conversation or heard such gratitude towards the government. I heard voters say this day in and day out, again and again in Karawara, Manning, Waterford, Kensington, Como, Salter Point and South Perth. Ours is a seat that has never voted Labor in the previous 71 years, but in a time of crisis, when the McGowan government stepped up to protect Western Australians, the voters of South Perth gave their verdict loud and clear. Until now, there have been only four members for South Perth: George Yates, Bill Grayden, Phil Pandal and John McGrath. I never met George Yates, but I have had the pleasure of meeting Bill, Phil and John. Despite holding one of the safer conservative seats, they never took South Perth for granted. All three were a touch liberal in their conservatism. They all had an independent streak and served their constituents loyally. South Perth itself is a bit of a maverick amongst conservative-leaning seats. Bill Grayden won the seat twice as an Independent, as did Phil Pandal. John McGrath, my immediate predecessor, has left big shoes to fill. He is well regarded by people of all political persuasions, and he has made me feel welcome in this small club. I will work hard to represent South Perth voters for at least as effectively and as long as my predecessors did.

My grandparents Dudley and Nell Baker knew the first member for South Perth, George Yates. They were dentists with a practice on Angelo Street at the corner of Waverley Street, opposite Wesley College. Nell was the first woman admitted to practice as a dentist in WA. She was a member of the Karrakatta Club, the bastion of blue stockings and suffragettes, albeit with a conservative tint. We often forget that Western Australia was among the first places to grant women the right to vote. The Karrakatta Club, with members such as Edith Cowan, inspired suffragettes in Britain and around the world.

The WA Parliament has a long and proud history in this area, with the first woman elected to an Australian Parliament and the first woman Premier. I am proud that my grandmother was a trailblazer in this journey. When I was

growing up, I did not know anything about this. I grew up on Morrison Street in Como, and later on Ridge Street in South Perth. My first kindergarten was Koonawarra Kindergarten, now McDougall Park Community Kindergarten. My first school was Koonawarra Primary School, now Curtin Primary School. This was in the early 1970s, when I witnessed the construction of Karawara next to the school. I loved the design of that neighbourhood. I think much can be done today to make Karawara a better place. Later, I moved to Collier Primary School and into that wonderful community. I still have many friends from those years. This was when I had my first experience of doorknocking in South Perth, helping my mum volunteer for a Red Cross appeal. We knocked the best part of Ryrie and Todd Avenues that day.

My dad, Rob, also grew up in South Perth, and my mum, Jill, in the goldfields. They met while they were studying physiotherapy. Dad was obsessed with boating at the time. Later, he built his own speedboat from plywood. This led to an accidental side gig in selling marine jet engines, supplying to Transperth ferries and even Austal in its early days. Even in his work as a physiotherapist, Dad was a quiet innovator. He was a pioneer of ultrasound treatment in WA and treated a wide range of patients, including the ballerina Margot Fonteyn, Flea from the Red Hot Chili Peppers and several of Perth's notable racehorses. Mum put all her energies into me and my brothers and sister, supporting us in school and our many sports. Her assistance gradually grew from after-school transport to enthusiastic sideline supporter to club volunteer. She eventually became president of the Perth Redbacks Basketball Association. She could not dribble and she could not shoot, but she ran the club!

Mum and Dad brought all these diverse trends together in their lives and in their physiotherapy practice. The practice looked like an ordinary medical establishment, but it also ran the basketball club, with photos of basketballers such as Luc Longley and Andrew Vlahov on the walls. If someone went through the wrong door, they ended up in the mechanic's workshop surrounded by engine blocks and boat parts. I grew up thinking that this sort of approach to career planning was perfectly normal.

Like my parents, my career has been wide and varied. I studied psychology at Curtin University and Murdoch University, and then taught research methods, statistics and much more to psychology and business students. I have worked in government and business and in the union movement, and I have made a modest living as a music composer and a producer. Like my parents, at times it was hard to tell what my main job was and what was a side gig.

I first ran across Labor values at Wesley College. My media studies teacher, Bill Lyon, showed me an alternative view of the world to the conservative circles I had been living in and made me think deeply about my own beliefs. He encouraged me to look out for the underdog, for the powerless and for the quiet voices, even if his own voice was loud, cynical and witty. Later, in 1993, he ran as a Labor candidate for Jandakot and Melville. I was very sad when he passed two years ago.

Since then, I have run across many great individuals who have lived Labor values, including former members of this house. Andrew Waddell, a former member for Forrestfield, recruited me to the Labor Party and convinced me that to be the party of reform, you had to be the party of government. The late Jaye Radisich, a former member for Swan Hills, showed me that anything is possible. Many times while campaigning in South Perth, I thought of the surprise victory that she had in Swan Hills in 2001. Kay Hallahan, a former deputy leader of the Labor Party and member for Armadale, was an inspiration to me even before I met her. Janine Freeman, the former member for Mirrabooka, whose moral compass and generosity of spirit has always been obvious to everyone, guided me.

My path through the Labor Party has included service from Forrestfield to Mirrabooka to Rockingham, which was a valuable opportunity to learn about the lives of constituents from many different walks of life. During this government's first term, I worked as a policy officer for the former Minister for Police; Road Safety, now Madam Speaker. The one boring task that I am proud of is the Road Traffic Amendment (Blood Alcohol Content) Act 2019, which some members might remember. It is known to the WA Police Force as "what you blow is what you go". I was given this task by the minister and nudged it through the legislative process, from agency brief, to drafting, cabinet, parliamentary briefings, which I think I saw some of the members at, the Legislative Assembly—the member for Burns Beach gave a memorable speech there—the Legislative Council and on to the Governor for signature. It was not a major reform but it achieved something good. Recently, I was out with the present Minister for Police at a booze bus on Hayman Road. I asked officers on the line how things were going. Without prompting, they responded enthusiastically about this very piece of legislation. It had made their lives easier and made the process simpler and more transparent for drivers. Officers had been wanting this change for 30 years. It was personally rewarding to hear that the circle had been completed.

The arrival of the worldwide pandemic has made politics feel a great deal more personal. I do not think I am alone in feeling that way. As the pandemic took hold, we saw a wide variety of responses from around the world. On the one hand, the McGowan government listened to medical advice and adopted a cautious approach designed to stop the virus at the border. On the other hand, we had people from other places, including politicians and business leaders, show disregard for safety, demanding we open the borders and let the virus tear through our community. We saw High Court challenges in Australia and conspiracy theorists around the world. These dangerous thoughts had consequences.

My wife is from America. We saw what her family went through day to day. I saw what some of my own family members were going through in the UK. When I compared their disrupted and isolated lives in the USA and the UK with our safe place, it was a stark and horrible contrast. We all know that. Coming from a family steeped in health sciences and given my background in research methodologies, the choices for government seemed to be very clear, yet too many public figures failed to grasp the problem and the solution. That is when I knew that my background as a native in South Perth, my education and my training would bring something unique to this Parliament, so I offered myself to the voters of South Perth and they said yes, with an 18 per cent swing to Labor, a 50 per cent primary vote and a 60 per cent two-party preferred vote.

But this election was not just about the pandemic; it was also about the community we live in and what people want when this pandemic has passed. South Perth is known for some pre-eminent private schools. However, the local public schools have been a tad neglected by successive conservative governments. Curtin Primary School, my first school, has largely the same buildings as when I was there as a kid. Como Secondary College has had only one major new building in 50 years. With a great deal of pleasure, I was able to announce commitments for a re-elected McGowan government for schools across South Perth: for Collier Primary School to extend its nature playground; for Curtin Primary School to convert one of its old bitumen quadrangles into a class breakout space and shaded play area; for Kensington Primary School to renovate its basketball courts; and for Collier Secondary College to address traffic problems, get a new STEM transportable classroom and be given \$1 million for a cafeteria upgrade.

WA Labor has a great record in public education. We believe that every child, no matter what their background, should get access to quality education from kindergarten to high school and beyond. We have shown this by providing many wonderful building commitments to high schools across Perth, slashing TAFE fees for students and supporting teaching assistants in our classrooms. Our current Minister for Education and Training has led a huge change across Western Australia. We will all benefit from this work for decades to come. But there is still more to do.

On the campaign trail, I had many conversations with so many passionate parents about the high standards they expect from their local government high school. As WA Labor policy says, access to high quality education is the keystone to a just and cohesive society. Improving outcomes for Como Secondary College will be one of my top priorities for this term. That is a commitment that I made to the parents I spoke to, and I know they will hold me to that. I look forward to working with the Minister for Education and Training so that Como Secondary College is best supported to ensure that its students can achieve their full potential, and that it is seen as a standout school that is known for its achievements and a valued asset of the local community.

The residents of South Perth have a keen idea of what the community should look like. It is no accident that South Perth is known as a leafy green seat. When I was younger, I took that beauty for granted. Now I see it as the combined effort of the residents and the City of South Perth over many decades. Many green thumbs have made the trees and gardens of the suburbs a delight for everyone to enjoy. However, South Perth is in the middle of a growing city and it is feeling the pressure of development. It is irresponsible to keep expanding Perth city endlessly to new suburbs on the fringes. This is economically costly and environmentally damaging. It is also socially dislocating. Parents want their children to be able to grow up and live nearby, to become grandparents who live near their grandchildren. We must ensure that the choice to live close to the city is not closed off to anyone who is not already on the property ladder. We should and could, and probably can and should, accommodate growth while keeping the essence of South Perth.

I have had many conversations with locals about the current planning framework and the planning scheme and its outcomes. I believe that we can find the best outcomes for our community as long as we engage fully and openly with the community. Not everyone will agree with everything and there will be times for understanding and times for compromise. But it is critical that we continue to engage and be respectful to others.

I would like to briefly outline my vision for development in South Perth. We can keep high-density living to appropriately designated areas while maintaining the suburban feel for the rest of the suburbs.

We can keep streets in high-rise areas from feeling overwhelming though the use of low podiums of one or two storeys at street level, with higher building elements set back from the street, and maintaining view corridors where possible between neighbouring buildings. We can then activate high streets through retail and community facilities at ground level, and keep local neighbourhoods walkable, with gardens and active spaces at ground level, and set space for tree canopy and public open space.

I would like to see innovative transport options explored, whether better roads, a South Perth train station, new ferry routes, better bus routes, or even light rail. Technology, imagination and good planning should guide us here.

Finally, we should expect a tangible contribution to the community and to community facilities by high-rise developments beyond the block being developed.

Some of these issues are being addressed with amendment 61, currently being advanced by the Western Australian Planning Commission and the City of South Perth, but, as always, the devil will be in the detail. I will remain very engaged with planning matters where appropriate to make sure that developments are designed to make South Perth a better place to live.

Above all, I want a new discussion around the planning framework in general. The current planning framework is complicated and confusing, and ordinary people often feel like they have little chance of understanding it,

Finally, I have some very important thank-yous. To the Premier, the Minister for Health, the former Minister for Police, and the WA government, thank you.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr G. BAKER:** When we won the 2017 election, our focus was on budget repair. In a few short years, careful government spending brought the budget back into surplus, and long-term debt trending down. WA's economic fundamentals were heading back in the right direction.

Then the pandemic happened and the world-leading response of the WA government kept us safe. Without this world-leading response, this historic election result would not have been possible.

I have been lucky enough to work for the Premier in the lead-up to the 2017 election, and also for you, Madam Speaker, when you served as Minister for Police. I thank both of you for the example you set by your hard work, diligence and service, and for taking a chance on me and my occasional outlandish ideas—like “I want to run for South Perth”.

Two personal highlights—please indulge me—of the campaign involve the Premier and the Speaker. Especially memorable was arriving at the Perth Zoo for a policy announcement, but then finding myself in the giraffe enclosure with the Premier and the now member for Victoria Park, face to face with those gigantic and beautiful animals. It just seemed to be completely unrelated to the campaign, and then the Premier announced some initiatives for the Zoo just to finish it off.

The other highlight was standing by the side of the road in Karawara, in the rain, with the then the Minister for Police, meeting local residents to talk about community safety. As everyone in this house knows, community safety raises strong emotions, and this meeting was no different. But she acknowledged every angry point and every grievance with grace and understanding. She made a big impression upon that gathering, and from that a great discussion about community safety in Karawara has developed.

I also want to thank everyone in the health system, in the WA Police Force, our doctors, nurses and other workers, both frontline and behind the scenes, who kept us safe during last year and are still keeping us safe now.

Now I have some final thank-yous. I want to thank Hon Kate Doust for her mentorship and her guiding hand. I appreciate all her efforts, and without her this project would never have started. To Dr Amanda Rainey and Dragana Flynn, thank you for saying yes when I asked. Your efforts turned a whiff of a chance into a huge win. We had a campaign built on expertise, efficiency and trust. It was a campaign unlike any I had been involved with before, and I was extremely lucky to have you on my campaign. If anyone has a campaign for a good cause, run on a tiny budget, with an outside chance of success, they are your people.

My campaign seemed to be full of doctors. Thank you to Dr Ramanathan, Dr Selvandra, Dr Strahan, Dr Baker—who is in the gallery there—and Dr McKenna. I was overwhelmed with your support. You injected a great deal of enthusiasm and resources in to the campaign. And I believe it reflects the appreciation that the wider medical community has for this government.

To all my supporters and those of you who volunteered on the campaign, who stood on polling booths, dropped leaflets, doorknocked, and helped in any way—over 70 of you—thank you! I would like to acknowledge: Robert Lowney, Bevan Green, Brad McGuire, Brendan Jackson, Noolifar Shiekh, Lauren Kinder, Sarah Haynes, Don He, Phil Kemp, Michael Schaper, Willam Bower, Trevor Todd, Dave Cake, Harry Saunders and the assistance of the member for Bateman and her Bateman campaign, the member for Victoria Park and her campaign and the member for Cannington and his campaign for their assistance in the pre-poll. My apologies to anyone I missed out. Two notable contributions are from Michael Voros, for paving the way in 2017 as the Labor candidate who got a 12 per cent swing, which was a massive effort, and Phil O'Donoghue, for being my doorknock mentor. Many of you will know what assistance he can give!

To Mum and Dad, Jacquie Jamie and Michael, and my extended family, the Bakers, the Prodonovichs and the Annears, your support has meant the world to me, and you all worked so hard on the campaign trail. Often it felt like I was talking more about dentistry than about the campaign as I knocked on the doors of people who remembered my grandfather and grandmother from years before.

Rachel, Macy and Alex—are they in or are they out of the gallery? Rachel, are you listening? Thank you! Thank you for your support, even through your doubts. I love you. None of this would have happened without you.

For much of the campaign I was full-time carer for Macy and Alex. I took them to many meetings, much to people's surprise, and I would like to thank them for their patience but also apologise to the following establishments for the inconvenience and minor damages that may have been suffered: Blue Jamaica Cafe in Waterford Plaza—a fine place; Halo Cafe in Angelo Street, South Perth; Hangout on Preston cafe in Preston Street, Como; the ice creams at WA Labor HQ, much diminished; Atomic cafe, Mends Street, South Perth; the office of the headmaster of

Wesley College; Raktacino cafe in Manning; Manning Road markets, Karawara; the giraffe enclosure at Perth Zoo; Little Banksia Cafe, Kensington; the Lego collection in the office of the member for Perth; Secret Garden Cafe on Angelo Street; and the piano in the Royal Perth Golf Club clubrooms.

And to the people of South Perth, you have done something you have never done before. I hope to never let you down. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk):** Members, we will just wait for the changing of the guard.

**MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka)** [4.30 pm]: I add my congratulations to Madam Speaker on her election as the first female Speaker of this house. I also congratulate the Premier and all members who have been elected to this Parliament, especially those who, like me, are here for the first time.

I would like to begin by acknowledging the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, the traditional owners on whose country we meet. I acknowledge their continuing connection to the land and pay my deep respects to their elders past and present.

First and foremost, I thank the good people of Mirrabooka for the faith that they have shown in electing me as the member for Mirrabooka. It is a great privilege to be here, and I promise I will work hard for you and I will do my best for you. I would like to acknowledge the former member for Mirrabooka, Janine Freeman, and thank her for her passionate advocacy for our community over the last 12 years. She has worked tirelessly for the people of Mirrabooka, and she has an abiding affection for our community. In return, she is much loved by people in the electorate, as they have reminded me almost daily since I was preselected as the Labor candidate! I am very grateful to Janine for her friendship and for her generous support. I am aware that I have big shoes to fill as I seek to follow in her footsteps.

I also need to acknowledge you, Madam Acting Speaker, as the member for Landsdale, who until this election represented the suburbs of Girrawheen and Marangaroo. People in these suburbs have also been quick to tell me that the member for Landsdale has been a committed, hardworking local member for them for more than 20 years and that they, quite rightly, expect nothing less from me. While campaigning, I regularly assured people that I will work hard to live up to the high standard that both Janine and Margaret have set, and I reconfirm that promise to the good people of Mirrabooka today.

On a wall in my office hangs a letter written in 1954 by the then Under Secretary for Lands that tells us that Mirrabooka is named for the Southern Cross. However, the well-known Aboriginal poet Oodgeroo Noonuccal, or Kath Walker as she has also been known, tells the story in more detail in her book *Stradbroke Dreamtime*. She tells the story of Biame, the good spirit in the sky, who was extremely busy guarding the Aboriginal people and found that he could not watch them all the time. He decided he needed the assistance of someone to help him to care for and protect his people. He chose a man named Mirrabooka, who was wise and much loved by his people for the way he cared for the welfare of his tribe. She writes —

‘Biame gave him a spirit form and placed him in the sky among the stars ... Biame gave Mirrabooka lights for his hands and feet and stretched him across the sky, so that he could watch for ever over the tribes he loved. And the tribes could look up to him from the Earth and see the stars which were Mirrabooka’s eyes gazing down on them’.

The electorate of Mirrabooka comprises the suburbs of Balga, Mirrabooka, Koondoola, Girrawheen, Marangaroo and part of Dianella. It is one of the most ethnically diverse electorates in the state. Many Aboriginal Australians call Mirrabooka home, with a continuous connection to the land stretching back tens of thousands of years. The area was considered a rich source of food for Aboriginal people for thousands of years. In the same way that the Mirrabooka of Aboriginal legend cared for and protected the Aboriginal people, so, too, the electorate of Mirrabooka provides refuge for those who come from around the world to settle in its suburbs. Of those new arrivals, some have come as migrants and others have come as refugees, having left political, social and economic upheaval in their home country. Around half of all people in the electorate were born overseas and around half speak a language other than English while at home. The largest group—outside those with Australian or English backgrounds—are people who have come from Vietnam, followed by Burmese people from Myanmar and those of Indian descent. I am fortunate to have recently been a part of many joyful community gatherings, such as the celebration of the Kachin harvest festival, the Karen and Chin New Year celebrations and the Lohri festival. It was a great pleasure to join with the Vietnamese community for its Tet celebrations, welcoming the Vietnamese New Year, at the Girrawheen Senior High School oval in March. The vibrant community celebration brought crowds and festivity, culture, dancing and amazing food to the heart of our community.

Representing the people of Mirrabooka has also brought me closer to world events, as local constituents regularly speak with me about social and political upheaval being experienced by friends and family in their country of origin. Many have reflected on how fortunate we are to live in Western Australia during the global pandemic that has wrought havoc on the health and economic welfare of so many people around the world. The contrast between our experience in WA and how other parts of the world have fared during the pandemic is stark. Quite rightly, people

have praised the leadership of the McGowan Labor government in keeping our community safe during these most challenging of times. They have expressed their gratitude for our amazing healthcare workers and a public health system that has responded so capably to the challenge of keeping us safe during these past 12 months. Reverberations from global upheaval touch the lives of my constituents every day. The Burmese people in Mirrabooka have been deeply impacted since the military seized control in Myanmar on 1 February this year. Many civilians in Myanmar have lost their lives in the violence that has followed. These are not just events happening in some country far away, but rather there is a deep and daily impact on my constituents who have been so distressed to witness the loss of life and the loss of democracy.

People in Mirrabooka share a deep sense of community and a deep sense of pride in our area. It is a community that is resilient and knows the importance of standing alongside one another. Everywhere I go in Mirrabooka, there are many excellent examples of collaboration and cooperation. State and local governments, community groups, religious organisations, sporting organisations and businesses are finding ways to collaborate and bring people together. They are finding ways to build strong bonds of community and ways to improve the lives of the people who live there. Balga Senior High School collaborates with the Wadjak Northside Aboriginal Corporation to help young Aboriginal people grow into valued cultural leaders. At the Mirrabooka markets, the Mirrabooka Square collaborates with MercyCare to create a community market that helps small, mostly home-based businesses grow into retail outlets. State and local governments work with newly arrived migrants to provide them with mentoring and training that will help them find professional and skilled work. Soccer clubs and football teams are formed to bring young people together to learn about teamwork, leadership and discipline. The Naala Djookan Healing Centre, a one-stop shop for people experiencing domestic violence, is an excellent example of how collaboration and connectedness is making our community resilient and achieving better lives for people in the area. These collaborations demonstrate that Mirrabooka is built on mutual respect. Although there is diversity, there is not division. There is a great appreciation among the people of Mirrabooka that the best way to improve our economic and social circumstances is by working together, building strong relationships and by standing together in solidarity with each other.

I learnt a lot about community, growing up in small country towns in the great southern region. I learnt a lot about solidarity—although we don't call it that where I come from! I come from a long line of resourceful and hardworking country people. As a young man, my maternal grandfather, Don Hill, built a shack from corrugated iron near Travellers Lake in New South Wales. He then lived in that shack and called it home while he worked to transform the saltbush scrub around it into a sheep station. When my dad's father died at age 49, my grandmother Patricia Hammat carried on running their sheep station, also in the west of New South Wales, while she had two young daughters of primary school age still at home.

This part of Australia is vast and remote, and at the time it lacked communication and services. When going to town meant several hours of slow car travel over sand dunes and opening and closing gates along the way, it made sense that neighbours looked out for one another and helped each other through the best and worst of times. My parents, Andrew and Lesley, arrived in Western Australia in 1963. They had just married and moved to this great state in search of opportunity and land. They packed up a Volkswagen Beetle with all their worldly belongings and made their way to WA. They arrived just days before Christmas and celebrated their first Christmas in WA with tinned peaches and tinned ham, eaten on wooden crates, as they had arrived here with neither furniture nor funds to do any more. My dad worked as a farmhand in Broomehill and my mum as a midwife. At the same time, my dad secured his own property on newly released land north of Jerramungup. For the first part of my childhood, he worked as a farmhand at Broomehill during the week and spent almost every weekend working the block in Jerramungup, clearing, fencing and turning the sand and scrubland into viable farmland. Through their example, my parents taught me a great deal about hard work. They also taught me the importance of looking after your neighbours and making sure that nobody gets left behind. They taught me about the importance of community and that we all have a responsibility to contribute to building something better. These values have stayed with me throughout my working life, and they will continue to guide my work in this Parliament.

I started school at the Broomehill Primary School, a small school with about 60 students and only three classrooms. I later attended Kojonup District High School and completed years 11 and 12 at Governor Stirling Senior High School in Midland. I am very proud of my public school education. Our public schools consistently deliver excellent education outcomes and transform the lives of young people. Although Broomehill Primary School was a small school, its quality of teachers, education assistants and other staff was excellent. I received an outstanding education from all the schools I attended, and so I take this opportunity to thank all those who work in our public schools and particularly those teachers who contributed to my education and my progress to this place.

Like many young people, while I was at university I supported myself financially with a number of casual jobs in hospitality and the fast-food industries. Because I could not live at home, these were jobs that I relied on to pay rent and buy food. It was these casual jobs that made me a unionist, as I discovered, like many young people experience even today, that it was all too common to be underpaid and unfairly treated. By the age of 18 I knew enough about work and the law to know that what I was experiencing was not fair and it was not legal. I was also smart enough to know that if I raised my concerns with my boss as a casual worker, it would only lead to my hours getting cut or losing my job altogether, rather than any improvement in my circumstances. Although laws that protect workers

are important, it became clear to me at this time that laws on their own are not enough to give working people protection from a bad boss or equal power with their employers; it is only unions that do that. So it was, that when I started my first job after finishing university I immediately joined the union. I found in the union movement many of the same values of community, solidarity and making sure no-one gets left behind, which I had learnt while growing up. I am indebted to former leaders of the Australian Services Union who took a chance by employing me in a full-time role when I was young and inexperienced. When I can, I try to repay this debt to young people I meet who are just starting out in their careers by offering support, encouragement and opportunities.

I spent over 17 years at the ASU, including time as assistant branch secretary. I was elected as the president of UnionsWA in 2008 and then elected as secretary in 2012, when Simone McGurk left UnionsWA to campaign for the 2013 state election. I am particularly grateful to her for the straight talking and advice she gave me at that time, without which I may never have accepted the opportunity that was presented to me. I also recall that when I started at the ASU, I was the first woman to be employed to organise the mainly male union members in the energy industry. At the time, Simone McGurk was an official with the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union and was a valuable role model for me, providing me with an example of how a youngish woman in her 20s might organise workers in a male-dominated industry. I am indebted to her for a great deal of wise counsel, assistance and friendship over the years we have known each other.

It was a great privilege to represent working people of this state and I want to thank union members of WA for giving me that honour. Overwhelmingly, union members are people who understand what it means to ensure that no-one is left behind. They understand solidarity—that is, standing side by side with one another, offering strength and support, not judging and not condescending. Union members are people who care about not just themselves, but also others in their workplaces, in their industries and in the broader community. They understand that our society and our economy are strongest when we focus on our collective wellbeing, instead of just focusing on delivering benefits for the few.

I became a Labor Party member because of the union movement. It was the union movement that made me active and politicised me. It was the union movement that taught me, particularly during the campaign against the Howard government's WorkChoices legislation, that we need governments that are prepared to fight for a fair go for everyday working people, and that, in particular, we need Labor governments.

My experiences in life have shown me that a fair go and a good job cannot be taken for granted. As secretary of UnionsWA, I have stood up for WA workplaces to be fair, equitable and safe. I have fought for a fair go for everyday working people and I intend to carry on that work. Good, well-paid jobs are an important way that we can build a society in which nobody is left behind. For most of us, a good, secure job is the cornerstone to being able to live a good life. A good job provides the income, security and peace of mind that allows us to buy a house, have a family and enjoy family time on weekends. I am proud to be a part of a government that has a comprehensive plan to create good jobs for everyday working people.

Supporting local manufacturing and having a long-term plan to make things here in WA will diversify our economy and give us access to well-paid, highly skilled jobs of the future. Making it easier and more affordable for people to go to TAFE and access vocational training will help people get skilled jobs. Investing in critical infrastructure such as Metronet will create jobs and also make public transport accessible and affordable for everyday people. Having a strong safety net of public services like schools, hospitals and other services gives everyone a fair start in life and support when they need it the most, regardless of how much they earn or where they live. We should also ensure that so-called women's work is properly recognised and paid. Many women in my electorate work in aged care, health and community services, retail and other service industries. We need to take steps so that the occupations and industries that predominantly employ women do not continue to undervalue them for their skill and for their contribution to the economy. I applaud the work of unions, the United Workers Union and the Australian Services Union, towards addressing the structural issues that are contributing to the gender pay gap.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms M.J. HAMMAT:** We live in a moment of great opportunity to create the secure, well-paid jobs that we need for WA's future, jobs that will build both a prosperous economy and a fair and inclusive society. I want to be a part of making sure that everyday people get what they need to live good lives, and I want to be part of the debate about how we share around the wealth of this great state to make sure that everybody gets a fair go. There have been a great many people who have supported and encouraged me along the way; it is impossible to mention them all by name. Many union members, delegates and union leaders have provided me with so much sensible advice, encouragement and friendship over my 25 years in the union movement. I would like to particularly thank today Carolyn Smith, Wayne Wood, Steve McCartney, Jon Phillips, Pat Byrne, Rikki Hendon, Peter O'Keeffe and Mick Buchan. Some of those people are here and I want to also thank them for being able to endure yet another speech from me! They have certainly endured enough over the last eight years. To Owen Whittle, who follows me as secretary, and all the wonderful people who worked at UnionsWA during my time there, thank you for your friendship and all that you do for the working people of WA. UnionsWA is a special place to work, and you have an incredibly important role to play in the debates that will shape the future of our state. I wish you well in all that you do.

Thank you to the people who worked so hard on my campaign and kept me diligently working to the plan, especially the ever-fabulous Izzy McDonald and Amy Blitvich, who both came early and stayed to the end. I also thank Katherine, Sue, Donata, Hiba and Carly, who are an important part of the team. I extend my great thanks to the members of the Nollamara branch and the many, many other volunteers from the community, the Labor Party and the union movement who joined our campaign because they believed in what we were doing. I am particularly grateful to Ibrahim, Emmanuel, Dave and Laurice, Robert, Hassain, Lovelte, and Kayande.

As always, the final word and the greatest thanks must go to my family. I thank my husband, Matthew, my two sons, Adam and Jeremy, mum and dad, my brother, Steve, and his partner, Monica, for their love and support, without which none of this would have been possible. I know I can rely on you to keep me grounded and I know you will ensure that I never become too big for my boots.

Let me say in conclusion that it is a great honour to be here as the member for Mirrabooka. However, the point is not just to be here to enjoy the fine debate in this chamber. What matters is that we build something better during the time that we have here. Like my grandfather who built a sheep station from a corrugated iron shack in the far west of New South Wales or the migrants and refugees who settle in Mirrabooka to make a better life for themselves and their families, we all bear a responsibility to build something better for the generations of Western Australians who will come after us. It is an opportunity to build a better life for individuals, a more prosperous economy and a fairer and more inclusive society. I will work hard to achieve these things for the people of Mirrabooka. During my time in this place, I will hold in my heart and in my head the story of the original Mirrabooka who so loved his tribe, he was raised up to care for and protect them. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary)** [4.52 pm]: Madam Acting Speaker, I add my congratulations to the Speaker on her election as the first female Speaker of this house and, indeed, it is part of what I want to touch on today in my contribution. As many of my brand new colleagues have highlighted, it has been 100 years since Edith Cowan was elected to this Parliament. It intrigued me when I heard that my friend the member for Hillarys was the 100<sup>th</sup> woman to be elected to the Western Australian Parliament, so I had the staff in our fabulous Parliamentary Library send me a copy of all the women elected to our Parliament in both this place and the other place. In fact, 106 of us have been elected, with 65 of them in this chamber. I think that is a fabulous number.

I am celebrating an important birthday this year and one of the things struck me when I was looking at the election dates of these women was that only four of them were elected before I was born. I found it quite striking that in 100 years, only four women were elected before 1981, so it made me look back at a number of different reasons why we might be elected. I was inspired by my 11-year-old daughter who absolutely adores Ruth Bader Ginsburg and officially went into mourning at her passing last year and wore her Ruth Bader Ginsburg T-shirt for a week until I said, “That needs to go in the wash.” Ruth Bader Ginsburg was often asked how many women would be enough to sit on the Supreme Court in the United States and her response was nine. There are nine judges who sit on the Supreme Court in the United States and her response was nine. People were often taken aback by this because they thought that was a strange response. Her response to that was, “It has had nine men for a number of years, why should it not have nine women?” I am not suggesting by any stretch of the imagination that we should do away with our male counterparts in this place. I think a lot of them make some very valuable contributions, but it is a great source of pride to stand in this place knowing that, as we do so, 47 per cent are women representing the people of Western Australia. We have always aimed, particularly on the Labor benches, which continue all the way across there now, to get to equality and we are just about there. Of 59 seats here, 28 are represented by women and 26 of 53 in the Labor caucus are represented here by women and my esteemed colleague the Minister for Police has informed me that 52 per cent of the Labor caucus are women. We are taking some great strides towards equality and true representation. It has been also great to see that of the 19 new members of this place, 13 are women.

I would like to echo what Ruth Bader Ginsburg said —

Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception.

This was particularly brought home to me again by my fierce and independent feminist 11-year-old when I took her a copy of a 2019 article that was showing that the Matildas were now going to be paid the same amount as the male players. I was very excited by this. I said, “This is fantastic.” I was so impressed. She was completely dumbfounded and confused by my excitement. She said to me, “But, mamma, do they play the same game? I said, “Yes.” She said, “So they do the same job.”

**Ms A. Sanderson:** And they do it better!

**Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI:** They do do it better. She said, “So why haven't they always been getting paid the same?” That brought it home to me that our future is safe. We have some very strong women coming up through the ranks, whether they choose to join us in Parliament or not. In society we have some very strong, very opinionated, very independent women coming up, if they are anything like my 11-year-old daughter, Nadija. I am sure a lot of the mums here could agree with me that they look at their daughters and think, “Wow, I could never have done that when I was your age.”

I would like to thank all the fabulous members who are joining us here. I know that they will make wonderful contributions to not only their electorates, which have instilled that humbling authority in members to represent them, but also the Labor Party, which was built on the shoulders of giants that we now stand on, and this Parliament as we represent diversity, compassion and strength. Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

**MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn)** [4.58 pm]: I acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet today, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and pay my respects to their elders past and present. This land always was and always will be Aboriginal land.

I say at the outset how pleased I am to begin my speech with those words. Madam Speaker, I congratulate you on your historic election to the role of Speaker. It caps an accomplished career as a Labor member and minister. It is also fitting, if overdue, that a woman sits as Speaker on the centenary of Edith Cowan's election and a few years shy of the centenary of the election of May Holman, the first Labor woman elected to this place and, indeed, to any Parliament in Australia. I look forward to the day when there will be no novelty in members using the phrase "Madam Speaker" in this chamber.

It is the privilege of my life to have been elected to represent my local community as the Labor member for Cockburn. I am indebted to the Labor Party and the voters of Cockburn for giving me the opportunity to serve in this place. I acknowledge particularly the big shoes I have to fill in succeeding Hon Fran Logan as the member for Cockburn. Fran led many community campaigns, such as cleaning up Cockburn Cement. He was a reformist minister, who most recently brought many of our corrections facilities back into public hands. I wish Fran and Vivienne the very best in their well-deserved retirement.

Madam Speaker, I was born into a Labor family. My dad, Roy, was a child of the Depression who believed passionately in the objective of the Labor Party in bringing better conditions to all people without hope of personal gain. My mum, Catherine, is a Nannup girl, whose quiet hardworking nature typifies the backbone of the Labor Party.

I was raised on a steady diet of politics. Labor Party meetings and fundraising dinners were the norm, so much so that I feel uncomfortable at an event if there is no raffle. I remember watching a clip from question time when I was a kid and asking my dad who was the bad guy. He explained solemnly that John Howard was the bad guy and Paul Keating was the good guy. I thereafter enthusiastically shouted, "Put him in the green wheelie bin!" every time John Howard appeared on TV.

Few things were more important in our family than the Labor Party, but chief amongst those was education. I was fortunate to receive a first-class public education at Australind Primary School and Australind Senior High School. I owe much of my trajectory in life to the brilliant teachers and other staff who invested in me in my early years. I give particular thanks to Greg Slavin, who was the principal of Australind Senior High School while I was there. Greg pushed me to do better and opened doors for me, and I know he did that for all students. He represents the very best of the public education system. I was pleased to later return to my high school as a board member at Greg's invitation.

Because of the education I received at Australind, I was able to secure a Fogarty Foundation regional scholarship to study arts and law at the University of Western Australia. I found it difficult to fit in at UWA. I discovered quickly that my path was not the typical path taken by most of my peers at UWA Law School. I had gone to public schools, I was a country boy, and my parents were not lawyers or judges. Indeed, no-one in my family had attended university until my older sister did two years before me. Fortunately, I eventually found my people. I made fast friends with people who shared my values for fairness, equality and inclusion—people like Mike Workman and Tim Goyder, who, like me, viewed the law as a political tool and not as a merely academic or commercial exercise. I was also invited at that time by Hon Dr Sally Talbot to drinks with what she described as a "group of like-minded people". I met Hon Stephen Dawson, Hon Alanna Clohesy and Senator Louise Pratt, and many others who would go on to be employers, friends and mentors to me. I found the metalworkers and found my political family.

I am a strong believer in lifelong learning. In 2019, I finally uprooted myself from Perth and moved to the United Kingdom to study a Master of Laws at University College London. Again, I was fortunate to benefit from great teachers, taught and supervised by some Europe's best labour lawyers. That was until I called my wife, Ellie, in early 2020. Ellie had remained in Australia. I told Ellie that this COVID-19 situation seemed pretty serious and that it might be a good idea for me to come home. Thankfully, I did just that. I ended up writing my thesis remotely on the experiences of Qantas workers, many of whom have been stood down without pay for months on end while the pandemic rages.

When I look back at my life and education, the common thread is how much I owe my achievements to education, and particularly public education, and to the work of other people. I was raised by a family who loved and supported me. I was encouraged at school and university by teachers who saw more in me than I did. I was mentored by colleagues in the Labor Party and the law who recognised a kindred spirit. To that extent, my story reflects the objective of the Labor Party, which is, surely, to build a society that allows a kid from Australind to attend world-class universities and crack into the exclusive club of the legal profession. My story may be the story of yet another lawyer who stumbled into this place, but it is also fundamentally a story about fairness, equality and inclusion.

But it is not really my story that drove me to serve in this place. Instead, it is the stories of the many vulnerable and exploited workers whom I have represented as a lawyer with both Slater and Gordon and Eureka Lawyers—women who were sacked for being pregnant, cleaners and disability support workers who were badly underpaid, and migrant workers who were threatened with deportation. If it were not for the union movement and the Labor Party, the stories of those workers would often go unheard. I hope to do my part by being a voice and a warrior for those workers in this place.

Today, I want to start that work by telling you about one of those workers, one of my former clients, Lovanitasing Veeraragoo. I am grateful to Lovanita for giving me permission to use her name and story in this place. I met Lovanita in February 2018, when she was referred to me for pro bono assistance. In February 2015, Lovanita had started working as a cook on a 457 visa for a chain of restaurants known as The Local Shack. In mid-October 2017, Lovanita had finished her shift but then stayed back when another employee failed to turn up for the next shift. However, after 45 minutes, she could stay no longer because she had to pick up her child from day care. At about 10.00 that night, Lovanita spoke by phone with the general manager of The Local Shack, Bradley David Wright. Mr Wright asked Lovanita why she was not still at work. When she explained that her shift had finished, he went on a tirade and abused her. The Federal Court of Australia ultimately found that he said to her things like, “Why the fuck am I paying you if you are not there?”, and, “You should still fucking be there.” After the call ended, Lovanita began crying. Her husband, Koomaren, called Mr Wright back and asked why he had made Lovanita cry. The Federal Court again found that Mr Wright responded, “Why the fuck do I have to talk to you? I sponsored you guys. I can cancel your visa any time I like.”

The next day, Lovanita took personal leave and submitted a medical certificate. In response, she was told by The Local Shack that she had abandoned her employment and breached the Fair Work Act. Lovanita later received a letter terminating her employment, partly because she had failed to turn up to work and had instead provided a medical certificate. The Local Shack also did not pay Lovanita her salary for her final two weeks of work, her accrued annual leave or her notice period. Over the following months, she faced the risk of deportation, a deterioration in her marriage, and suicidal thoughts.

In February 2018, I commenced proceedings in the Federal Court on behalf of Lovanita, alleging that Goldbreak Holdings Pty Ltd and Bradley Wright had engaged in seven contraventions of the Fair Work Act, including by sacking Lovanita because she took personal leave, misleading Lovanita by claiming she had abandoned her employment in breach of the Fair Work Act, and failing to pay Lovanita her salary, accrued annual leave or notice period. A few weeks after the proceedings were served on Goldbreak Holdings, it was placed into voluntary administration. That had the effect that we could not continue the proceedings against it, even though The Local Shack’s restaurants mysteriously continued to trade. Undeterred, Lovanita and I maintained the proceedings against Mr Wright, who we claimed was personally liable as an accessory. Over the following months, Mr Wright evaded service of the proceedings, until the Federal Court granted substituted service. Mr Wright then continued to ignore the proceedings. He would send me emails raising irrelevant matters, but refused to file a defence. In the end, the Federal Court entered default judgement against Mr Wright.

In his judgements, Justice Colvin declared that Mr Wright had committed the seven contraventions of the Fair Work Act alleged. His Honour’s findings against Mr Wright were damning. He described Mr Wright’s conduct in sacking Lovanita for taking personal leave and refusing to pay her entitlements as “considered and deliberate”. His Honour noted that Lovanita was in a vulnerable position and at an economic disadvantage. Justice Colvin also found that Mr Wright had used foul language and that he had used Lovanita’s need for a visa in a threatening way. Justice Colvin ordered Mr Wright to personally pay Lovanita \$28 000 in compensation and civil penalties for his contraventions but, of course, he did not pay. In April 2019, I lodged a creditor’s petition in the Federal Circuit Court requesting that Mr Wright be declared bankrupt. After a further application for substituted service, Mr Wright was finally declared bankrupt in June 2019 and a trustee was appointed to administer his estate. However, after conducting its investigation, the trustee informed Lovanita that the house Mr Wright lived in was in his mother’s name, that the shares in the company that ran The Local Shack were in his partner’s name and that he had no assets in his name other than \$1 000 in his bank account. To date, Lovanita has not been paid a cent of what she is owed by Bradley Wright. Despite that, the Local Shack continues to operate four restaurants in Perth and Mr Wright continues to identify himself as The Local Shack’s operations manager on LinkedIn. The appalling behaviour of Mr Wright and The Local Shack was covered in a series of articles published on WAtoday in late 2019. The articles give countless examples of workers who were bullied, underpaid and mistreated by that business. I commend journalists Hamish Hastie and Hannah Barry for their reporting.

There are few people whom I hold in greater contempt than employers and managers who use their power to bully and exploit the vulnerable. Mr Wright is a lawbreaker, a bankrupt and an unfit person to operate a business. I therefore call on him to accept responsibility for his actions and to pay Lovanita what she is owed. I hope that hearing Lovanita’s story will cause every member of this place to reflect on the need for stronger workplace laws. I am pleased to be part of a government that has modernised our workplace health and safety laws and is legislating tougher penalties for wage theft. I pay tribute to the former Minister for Industrial Relations, Hon Bill Johnston, for his work in those areas.

I also hope that hearing Lovanita's story will tell you a little about me. I am an idealist, but I am also a fighter. I am unforgiving when it comes to bullies, those who abuse their power and those who pick on the vulnerable and powerless. I am relentless in my pursuit of fairness and justice. I intend to bring all those qualities to this place in pursuit of this government's agenda. This government took a platform to the election that was broad and forward-thinking. It has a strong mandate to deliver on that platform, but I know that it will do so responsibly.

One of the pillars of this government's agenda, local manufacturing, is a key priority for me. For too long, governments around Australia have neglected our manufacturing industry, but this government has taken tangible action from the outset. In that respect, I acknowledge the excellent work of Hon Rita Saffioti in overseeing the construction of the railcar assembly facility in Bellevue.

The Australian Marine Complex, which is adjacent to my electorate, was established by the last Labor government and is one of the great success stories of WA industry policy. The AMC is the only facility of its type in Australia, built as a common-user facility to drive investment and collaboration in our defence and marine industries. I commend this government for the \$87 million in infrastructure projects that it is rolling out at the AMC, including the vessel transfer path, which is currently under construction. These investments will increase the AMC's capacity to take on more high-value projects and generate thousands of local jobs. I now look forward to working with the government on the next stage of development at the AMC. There are many opportunities. A heavy and wide-load transfer path would allow the AMC to attract work fabricating and assembling larger offshore structures. A second floating dock would enable the transfer of heavier vessels, such as the Hunter-class frigates. Local manufacturing is at the heart of good jobs, which in turn are at the heart of social inclusion; I am very proud to be part of the Australian Manufacturing Workers' Union and a government that understands that.

There is a final part of my story that I feel compelled to share today, and that is my passion for improving mental health services. For me, that passion is deeply personal. Not long after I had left home at age 17, I developed what I figured was an ordinary case of homesickness but it quickly turned into something more sinister. I withdrew into myself. I would eat meals alone in my room. I stopped attending classes and I turned up late and dishevelled to work. I would sob almost inconsolably when I returned to Perth from a weekend away at home. I felt overwhelmed by everything in my life. I lost interest in most of the things I had previously enjoyed. I endlessly criticised myself and my work. I was diagnosed early on with major depression, but I accepted only patchy treatment. Eventually, at about 20 years of age, I waded into the Swan River with the intention of drowning myself. Fortunately, I did not get very far. After a course of antidepressants, my mood improved. I declared myself cured and discontinued my medication. I fared all right on my own for another couple of years, until my dad was diagnosed with terminal brain cancer. Even then, I soldiered on, reasoning that a low mood was normal in the circumstances. However, a couple of years after dad died, I realised that many of my old habits had crept back—persistent sadness, lateness to work and a sense that I was overwhelmed. By then, I had the maturity to recognise that something was wrong and I sought help. I have been on antidepressants for several years now. I seek treatment from my psychologist as and when it is needed, and I am not ashamed to say it. During the election campaign, the former Leader of the Opposition made some startling admissions about his mental health. I congratulate him on doing so. It is beyond time that we break down the stigma around mental illness.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE:** However, there was something missing from the conversation spurred by the former leader's comments. He seemed compelled to explain that his darkest times were behind him, that he was cured and that there was nothing to worry about. I felt that those comments missed the point, because it should not be necessary to be cured in order to disclose struggles with your mental health. My message today is simple—it is okay to not be okay. Often mental illness is not something to be got over or to be cured; it is something to be treated and managed. My depression is well-managed and it has been for several years, but it is something that requires constant vigilance and work. I expect to be on antidepressants for the rest of my life. There is no shame in that. I know that this government is prioritising mental health. It is establishing additional mental health beds in our hospitals and fast-tracking the Young People's Priorities for Action program. There are also exciting projects happening in my electorate, including the new private mental health facility that is being built by Bethesda Health Care at Cockburn Central. I look forward to being part of that work going forward.

I turn now to the campaign and the many thank-yous that I owe. The first of those must be to our Premier, Hon Mark McGowan. We have heard many tributes to the Premier over the last two days, but mine has a slightly different character. I would like to tell you about an experience that I had while doorknocking in Atwell in the closing weeks of the campaign.

On a sunny afternoon, I approached a house at which a car had just pulled into the driveway. Out jumped four kids and two adults. I thought, "A captive audience—a candidate's dream!" As I chatted with the parents, the kids played around me. They must have spied the slogan on the back of my shirt that identified that I was on Mark McGowan's team. My conversation was interrupted by a singsong voice asking, "Do you know Mark McGowan?" I turned to the kids, knowing I at least had this one covered. "Yes, I know Mark McGowan", I said. "I am running to be on his team", I continued like a well-rehearsed candidate. Question answered, I turned back to the parents, only to be

interrupted almost immediately by another question: “Are you his best friend?” A cold sweat descended upon me. The jig was up. “No”, I replied. “I wouldn’t say I’m his best friend.” There were frowns of disappointment all around. But the questions continued: “Do you have his mobile number?” Back on solid ground, I assured them that I had the Premier’s number. Of course, that was a mistake. “Can you call him for us?”, the question came back. I delivered the disappointing news that it was not appropriate for me to call the Premier at that moment, quickly ended the conversation and got out of there before even trickier questions followed! I have never been involved in a campaign in which so many voters, let alone children, recognise our leader. They respect him in a way that is unprecedented. It is a testament to the Premier’s hard work in guiding our state through the pandemic. People have looked to the Premier to put their best interests first and he has done so. I thank the Premier for that service on behalf of my constituents.

There are so many other people to thank that I will no doubt miss someone, but I will do my best. I thank Melissa Parke for inspiring me to take up a career in law. To the member for Mount Lawley, Chris Pras and Alex Illich, thank you for your mentoring in the law and for your friendship. To Tim Picton and the whole team at WA Labor and CHQ, thank you for the brilliant campaign that you ran. None of us would be sitting here today without you. To my campaign directors, Owen Whittle and Hon Kate Doust, thank you for your patience and strategic thinking. To the branch members and volunteers who helped on my campaign, I give a heartfelt thankyou. I cannot name all of you, but I am particularly thankful to Glenn Anderson, Vassil Balakrishnan, Doreen Blyth, Dylan Davis, Tarun Dewan, Stephen Goodlet, Cassie Harrison, Karthik Pasumarthy and Brendah Toms, Jilly Regan, Daniella Simatos, and Robbie and Jean Bruce. Thank you to my many friends for your camaraderie over the years—Alex Cassie, Claire, Craig and Mima Comrie, Rebecca Doyle, Tim Goyder, Pearl Lim, Tom Palmer and Mike Workman. Thank you particularly to my oldest friend Ashley Buck.

To Peter O’Keeffe, Ben Harris, and the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees’ Association of WA, thank you for your support of a cross-factional ally. I wish to congratulate the SDA and Dustin Rafferty on their recent victory in the Industrial Appeal Court. The court declared earlier this week that state employees in the retail pharmacy industry are covered by the state shop and warehouse award, closing a loophole that some employers had used to pay low wages. I also congratulate the former Minister for Industrial Relations, who intervened on that matter.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Only on the advice of the department!

**Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE:** Thank you to Mick Buchan, Steve Catania and the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union for your support over many years and during the campaign. I give particular thanks to my two unions—the Australian Services Union and the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union. To Wayne Wood and Jill Hugo, thank you for letting me cut my teeth as an ASU delegate and placing such great trust in me as your advocate in recent years. The ASU has achieved marvellous outcomes for its members under your leadership. To Steve McCartney, Glenn McLaren and the whole AMWU caucus, there is no possibility that I can ever repay your solidarity. The AMWU is a leader in this state of driving industrial, political and social reforms. I am proud to be part of that work.

Thank you to the current and former members of Parliament who have supported me over the last 15 years, including Hon Jon Ford; Hon Alanna Clohesy; Hon Stephen Dawson; Senator Louise Pratt; Josh Wilson, MP; the member for Murray–Wellington; and the member for Kingsley. I am going to continue to rely on each of you.

Thank you to my field organiser and de facto campaign manager, Darcy Gunning. The campaign he ran was so good that I had to take him aside and tell him that we were at risk of being told off for doing too good a job in a non-target seat. Mate, you are a complete legend.

Now, there is a group of people to whom I must give a very special thankyou. There is the person who has been essential in shaping my political and moral compass. She has been my friend and mentor for many years. I owe a debt of not merely gratitude but of great love to Hon Dr Sally Talbot. Sally, thank you for seeing the potential in me all those years ago, for being generous with your time and advice and for your love for my family.

My family has always been important to me. I would not be here without my family’s support. To my parents in law, Anthony and Shelley, and to the whole Whiteaker family, thank you for letting me be part of your clan. To my sister and brother-in-law, Elizabeth and Jonathon, and to my beautiful niece, Lana, thank you for your love and support. To my mum and dad, Catherine and Roy, thank you for raising me and instilling in me Labor values and a love for public service. Mum, while dad is not with us anymore, I know that he would be so proud of all of us.

And, finally, to the most important person in my life, my wife, Ellie, I have two things to say. First, I am sorry that I forgot to mention you in my election night speech. As the member for Kalgoorlie said to me, that is dog house stuff! Please consider this a grovelling apology etched into *Hansard*; I am sure it is not the first. Second, thank you for loving me unconditionally, forgiving my mistakes and seeing my better side when I often do not. In our almost 10 years together, we have achieved so much. Thank you for being my partner in life and my partner in political crime. I love you very much.

Honourable members, you will often see me wearing a lapel pin, as I am today, with a depiction of Ben Chifley’s “Light on the Hill”—the objective of the Labor Party in bringing better conditions for all people without hope of

personal gain. The pin is a tribute to my beloved dad, who wore the same pin and who strove always to give a helping hand. The light on the hill is the great work of the Labor Party in this place. That work is never done and our eyes should never be distracted from it. I am excited by the prospect of what this Parliament can achieve and I look forward to working with each and every one of you to deliver a stronger, fairer and more equal Western Australia.

[Applause.]

**The SPEAKER:** As a word of guidance for members, you may have thought that the member for Cockburn used some unparliamentary language there, and those words used in another context could be considered unparliamentary. They were not considered that way by me today because they were direct quotes from court proceedings; it is not a precedent for people to assume that you can normally use that language in this house.

I will just wait for those who want to clear the public gallery to do so and those who want to arrive in the public gallery to also do so. Members, we have witnessed some truly extraordinary inaugural speeches in this house in the last couple of days. I congratulate all the people who have spoken so far and I am certainly looking forward to those speeches that remain. There are some people clearing out of the public gallery to celebrate with the member who has just spoken, I expect, and there are some others who are hopeful of making their way in.

**MR H.T. JONES (Darling Range)** [5.27 pm]: Good evening, Madam Speaker. I join all of my colleagues in this place, and, indeed, the people of Western Australia and further afar in congratulating you on your elevation to the role of Speaker. I acknowledge the example you have set for the many women and girls in Western Australia who may until recently have wavered in considering a career of service in this place. Your indulgence in batting away the odd “Mr Speaker” reminds me of the progress of women in the Navy over the last 30 years where the subordinates were conditioned through practice to reference their captain as “Sir” and had to learn to say “Captain Ma’am” when seeking attention from the women up the chain of command, probably with a less forgiving response if they got it wrong than you are providing.

I joined the Navy at the time of the first intake of a male-dominated category, the boatswains’ mates. When females were first recruited to that branch, they were known as quartermaster gunners. I was lucky enough to serve with the first female warrant officer bosun, the highest rank in that category, in my last posting in the Navy. Her name is Sherylee Folkes, and she was an outstanding professional and caring senior sailor. I wish I had had the opportunity to serve at sea with her.

I rise for the first time as the newly elected member for Darling Range. I wish to acknowledge the traditional owners of the land on which we meet and the land on which the electorate of Darling Range is situated, the Whadjuk and Gnaala Karla Booja peoples of the Noongar nation, and their elders past, present and emerging. I would also like to acknowledge the previous member for Darling Range, the honourable Alyssa Hayden, and thank her for her advocacy for the community. I wish Alyssa and her husband, Terry, all the best in their future endeavours.

I was very honoured and privileged to have been chosen to represent the people of such a diverse and expansive electorate, with immense natural beauty and one that is probably undergoing the most significant investment in infrastructure and housing development it has ever experienced. I am certain, as are many others—it was said after the election results so it must be true—that I was primarily elected as an endorsement of Mark McGowan’s leadership and the outstanding performance of the government over the last four years, and I agree. However, I will work very hard to repay the faith in me and the McGowan government and earn the trust of the people to represent Darling Range in my own right.

Many people will talk about their humble beginnings but I and my two sisters, Sarah and Jackie, were very fortunate to have wanted for nothing when we were growing up in north Wales, except perhaps warm weather! My sisters had horses and I had a motorbike, and we had the love of our parents. Our ancestors are Welsh coal and slate miners, farmhands and domestic servants. However, our parents worked hard to improve their economic outlook through education and training opportunities. My mum, Peggy, was the daughter of an ironmonger and a domestic servant. Her father passed away when she was only 10 years old. Mum went on to complete nursing training at Liverpool Royal Infirmary. It was in Liverpool where she met my father, Trevor, who was studying dentistry at the University of Liverpool. Dad was the son of a taxidriver and a World War I veteran and hotel proprietor. Like mum, dad lost his own father when he was only seven years old, and that was to the lingering effects of mustard gas. Dad had a brother, who died at age four before my dad was born, and a sister, who died at age five. The personal story of loss of life at a young age through war and disease impacting families in the early twentieth century is common. But it is still worth reflecting upon when considering our own situation and the risks posed to our own families should we fail to manage the various strains of coronavirus that threaten us, despite our advances in medical science.

Our family chose to migrate to Western Australia, arriving in Perth on Australia Day 1978. I recall that it was a very hot day. According to the records, it reached a maximum of 35 degrees. At the age of 11, I vividly remember the taxi ride from the airport to the city, along Riverside Drive, and marvelling at the palm trees that are still there today. They reminded me of exotic locations, usually American, and possibly in Florida, that I had seen on TV as a child. We stayed in a motel just down from this place on St Georges Terrace. My father bought our first car from

a car yard just around the corner on Milligan Street. It was a huge HQ Holden with a bench seat in the front. We very soon learnt of the hazards associated with vinyl seats and seatbelt buckles against naked legs in the summer heat! Again, the big car reminded me of America and the promise of prosperity and a better future.

My own schooling was relatively uneventful but I do remember initially being teased about my accent. It no doubt had an effect. My worst embarrassment at school was being forced to participate in a debate to which I contributed only one sentence, such was my fear of public speaking. But I am better now! Our own integration into Western Australia was easy in comparison with others, who perhaps had the wrong skin shade or cultural and religious differences. My friend and now colleague Hon Tony Buti, Minister for Finance, who is unable to be here this evening, recounted in his inaugural address that his father and, indeed, himself had suffered discrimination based upon their Italian heritage. It has since disappeared. I personally like Italians. They make beautiful motorcycles and outstanding finance, transport and police ministers!

It is my observation that the migrations of various groups to Australia, such as Italian, Greek, Vietnamese and Indian, were initially met with resistance, mistrust and associated discrimination, but there seems to be a period of probation, perhaps a generation, until they are accepted and their contribution is recognised. They want the same things as those already here—peace and prosperity and a great place to raise their children. For some reason, the cycle of acceptance has not been applied to the First Nations people of this great country. They have accepted or have had no choice other than to accept all those who came after but in many quarters, they are not themselves accepted. Our First Nations people continue to be locked up at atrocious rates, suffering increased rates of violence, an increased burden of disease and reduced participation in schooling and the workforce. I will do what I can to assist this government to continue its work towards closing the gap. We all have a role to play, calling out racism whenever we see and hear it, and giving people a hand up.

I want to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the First Nations Homelessness Project in which I and my sister Sarah volunteered for a few brief months, and its champions, Jennifer Kaeshagen, her husband, Gerry Georgatos, and their daughter, Connie Georgatos, who do vital work keeping First Nations families housed and supported, recognising that homelessness for children has devastating and irreversible effects.

After I left school, I was employed in a variety of jobs, from work as a laboratory assistant at the Murdoch University vet school and the then State Electricity Commission, where I mapped out and catalogued every part of Kwinana power station down to valve, model and serial number.

I also worked for a time as a motorcycle courier, with employment conditions similar to those now experienced in the gig economy where there are no mandated breaks for meals or respite, no requirement for safety equipment, except for a helmet, and that is only because it is the law, and the implicit encouragement to travel fast, take risks, split lanes and work tired in all weather in order to earn anything near a living wage. I understand that some food delivery drivers are clearing as little as \$10 an hour. I became rather skilful on the bike but I took far too many risks, having at least two falls, but luckily without any serious injury. I applaud and will support the efforts of the Transport Workers' Union of Australia to represent drivers and riders towards achieving a safer and fairer workplace. I will also do what I can to advocate for motorcycle safety, cognisant that there are cultural and behavioural factors that prevent a purely objective solution.

In October 1990, just prior to the commencement of the first Gulf War, I decided that I needed a change in direction in my life and some self-discipline, so I enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy, one of the many fortunate decisions I have made in my life. I signed on the dotted line for four years, which at the time seemed like rather a large commitment, rather like a term in Parliament. However, I remained in the Navy for 30 years and thoroughly enjoyed every minute. The Navy teaches people what anyone would expect—discipline, teamwork and technical skills. The technical skills I initially learnt were to touch-type at 35 words a minute, which has paid off handsomely, but I also spent months learning Morse code at ever-increasing speeds. The utility of that skill has been completely lost, except at the odd quiz night! The real skill I learnt during my time in the Navy, particularly at sea, was how to get along with people. You learn the art of empathy, either in its generally accepted definition or as a consequence of your actions or inaction. If you treat someone poorly, take credit for something that you did not do yourself or blame someone for something that you did, it comes back to bite you quickly. News travels fast on a ship, reputations can be destroyed in a moment, and you cannot always go home at the end of the day.

Another important life lesson that I learnt in the Navy was to look after your troops. There are the obvious requirements of food and shelter, but it is really about identifying their skills and getting the best out of them. It is about recognising people who are doing a great job. They might not be perfect all the time, but take or make the time to highlight the good. The present Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan, AO, was my boss back in 1997. He still was my boss at the end, I suppose—technically. He encouraged me to commission from the ranks and I am eternally indebted to him. Quite frankly, I remain loyal to him to this day.

I see parallels to this as a member of Parliament. It is so very important to recognise the achievements of people in the electorate and wider WA, be they volunteers, involved in business, or state or local government employees. It is very important to encourage them in their endeavours, to resist the urge to bask in their reflected glory and to call them out when things are not always perfect.

I then met my lovely wife, Cam. Where else would a sailor meet a lady to marry but at a pub? In this instance, it was the Moon and Sixpence, which is no longer there. This encounter changed our lives forever and later created two more lives. I was previously a fairly self-centred individual, more interested at being at sea with 100 or so close mates and spending my money on motorcycles, but my outlook changed.

We soon settled down, got married—tomorrow is our twenty-first wedding anniversary—and started our own little family. My beautiful daughter, Grace, came along to instantly erase any idea of being self-centred, and sparked a nurturing attitude that I did not know I had. Grace was, and still is, very bright and compassionate. She is presently completing an honours degree at Curtin University, and continues to make us proud. Grace was also a great help during my campaign, getting me up to speed with social media. Grace's boyfriend, Zac, is an electrical apprentice and a fine young man; Cam and I approve.

Our son, Gryff, was born a little while later. He wasn't progressing as well as Grace had, although she had met the milestones more quickly than average. A friend of ours Phillip Crossley had experience working in group accommodation for people with special needs, in particular those with autism. Although a very difficult subject to raise, Phil did suggest to us that we have Gryff assessed as he thought Gryff was displaying some traits. We were just about to relocate to Canberra, so we waited until we were there to progress what we were hesitant to do. A district nurse told Cam that Gryff was just progressing a little more slowly and that there was nothing to worry about. In any event, we had Gryff assessed and he was on the spectrum. Although we had already talked ourselves into the likelihood of a diagnosis, it was nonetheless traumatic, and I have been in a state of grief ever since.

We returned to WA two years later and were lucky enough to enrol Gryff at Kenwick School for early intervention. This went quite well, but we were told that his IQ was too high for him to remain at Kenwick School, so he had to go to a mainstream school, which meant Kelmscott Primary School, where his sister, Grace, was attending. This did not go very well, as Gryff lacked the ability to comprehend written and verbal instructions and to adequately express himself. After some battling with red tape, we were able to successfully argue for Gryff to return to Kenwick School, which equipped him with the skills that we would expect.

I also fought for Gryff to become eligible for the disability support pension. I recall leaving the post office in tears as I could not provide a photo ID. As a relatively competent person, I felt so helpless at the time. I can relate to the frustration of people with disabilities, and their advocates, when they navigate their way through the bureaucracy.

Gryff has been fortunate to have received great support from the principal of Kenwick School, Mr Mark Watson, and his staff. He was made job-ready and gained employment in a supported workplace. The wages that people receive in these places are very low. Gryff earns just \$3.57 an hour; however, this gives him purpose and a safe place to work, and his income is supplemented by the disability support pension. A consequence of such a low wage is that although he has worked full-time for 16 months, his superannuation balance is just \$226. Gryff will be okay because he has me and Cam to look after him, but other people do not necessarily have families to look after them and are not in a good way.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr H.T. JONES:** My wife, Cam, has, of course, had the same experiences, and more, as she was juggling the care of our children with the pursuit of her own career whilst I was away at sea. Cam was born in Vietnam and entered Australia under a refugee program in the early 1980s after being held in detention in Malaysia. Her family would have endured the same racism and discrimination that was directed towards other boat people back then. However, her family have gone on to become citizens and great contributors to Western Australia. Cam completed her primary school teaching degree with Curtin University, studying full-time at night classes held at the Armadale TAFE whilst looking after two children and working during the day as an education assistant—often when I was away at sea. I do not know how she managed, but she did and did it well.

My arrival in politics was neither anticipated nor a longstanding goal. Anyone who witnessed my debating effort in school would have rightly suggested that I would be the last person in the room to get into politics, but with the encouragement of people like Vice Admiral Noonan, I came out of my shell.

Another such person and good friend to many is Dr Tony Buti, the member for Armadale, who has now been elevated justifiably to the ministry. I would not be standing here today were it not for Tony. Tony is one of those people whom I aspire to be—someone who seeks to elevate others and bring people along without an expectation of anything in return. I first met Tony when he was doorknocking, despite there being no Liberal candidate for the 2010 election for the seat of Armadale. Tony impressed me as a kind and compassionate man, and after quite some time and several interactions he suggested that I join the Labor Party. Throughout his terms in Parliament, the member for Armadale has continued to take an interest in our family and made us feel special. I want to thank Tony in particular for encouraging me, a sometimes shy participant in life, to run for Darling Range.

I have so many other people to thank for my arrival in this place.

Of course, I must first thank my wonderfully supportive wife, Cam, and our children, Grace and Gryff, who gave me permission to run, probably not realising just how much time a campaign consumes and certainly not aware of the commitment that we have all now undertaken. It will be fun—I promise! I can never thank Cam enough for all that she has done for me.

My mother, Peggy, and father, Trevor, similarly encouraged me, as they have done all my life, as did my sisters, Jackie and Sarah, who are both nurses. Sarah has now retired, but Jackie works in a regional hospital emergency department, as she has done for a very long time. I am truly in awe of the work that they have both done, fronting up day after day despite the trauma, pain and suffering that they saw the shift before. All emergency services personnel have earned and deserve our respect. I commend the McGowan government, and you, Madam Speaker, in your former role as police minister, for the introduction of a new compensation scheme for medically retired Western Australian police officers and Aboriginal police liaison officers.

I also thank the member for Riverton, Dr Jags, and his former colleagues Mr Raj Selvendra and Dr Paddy Ramanathan for their support throughout the campaign—three kinder and more generously supportive gentlemen you will not find.

I am very thankful for the support provided by the union movement, including the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association of WA and the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union. Unions are filled with highly principled, tireless and compassionate people who work to ensure that workers' rights are maintained and enhanced. They ensure that workers receive a fair day's pay for a fair day's work and that employers provide a workplace that is safe so that workers arrive back home healthy at the end of a shift or a swing. You only have to stroll across to Solidarity Park and view the memorials for the many people, most of whom had their whole lives ahead of them, to see the consequences of workplaces without adequate safety standards and supervision. They are terrible and avoidable losses of life. I especially want to thank Mr Mick Buchan and Mr Steve Catania of the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union WA, who provided me with material support throughout the campaign, and Mr Simon Stokes whose cheery disposition and skills in acting and video production made the long days at pre-poll centres and doorknocking enjoyable, and the video recordings less daunting. Thank you very much to the CFMEU and its members. I would also like to mention Peter O'Keeffe and Ben Harris of the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association of WA who provided me with great support. They, too, give their all for their membership.

I enjoyed great support from Young Labor members, who endured long, hot days of doorknocking and phone banking without reward other than a cup of coffee or a piece of pizza. At the risk of missing some people, I would especially like to thank Adam, James, Kiara, Luke, Connor, Harrison, Christopher, Will, Hayley, Dan, John, Fatima and Denise, who were willing to give up their time for the cause. To the many people, union and party members, and those who are not, who supported me throughout the pre-poll period and on polling day, you have my sincere thanks for giving up your precious spare time. To the team at party headquarters—Tim, Ellie, Hugo and the countless others who provided support, and on the odd occasion strong encouragement to lift my game—I thank you. You ran a great campaign.

My own campaign team was also magnificent. It was directed at different times by Hon Matthew Swinbourn, member for East Metro, Hon Dr Tony Buti and Mr Steve Catania, who not only gave up their valuable time, but also, in doing so, impinged on the time they could enjoy with their own families. Thank you, gentlemen, and thank you to your families. My campaign manager, Jess Cunnold, although a very young man, showed great skill in putting the campaign together. He was pulled from pillar to post by competing priorities from the "good ideas club", but he kept me motivated and on task. Thank you, Jess. I also want to acknowledge Tina, Judith, Jill, Veronica, Bodhi, Joel and Rod, who were all integral to the campaign. A special mention to Mitchell Goff, my wingman, who kept me motivated and working hard for the home stretch. Thank you all. My field organisers were simply amazing. Despite Emily and Tom Meagher being the parents of a very young child, Dorothy, and juggling study and employment, they were always out there, often at the same time, driving me and the other volunteers to knock on just one more door or to make one more phone call. Their commitment and that of the other Young Labor volunteers gives me confidence that this generation is no different from those of yesteryear; they will work hard for what they believe in. I often received feedback about the conduct of my field and booth teams, and it was always positive. My volunteers all conducted themselves with maturity, respect and dignity. Thank you for being the public face of Hugh Jones and WA Labor in Darling Range. You did yourselves proud.

To the many members of Parliament who supported me—I will not go through them all, but you know who you are—I thank you. I am in your debt. And, of course, there is the Premier, the leader, who along with his cabinet and the Labor members of the fortieth Parliament demonstrated to the electorate that WA Labor had earned re-election and is to be trusted to take this great state forward. I first met the Premier in 1992, while we were both in the Navy. We were selected to go to Newcastle to play squash—it's a tough job! I met the Premier again when he doorknocked my house in Safety Bay before the 2001 election. For the record, the Premier was a slightly better squash player than I was! Thank you, Premier, for endorsing my preselection and allowing me to assist you in governing this great state of Western Australia.

As I mentioned, the Darling Range electorate is expansive, at almost 1 400 square kilometres, and includes urban, peri-urban and rural populations, with the Serpentine–Jarrahdale local government area rated as the fastest growing in WA and perhaps the third fastest in Australia. The housing boom, assisted by building stimulus measures, is resulting in rapid population growth, in the main by young families seeking affordable housing and needing quality education, health facilities and transport corridors. To support families in gaining access to this boom, I am pleased the McGowan government has a new WA Jobs Plan based on reducing interstate FIFO, more training through

TAFE in schools, and diversifying the state's economy. The freezing of TAFE fees, local infrastructure investments, improved public transport and capping fares to two zones will assist the residents of Darling Range achieve their education and employment goals.

The Shire of Serpentine–Jarrahdale is finding it difficult to keep pace with development, especially notable is the ageing rural road network. I am pleased that the state government will contribute \$18 million to assist in the upgrade of local roads to improve safety. The shire's strong advocacy during the fortieth Parliament has realised significant commitments from the McGowan government, and I will help to foster a strong working relationship in the forty-first Parliament. The McGowan government has made significant investment commitments for transport infrastructure, including the Byford rail extension, as well as contributions to, and the delivery of, the Tonkin Highway extension and improvements to Thomas Road. I want to again recognise the Minister for Transport, Hon Rita Saffioti, who is overseeing an enormous program of infrastructure investment. The minister is skilfully bringing together industry and federal, state and local governments. She has shown great vision, especially for Darling Range, to meet our needs now and into the future. Thank you.

I am also pleased that the McGowan government will deliver a \$30.6 million health hub in the heart of Byford, a new career fire station and will invest in schools throughout Darling Range. It is an exciting time to be the member for Darling Range and it will have its challenges. I undertake to work in cooperation with federal, state and local governments to ensure that there is wideranging consultation throughout the planning stages of these developments and to achieve the best results that I can for the people of Darling Range. I again thank the people of Darling Range for placing their trust in me and, assisted by my new staff members, Bella Fitzpatrick and Glenda Bourne, I will do my very best to give them the representation that they all deserve.

The legendary Australian combat cameraman Neil Davis used to write the following two lines from a poem by Thomas Mordaunt on the flyleaf of every work diary he kept while in the conflict zones of South-East Asia —

One crowded hour of glorious life  
Is worth an age without a name.

Members, let us be glorious and take this great state forward. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**MRS R.M.J. CLARKE (Murray–Wellington)** [5.57 pm]: Firstly, I would like to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. I would also like to congratulate Hon Michelle Roberts, member for Midland, on her appointment as our first female Speaker. Interestingly, Madam Speaker was the thirtieth woman elected to our Parliament on 19 March 1994. She has held ministerial positions, been a mentor to new member of Parliaments, such as me when I was elected in 2017, and has a wealth of knowledge on the workings of our Parliament.

Looking back on the history of women in our Parliament, I found some very interesting facts that I would like to share with members. We are all aware that 2021 marks 100 years since the first woman was elected to this place. Edith Cowan was elected on 12 March 1921, representing the seat of West Perth as a Nationalist. Sadly, she was subjected to heckling and ridicule, but she led the way for what we have now achieved, with 106 women elected to Parliament as at the 2021 election. Our first Labor woman elected to Parliament was May Holman. She was elected through a by-election on 3 April 1925 in the Forrest Division. She has a special place in my electorate of Murray–Wellington, as she was from Dwellingup. Tragically, she died in a car accident on 20 March 1939, after she had been re-elected for her fifth term. May Holman was also the first woman in the entire British empire to hold her seat for more than 10 years. It then took 69 years for our first female Premier to be elected, with Dr Carmen Lawrence becoming the first female Premier to be elected in not just WA, but also Australia. So many great women from all parties have led the way to what we now have—the largest number of female members of Parliament in our Parliament. I am proud that I was the first woman to be elected to the seat of Murray–Wellington on 11 March 2017, and that I am now, officially, the longest-serving WA Labor member in the seat after being re-elected for my second term on 13 March 2021.

Let us get back to Edith Cowan and the fact that it has been 100 years since she was the first woman to be elected here. We needed seven more women to be elected in 2021 to hit the magic number of 100 women elected to this place, and we not only did that at the recent state election, but also exceeded it to now have 106 women elected to the WA Parliament since 1890. I was the eighty-fifth female to be elected to this place. I was curious to see who made up the seven, in order of being elected, to get to 100. The ninety-fourth elected member was Rebecca Stephens, member for Albany; the ninety-fifth was Kim Giddens, member for Bateman; the ninety-sixth was Christine Tonkin, member for Churchlands; the ninety-seventh was Jodie Hanns, member for Collie–Preston; the ninety-eighth was the Acting Speaker, Lisa Munday, member for Dawesville; and the ninety-ninth was Lara Dalton, member for Geraldton. Congratulations to Caitlin Collins, the member for Hillarys, on being the 100<sup>th</sup> woman to be elected to our Parliament! We do not finish there: the 101<sup>st</sup> woman elected was Ali Kent, member for Kalgoorlie; the 102<sup>nd</sup> was Divina D'Anna, member for Kimberley; the 103<sup>rd</sup> was Meredith Hammat, member for Mirrabooka; the 104<sup>th</sup> was Dr Katrina Stratton, member for Nedlands; the 105<sup>th</sup> was Hannah Beazley, member for Victoria Park; and the 106<sup>th</sup> was Jane Kelsbie, member for Warren–Blackwood. These are seats that I never thought I would talk about

in this place! What a fantastic time to be a woman in Parliament, with so many other women side by side and showing that times are changing. What traditionally has been a male dominated place has now forged to a near balance between men and women.

I would now like to share some of the achievements that have occurred over the last term of government in my seat of Murray–Wellington, which I am so proud to represent and to be a strong voice for our community in the McGowan government. We are delivering on our jobs plan, with \$18 million provided for the Bushfire Centre of Excellence that has been built and opened in the Shire of Murray at Nambeelup. We have invested \$852 million in the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, which was fast-tracked due to COVID-19, creating approximately 4 500 jobs. We delivered the \$116 million Regional Land Booster package, which includes discounted land at the Pinjarra industrial estate; \$8.7 million for improvement and safety works on Pinjarra–Williams Road; and \$4.95 million to help implement the Dwellingup adventure trails project. I found out today that Dwellingup won the tourism award for small tourist town at last night's awards. Congratulations to the Shire of Murray and everyone concerned. Local Peel-based company Wormall Civil was awarded contracts worth \$7.3 million for Transform Peel works at the Peel Business Park at Nambeelup. The McGowan government has supported amendments to the Peel region scheme to rezone 378 hectares of land within the Shire of Murray from rural to industrial use, providing for future production, business and employment opportunities. A second scheme amendment to rezone a further 201 hectares of land has also been approved, which will expand the existing Peel Business Park in Nambeelup to a total of 870 hectares. We opened the McLarty state explosives facility in Myalup. This site has 36 explosives storage and manufacturing sites. We also put \$1.28 million towards upgrades to the North Dandalup and Cookernup train stations; \$7 million to upgrade level crossings on the south west line in Cookernup, Coolup, Waroona and North Dandalup; \$15 million through the regional road safety program to upgrade 240 kilometres of south west roads with shoulder sealing and the installation of audible lines, creating around 60 jobs; \$10 million to establish rail access to Kemerton industrial park; and a \$10.5 million investment in the Kemerton and Shotts industrial parks to create more opportunities for businesses.

We are investing in our schools and rebuilding our TAFE sector. In my inaugural speech in 2017, I promised to work on delivering a performing arts centre and sports hall at Pinjarra Senior High School, and I am proud to say that a \$10.4 million project is currently being designed. Construction will commence later this year, with anticipated completion in 2022. We have invested \$15 million in Australind Senior High School for a new classroom block to enable the school to manage growth in student enrolment. This will include specialist classrooms. Funding of \$2.5 million will go to Kingston Primary School for a new student classroom block that will enhance facilities and replace transportable classrooms; \$1.2 million to Harvey Senior High School for upgrades to the cafeteria and specialist classrooms; \$9.17 million to South Metropolitan TAFE, Mandurah campus, for a new hospitality and tourism training centre to deliver training for a range of courses, including commercial cookery, tourism and events management; \$25 million for free TAFE short courses to upskill thousands of Western Australians, with a variety of free courses available at South Metropolitan TAFE's Mandurah campus; \$32 million to expand the Lower Fees, Local Skills program and significantly reduce TAFE fees across 39 high-priority courses; and \$4.8 million for the apprenticeship and traineeship re-engagement incentive, which provides employers with a one-off payment of \$6 000 for hiring an apprentice and \$3 000 for hiring a trainee whose training contract was terminated on or after 1 March 2020 due to the economic downturn.

We have done a major maintenance blitz across schools in Murray–Wellington worth approximately \$2.1 million in builds, including \$32 123 to Brunswick Junction Primary School; \$26 000 to Carcoola Primary School; \$74 293 to Dwellingup Primary School; \$192 242 to Harvey Primary School; \$309 630 to Harvey Senior High School; \$63 019 to Kingston Primary School; \$31 904 to North Dandalup Primary School; \$183 854 to Parkfield Primary School; \$72 544 to Pinjarra Primary School; \$478 923 to Pinjarra Senior High School; \$31 200 to Treendale Primary School; \$288 225 to Waroona District High School; \$249 382 to WA College of Agriculture in Harvey; and \$36 114 to Yarloop Primary School. I recently met with all the principals at all these schools. They cannot thank the McGowan government enough for what we have achieved over this time with the maintenance blitz that was desperately needed.

We are also supporting the local community, with \$275 000 going to the Preston Beach Community Centre, which we opened in 2019; \$10.5 million to establish and manage Preston River to Ocean Regional Park, and Leschenault Regional Park; and \$75 000 to help construct dedicated female facilities at the Harvey Brunswick Leschenault Football Club. I will be working in the next four years to ensure that all my clubs in the electorate get female facilities. We provided \$800 000 of additional funding for the Yarloop bushfire clean-up; \$1.75 million towards the new Yarloop Community Resource Centre that we opened in 2019; \$2 million to the Beddingfeld Park aged-care accommodation for a dedicated dementia unit in Pinjarra; \$1.5 million to Brunswick River Cottages over 55s low-income housing; and \$1.8 million for Waroona housing options for aged-care accommodation.

We have achieved and delivered so much more in the electorate of Murray–Wellington during my first term of Parliament. This is just a small snapshot of what a government that is competent, caring and a sensible economic manager can do in just four years. One accomplishment was the reinstating of the postcode of 6219 to Cookernup, after Premier Mark McGowan intervened and helped this historic moment happen. This is the very first postcode in Australia to be reinstated. Cookernup also wanted recognition with a town sign erected on South Western Highway, and after many years of asking, this was also achieved with the help of Minister Rita Saffioti. This great community

has a weekly “Watch Out Wednesday” community morning tea run by Jac Taylor and the Cookernup Community Association. This is always a great event for people to keep connected with the community, and I look forward to many more WOWs in Cookernup. Meeting and getting involved in the community is the strength of a region. For example, I am involved with the Lions Club of Australind, the Lions Club of Pinjarra, the Lions Club of Waroona, the Rotary Club of Harvey, the Waroona Action Group, Pinjarra Connect, the Yarloop Country Women’s Association, and the community gardens that are popping up in Binningup and Preston Beach as well as the well-established gardens in Myalup and Pinjarra.

Then there are the great Men’s Sheds in Leschenault, Brunswick, Pinjarra and Waroona, which provide great social and mental wellbeing places for not only the men but also the women who are involved. As a regional member, it is important to connect with community and to get to know each town and its community’s needs. That is what I have worked hard to achieve over the past four years. I will continue to listen and advocate on issues for each and every community to ensure that they have a voice in this place. I look forward to delivering on the many election commitments throughout the electorate in the Shires of Murray, Waroona and Harvey and being that strong voice for all my constituents.

I want to thank some very special people who have assisted me to be back here in this place. Firstly, my great staff in my electorate office, Jayde Rowlands, Lindsay Stacpoole and Sarah Robertson. I refer to them as “Team Awesome” for being my voice in the office when I am out in either the electorate or Parliament. It is a privilege and an honour to be part of the “Peel Dream Team” with the guidance, friendship and mentoring of Hon David Templeman, member for Mandurah. Also on the team is the phenomenal Lisa Munday, the newly elected member for Dawesville. I cannot forget my south west comrades, newly elected Jodie Hanns, member for Collie–Preston, and Hon Don Punch, member for Bunbury. I am very fortunate to be surrounded by some awesome members of Parliament.

I also acknowledge and congratulate David Scaife, the newly elected member for Cockburn. I thank him for being my campaign manager back in 2017. He ran for the seat of Murray–Wellington back in 2013. It is great to see you in this place, where you belong. You have been a staunch WA Labor activist for most of your young life and I know your father, Roy, is looking down on you with such pride and sending you guidance. Your mum, Cathie, is your biggest fan and I know how proud she must be.

To all our amazing volunteers who spent hours doorknocking, calling, letterboxing and, finally, enjoying the fruits of their labour on election night by being rewarded with my re-election, I could not have done this without you. I would like to personally thank the staff and members of the Australian Manufacturing Workers’ Union, the Australian Services Union, the Finance Sector Union and the Electrical Trades Union for believing in me and supporting me. I give a special thanks to Steve McCartney, Alex Cassie, Wayne Wood and Jill Hugo for your leadership. Your knowledge and passion for workers’ rights and safety are immeasurable. Thank you for all your assistance you gave during my campaign.

New members, please do not let this place and your electorate consume you. Remember that the most important people in your life are your family. I know I have missed events such as birthdays and family get-togethers because I also treat my electorate like an extended family and feel that they need me just as much as my actual family. Can I please say to our wonderful children that they have grown into amazing adults and are quite different in their own special way. I say a huge thankyou for understanding when we say, “Sorry, we cannot make it” and for standing with me during both elections. To Steve, Christina, Cassandra, Luke, Ashley, Jess and Dave, you make us proud knowing what capable and wonderful kind people you are. To our gorgeous grandkids, Sophia, Josie, William, Isla, Lucus and Alex, what can we say as we watch you all grow into confident young adults? I cannot believe three of you are now in high school. To the extended family of Jason, Glenys, Georgia, Grace, Blossom, Joel, Zack, Alison, Dimi and Samuel, thank you for believing in me and being there when I needed help during both election campaigns.

I would especially like to mention Steve, my firstborn. He is my political encyclopaedia and my greatest critic. He tells me how it is even if I do not really want to hear it. I recently attended a function where he works and the majority of the attendees were not aware I was his mother; all I heard throughout the evening was how amazing he is at his job and how he is the life of the office. It is those moments when I have those proud mamma moments. In saying that, I am not taking credit for his abilities, as he has made his path and life with determination and passion for what he is doing. Thanks, Steve, you are everything and more to me.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE:** Last but not least is the one person who has been my rock, my confidant, my campaign field organiser, chauffeur, bag holder, photographer, security, companion and my best friend, my husband, Charlie Clarke. I want to say a huge thankyou for sacrificing so much to support me to represent the great community of Murray–Wellington. As people say when they meet us, they get two for the price of one. We both have the same vision, passion and compassion for our community. I look forward in the very near future to you hanging up your overalls for good at Alcoa after 32 years of service there and prior to that, 12 years at the Midland railway workshops. You have also held the position of the AMWU convenor for the past 20 years, ensuring work conditions and the safety of workers were always first and foremost. Thank you, Charlie, you are my world, my life, my love.

I want to thank WA Labor, in particular Tim Picton and Ellie Whiteaker, and the entire team for believing in me.

Thank you to the remarkable Premier Mark McGowan, his ministers and staff. He is being a strong, capable caring leader of a great government. Given what we have been through and continue to deal with during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is keeping WA safe and strong.

But last, I say thank you to the constituents of Murray–Wellington. We are in this together.

[Applause.]

**MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Parliamentary Secretary)** [6.16 pm]: Before I begin, Madam Acting Speaker (Mrs L.A. Munday), I remember the other day when you bravely put your hand up to take on the position of Acting Speaker. I said I would tell you a story about my first experience of being an Acting Speaker and I thought I might quickly share it now to calm my nerves and, hopefully, to calm yours as well, because I know exactly how you are feeling up there!

I was watching you as you came to the chair this evening. The very first time I got to be Acting Speaker was when a general debate was on. I cannot remember what legislation we were debating at the time. It was in the evening. A member of the opposition was on their feet. As is usual, a member of the opposition gets up and speaks for about 30 minutes. As you are in that chair, all you are worried about is what is going to come out of your mouth and who is going to pop up next and whether you will be able to say “the member for so-and-so”. As you will experience, we have wonderful Clerks who are fantastically supportive. On the occasion that I was in the chair, I think the member for Carine—who was a Liberal back then but of course is now a Labor member—was on his feet and reaching the conclusion of his 30 minutes, I was getting nervous about who was going to pop up next, and the Clerk turned around and gently said, “I think it’s going to be the member for Hillarys”, and I felt really great. Sure enough, the member for Carine sat down and the member for Hillarys got up and I knew to say “The member for Hillarys.” Then I relaxed into it again because the member for Hillarys was to be on his feet for 30 minutes, but towards the end of it, I started getting nervous again thinking, “Oh my gosh, who am I going to have to call next?”

On cue, the Clerk turned around and said, “I think it’s going to be the member for Kalgoorlie.” I thought: rightio, great, fantastic. As the member for Hillarys sat down, two members of the Liberal Party stood up at the same time, which was unusual, but not unexpected given what we saw during the four years of the previous government; they did not quite always have their ducks in a row or communicate with each other. So I had the member for Kalgoorlie, I think it was, and the member for Cottesloe stand at the same time. At that point, of course, as the Acting Speaker I had to make a decision, and because I had firmly planted in my mind from the Clerk that member for Kalgoorlie was going to stand up, even though the member for Cottesloe stood up slightly earlier, I gave the call to the member for Kalgoorlie.

The member for Cottesloe sat down, looking grumpy, huffing, and looking at me. You will experience that, Madam Acting Speaker—it is your call. What was interesting about it was that the member for Cottesloe was, of course, as many of you would know, Hon Colin Barnett, the previous Premier. The significance of it was that was the very first time after the election loss in 2017 that he had actually got to his feet, so the media and everybody else was very interested to hear what he had to say for himself, but I had actually sat him down. He was very grumpy and left the chamber, and I thought, “Oh my gosh; what have I done?”, and I finished my hour in the chair and went out, legs shaking. A variety of colleagues came up to me, “Well done, Sabine; keep him down as long as possible”, and I said, “Yes, no problems at all.” I got a bit of a reputation as the Acting Speaker then, so I look forward to your contributions in this place, and good on you for putting your hand up to give it a go. There is nothing like being an Acting Speaker in this place for new members in particular to learn the ropes, although I have to say the experience for all Acting Speakers this time around will be a little bit more subdued given that the opposition comprises only six members.

I would like to also begin, as many others did, by congratulating the Speaker, Hon Michelle Roberts, on her election to this post. As we know, she is the thirty-first Speaker and the very first woman to hold this most important role in our state Parliament. She has the longest continuous service in this place. In fact, I took a bit of time to research her to find out a little more about her. As many of you know, she started her parliamentary career back in 1994 as the member for Glendalough and then moved to serve as the member for Midland from 1996 until the present time. She has held numerous ministerial roles and numerous shadow ministerial roles, as well as having served on numerous parliamentary committees. Rightfully so, the current Minister for Police acknowledged her service as “our finest Minister for Police to date”, and he certainly did acknowledge that he has big shoes to fill in that regard.

But what I also discovered in researching Hon Michelle Roberts was that she was a teacher before entering Parliament, like so many other members. She also has three daughters, like I do. In reflecting on that, as a mother of three older daughters, and the challenges that I faced with being a member of Parliament in the last four years, I find her career of over 27 years extraordinary. She inspires those women in this place for whom motherhood may be in the future, and those MPs now who are mothers of young children. Women can, and should, aspire to fulfilling careers whilst being mothers, and women can, and should, aspire to public life while being mothers. It is without question that she should be the Speaker of this chamber, the Legislative Assembly. She is the most qualified and the most experienced member of Parliament in this chamber, and she happens to be a woman.

I would like to make a couple of comments to acknowledge the contribution and the speech made by His Excellency Hon Kim Beazley to mark the opening of the forty-first Parliament last Thursday. I acknowledge His Excellency for his enormous contribution to public life in Australia over many decades and his contribution and service as the

Governor of Western Australia. His speech very much resonated with me. I want to take up the opportunity, if I get the time, to respond to a number of things that he raised. I would also like to acknowledge the member for Victoria Park. It has been inspiring to listen to all new members' inaugural speeches, and particularly last night's special moment when His Excellency was here in the public gallery as a dad.

Many of us who have made a contribution to the Address-in-Reply have talked about women in Parliament, and rightly we should. We have more women in Parliament now than ever before. In fact, 43 women will take their place in this Parliament, both Labor and Liberal, and crossbenchers. In the previous Parliament, I served with 14 Labor women in the Legislative Assembly, and we had seven Labor members of Parliament in the Legislative Council. We had a total of 22. That was a pretty significant change at the time. But we have been shown up since then in the forty-first Parliament. The fortieth Parliament saw the very first female Leader of the House in the Legislative Council, we saw the very first female President of the Legislative Council and we saw the very first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. This forty-first Parliament sees us go so much further—as I said, a record 43 women have been elected to this Parliament. That is 43 out of a total of 90. We are nearly there. Of course, 39 of those women are part of the McGowan Labor government—39 women. That is pretty significant. Prior to this Parliament, as the Speaker remarked on the opening day, there had only ever been 93 women elected to this Parliament, starting, of course, with the election of Edith Cowan as the very first female member of Parliament in 1921.

I liked Hon Michelle Roberts' comments in trying to provide context to the significance of how far we have come in this forty-first Parliament, when she mentioned that she was only the thirtieth woman in 1994—that is not so long ago—and Hon Alannah MacTiernan was only the twenty-sixth woman. With the 13 new women who have been sworn into the Assembly, as has been mentioned by others, that number will rise to 106, and when our new members in the Legislative Council are sworn in, that number will rise to 114.

I want to take a couple of minutes to acknowledge all those members who have retired or were not returned. We must thank them for their service. Politics is a brutal and thankless profession. But of course with their exit comes a Labor majority of 53 in this chamber. I say that again: with their exit comes a Labor majority of 53 in this chamber. There are so many Labor people in front of me, there are so many Labor people behind me, there are so many Labor people to the left of me, and there are so many Labor people to the right of me. In talking to some of my friends and supporters who want to know how Parliament is going, I have told them, "You really need to come and see the physicality to actually appreciate the size of our majority in this chamber, but also to come and meet some of the wonderful new additions to the chamber that we have achieved at the 2021 election."

It is going to be a different chamber. It is going to be a different experience when we get to our feet. For the Acting Speakers, it is going to be gentle. I have to say that the inaugural speeches—I would say all members would agree with me—have been nothing short of stunning. It has been quite frustrating, I think for all of us, to have our masks on and not be able to fully express how in awe we are of the inaugural speeches that have been made and the contributions that have been made in this place. One of my favourite speeches to date, on a personal level, was the one made by the member for Darling Range. I am sure that those members who were with me in the fortieth Parliament will agree. We are going to have a sort of quiet cheer every time the member for Darling Range gets to his feet from now on. The member for Darling Range will bring humility, authenticity and soul from Darling Range to this place, and we will all be the better for it.

The Labor Party is strong, and we have been preselecting candidates who are connected, authentic and have a strong work ethic.

I will take a moment to thank the most important people, the voters of Wanneroo. They are the reason that I am here for a second term in Parliament. I am honoured and humbled to continue to be the member for Wanneroo. Two former members for Wanneroo, Dianne Guise and Jackie Watkins-McKiernan, are dear friends and great mentors. They have repeatedly said to me over the last few years, "Sabine, the second time feels better." For those members who have just been elected for the first time, it will feel better if they get the privilege and opportunity to serve for a second time. The second time is better because it is a validation of the four years' work that you have done. This might be hard to explain to the new members, but the second time around you put yourself forward to your community and ask them to judge you on your performance. There is no greater feeling than feeling that the voters in your electorate endorse you for a second time. I am honoured and I thank the voters of Wanneroo. I assure them that I will be the same member for Wanneroo in my second term that I was in the first four years. I cannot wait to keep working with all the residents in Wanneroo and continue to take up not only their individual issues, but issues that are important to my community as a whole. I am also honoured to have been appointed as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. I very much look forward to supporting our Premier, cabinet and enormous caucus as we make sure that we deliver the agenda that we took to the people of Western Australia in March this year.

People often ask me what it is like to be a member of Parliament and what is the most important thing I do. I hope new members will feel the same way about this as they start their lives as members of Parliament, set up their electorate offices, work for their communities and become more entrenched in their communities. The most important and rewarding work that I do is advocacy and supporting residents. It is not always about building a new playground for a school. It is not always about delivering on infrastructure. It is very often and most importantly looking after

Mrs Jones when she comes into the electorate office because she has a problem that she needs assistance with. That is the most important work that we do. If all of us continue to focus on that as the reason that we are here, as well as being in Parliament to debate and pass important legislation, it will serve us well in the next four years.

I particularly want to mention Jahanna Frederickson and Justin Pereira, who are extraordinary humans. Their support of me and my work, and their work for the residents of Wanneroo, is simply extraordinary, and it is the heart of my success at the last election. I also acknowledge Roman Booth, Haeden Miles and Ryan Harte, who joined me at various times in my electorate office over the last four years. I wish them well in their new endeavours. It is nice to see that Ryan Harte is the Whip's assistant. I can still see him and enjoy his progress throughout his career.

Elections allow us to get a real sense and honest feedback of our performance over the previous four years. Without doubt, it is always in the detail; it is in the one percenters that we do. Without question, the electorate, the people of Western Australia, supported the McGowan government for its management of COVID and keeping us safe and strong. There is no question in my mind or anyone's mind that that played a huge part in Labor's success. But it was much, much more than that. I particularly enjoyed the period during the pre-poll and the last bit of the election when I received great feedback from individuals about specific things that I or my electorate staff had done for them or their families. There is no better feeling than to get that type of feedback about the work that you have done over four years.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** We were successful at the state election. We managed a 69.7 per cent two-party preferred vote. We had a statewide swing of 14.1 per cent, which is on top of the 12.8 per cent swing in 2017. Of course, the swing that we achieved in Wanneroo was slightly higher, and that is in no small part due to my electorate office and the volunteers and supporters who helped me over the last four years. As I said before, there was a COVID story and recognition that the Mark McGowan Labor government had kept Western Australia safe and strong, but we did a lot of work in those four years. It is sometimes very hard to sell that message and get people to acknowledge it. I want to spend a few minutes in my reply to put on the record some of the things that the state government achieved. Members who were at the Labor launch when ACDC's *Thunderstruck* was played would know this. The moment the PowerPoint came on gave me goosebumps as we reminded ourselves of the things that we had achieved as a government.

I will be indulgent and call out some of those things because I would like them on the record forever. We tore up the skilled migration list. We created more than 76 000 jobs and passed the Western Australian Jobs Act. We brought railcar manufacturing back to WA. We built the Matagarup Bridge here with local manufacturers. We stopped Roe 8. We delivered the \$600 household electricity credit. We froze WA household fees and charges in response to COVID-19. We finally got a fair share of the GST for WA. We delivered a \$5.5 billion recovery plan to help WA recover from COVID-19. We got the economy back on track. We invested a record \$28.8 billion in infrastructure, creating thousands of local jobs. We put hundreds of education assistants back into classrooms. We converted 200 primary school classrooms into science labs. We invested an extra \$200 million across every Western Australian public school. We froze and slashed TAFE fees. We fixed the issues with Perth Children's Hospital and opened it. We had the historic voluntary assisted dying legislation passed. We established the GP urgent care clinic network. We made a record investment in mental health services. We recruited an extra 1 100 police officers. We cracked down on dangerous methamphetamine use and trafficking. We enacted life sentences for meth traffickers. We expunged historical LGBTIQ offences. We established the first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. We removed the statute of limitations for historical child sex abuse. We delivered WA's first-ever 10-year homelessness strategy. We introduced Metronet. We built roads and busted congestion throughout Perth. We achieved a record number of major road projects around regional WA. We banned single-use plastics. We brought in the container deposit scheme. We created five million hectares of new national and marine parks. We invested in and expanded the Aboriginal ranger program. We passed industrial manslaughter laws. We doubled compensation payments for the families of people killed on Western Australian worksites. We brought jobs back into public hands at the Water Corporation, Wandoo Rehabilitation Prison, Melaleuca Women's Prison, Fiona Stanley Hospital and Perth Health Campus. We are the only party in government that can guarantee the future of royalties for regions. We stopped the privatisation of Western Power. I am sorry that more members of the opposition are not here tonight because they really need to hear about our achievements between 2017 and 2021. Yes, the McGowan Labor government has done and will continue to do an extraordinary job in keeping Western Australia safe and delivering a strong economy, but we have a much bigger story to tell, and that is why we had the historic success that we had at the election in March.

We have a fantastic agenda with a magnificent majority. I look forward to the next four years and I hope that the opposition starts thinking about why it is in opposition, otherwise next time around we might welcome even more members on the Labor side.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Ms E.L. Hamilton**.

*House adjourned at 6.39 pm*

