

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bateman.

[Applause.]

MS K.E. GIDDENS (Bateman) [2.51 pm]: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

It is with deep pride that I rise today to speak in this chamber for the first time as the member for Bateman. I acknowledge the traditional owners on whose land we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and pay my respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

Soon after I was elected, I met with Noongar elder Auntie Kerry-Ann Winmar. It was important to me to acknowledge and to learn more about the Aboriginal heritage of my electorate. Kerry-Ann shared with me stories about how her ancestors moved across the area we know as the electorate of Bateman. My electorate office in the heart of Applecross Village sits in the area known by the Whadjuk people as Margamangup. Nearby is Goolugatup, or Heathcote, and Kooyagoordup, or Waylen Bay. The swampy reeds along the Alfred Cove–Applecross foreshore was where women hunted in the mud for frogs, turtles and birds and sophisticated traps were used by men to catch fish. I thank Kerry-Ann for sharing these stories with me and for giving me permission to talk about them here today. They are not only interesting facts of reference; behind each place and language, each story, is a connection of more than 60 000 years of rich culture and custodianship of this land and our environment. That Aboriginal people extend to all Australians an invitation to share in this history and culture is a rich gift that strengthens us all.

I congratulate Madam Speaker on her achievement in being this Parliament's first-ever woman Speaker. I, too, stand here today as not only the first-ever Labor member for Bateman, but also the first woman representative of this seat—both achievements of which I am especially proud.

[Applause.]

Ms K.E. GIDDENS: It is fitting that we acknowledge these milestones and achievements. It is much easier to walk the path well trodden. Firsts send a signal of hope and encouragement to girls and women everywhere, like my nieces Scarlett and Avalon, who are here in the public gallery today. You can do it.

[Interruption from the gallery.]

The SPEAKER: If I could interrupt for a moment. We do appreciate the support of the people in the gallery, but generally they do not participate, so if I can just ask people to hear the speech in silence.

Ms K.E. GIDDENS: Thank you to my colleagues who have delivered their inaugural speeches over this past week. Although you have made it very hard for me to follow, it has been an honour to share your stories and I look forward to working with you.

Bounded by the Derbarl Yerrigan, Kwinana Freeway, North Lake Road and South Street, the electorate of Bateman takes in full or in part the suburbs of Applecross, Alfred Cove, Ardross, Bateman, Booragoon, Brentwood, Kardinya, Mt Pleasant, Myaree, Murdoch and Winthrop. It is a diverse electorate with large Chinese, Malaysian and Indian communities. Statistically, people in Bateman are twice as likely than the state average to hold a bachelor's degree and work as a professional or manager, and they enjoy a quality of life defined by established suburbs and the beauty of the river. Of course, we cannot define a community by its demographics. Like anywhere else, the lifeblood of Bateman is its people. It is an active place where people take pride in their neighbourhoods and care for their neighbours, where traditional notions of community are held dear and where the environment, particularly the green open space, the mature trees and the river are loved and fiercely guarded.

I acknowledge Dean Nalder, the former member for Bateman, for his service to our community over eight years, and wish him and his family all the best.

My arrival in this place feels, on the one hand, like a natural extension of my life's interest and passion for social justice and advocacy and, on the other, entirely unexpected. When people ask me what my background is, I am never entirely sure how to answer. I have lived and worked across Australia, as well as in England, France and Cambodia. I have held jobs in retail, administration, mining, security, government, hospitality, youth work, children's rights and education. Born in Nhulunbuy on the tip of east Arnhem Land, my first eight years were spent wrestling crocodiles and playing in cyclones—and that is not too much of an exaggeration. It was the kind of idyllic and wild childhood one hears about as a relic from times past. Free from helicopter parents, I remember long days riding our bikes to friends' houses or camping, fishing and swimming in waterholes—and not necessarily croc-free ones either.

When I was eight, my family moved from the Northern Territory to the rural midlands of Tasmania, which was a shock in both climate and culture. Shortly after, my mother decided to study to become a teacher, a role she still

holds today. As a single mum with four kids, it was tough going at times. That I am so tall may well be the result of a pantry heavily skewed towards Weet-Bix and pasta! Jokes aside, it was through perseverance and sheer determination that she forged a path that would provide the kind of opportunities for herself and her children that would not have otherwise been possible. My mum is also in the public gallery today and I acknowledge her and thank her for all she has done.

In my final years of school, two pivotal events occurred. The first, on 28 April 1996, was the Port Arthur massacre in which 35 people were horrifically murdered. In that moment our collective sense of safety and innocence was completely shattered. But from the horror and shared grief came the political and community leadership to overhaul Australia's gun laws, resulting in the states and territories signing up to national reform. Just a year later, violence struck again with the murder of my classmate and her three sisters in a murder-suicide at the hands of their father. Unlike the shared will that followed the Port Arthur massacre, which has seen gun-related deaths in Australia fall by two-thirds since, violence against women and children remains stubbornly high. I would like to read their names so they are recorded forever in memorial in this place: Rebecca "Bec" Rose Shoebridge, Anna Josephine Shoebridge, Sara Francise Shoebridge and Georgina Rose Shoebridge.

At university, I studied international relations and politics, but it was the international relations part, not the politics, that held my interest. I had a vision to work in international development and, to that end, when I finished my degree, I took myself to Cambodia to intern for two children's rights organisations. The first was a local NGO that rescued children from sex trafficking. For the second, I was tasked with the job of conducting research to commence drafting the alternate report to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which Cambodia is a signatory. In a country recovering from genocide, it was challenging but deeply rewarding work. When I returned from Cambodia, I picked up a short-term contract with a temp agency so I could save money to return overseas. The role was with a state government minister, and it was from this experience that my passion for politics emerged.

For experienced members in this place, you need no introduction to the diversity of issues and need in our community that presents through the office of a local member. But to a young 20-something focused on the bigger world around me, I was naively amazed that this process called politics could have such a big impact on people's everyday lives, right here in Australia. In almost all areas, government can directly improve, or impede, people's lives. I was hooked from that moment. But still my path to this place was by no means obvious. Following the sudden death of my brother David and my niece Stella, I struggled for some years to make sense of a world whose axis had so fundamentally and permanently shifted. I sought meaning in adventure, and to this end I travelled to Western Australia. The rest, as they say, is history, although of course it was not as simple or easy as that.

No-one arrives in this place alone, and I would like to acknowledge the people who have supported me to be here today. My first thanks goes to my husband, Mick, whose steady counsel and unwavering faith in me always leads me to a wiser place than I could ever arrive at alone. Thank you for the love and leadership you provide to me and our family. To my beautiful boys, Joel, Liam, Fergus, Finnan and Hugo, being your mother and stepmother is at times one of the hardest things I have ever done. It is in your love that I find the motivation to always try harder so that I might be the very best I can be for you. I cannot think of anything that brings me more joy than being your mum. To my mum, Anne-Marie, sister Alex, and aunty Jean, or "Aunty Dream" as she is lovingly known to us, you belong to a long line of matriarchal women whose legacy of strength, courage and resilience you proudly share and pass on.

I am now going to do something that I have been advised not to do in an inaugural speech, and that is deviate from my script. I would like to share a story of my great-grandmother that maybe tells a bit about the line of women in my family. My great-grandmother lived in a three-bedroom, upstairs-downstairs house in the United Kingdom and had 14 children. As the story goes, she was preparing dinner one night for the family after another baby—I do not know; let us say baby eight—and the local priest arrived and knocked on the door to ask her why she had not been to mass lately. The dinner, which was apparently spotted dick, was thrown across the kitchen and hit the door near where the priest was standing. I think he never visited again! I am not sure whether she ever attended mass again. I like to think sometimes of her spirit and temperament and that I maybe have a bit of her in me as well.

To my family who could not be here today, my stepdad, Phil, brother Sam, my brother-in-law Samm, and my handsome nephews Archie and Atticus, thank you. To my in-laws, Sue and Richard Moore, and the Reedy Creek mob, who were meant to be here today but were stopped at the border not by COVID restrictions, but by a broken-down car, thank you.

To my campaign team, campaign director, Hon Kate Doust, MLC, campaign manager, Peter Feasey, and committee members Shenae Hunter, Hamish Beer, Hugo Seymour, Dean Ellis and Sonia Arrakal, and to every volunteer who spent time on pre-poll and polling day, thank you, with special mention to Hannah and Jeanette Anderson, Rhonda Kerr and Kaylie Burnett. I cannot thank you enough. I thank Glenn and Fiona Sterle for their moral and practical support. I am extremely grateful for your belief in me. Thank you to Ben Harris from the Shop, Distributive and Allied Employees Association of WA for your time, quiet patience and advice. I thank Paula Rogers for your motivation and friendship. You have a joy for living that you are so happy to share with those around you.

I welcome Shaun Hawkes, who will be joining my team after the arrival of his first child, who is due very soon. I wish him and his partner all the very best in this exciting time.

Finally, special mention must go to two people. The first is to Karen Wheatland, who volunteered on my campaign as field coordinator. She gave willingly of her time, energy and passion, while holding down three jobs, renovating her house, and caring for an unwell parent. The only thing bigger than her smile is her generosity, of which I am a thankful recipient. I am excited to work with you and continue this journey over the next four years. The second is to Hon Peter Tinley, AM, MLA, member for Willagee, who has served not only in this place but also in the service of our nation, with distinction and honour. Peter is a builder of teams and his commitment to helping others has been to my great benefit. I thank him not only for his guidance and encouragement but also for shining a light on the pathway to the opportunity for me to be in this place.

If experience is the name we give to our mistakes, then I come to this place with plenty of experience. The difference between where I stand now as a representative in the forty-first Parliament of Western Australia, and an alternate path, is not the result of some intrinsic moral character or particular talent or special intelligence, although, perhaps like all of us here, I like to think I do in fact possess these things. Rather, it is the result of support, both human and structural, that at different stages of my life have provided me with the tools to fulfil my ambition.

The concept of equality and fairness are great Australian traditions woven even into the most sacred of Australian narratives, that of the Anzacs. Broadly, these values are promoted as shared across partisan lines. In reality, these notions are deeply contested. The concept of “lifters and leaners”, favoured under the neoliberal tradition, is an example of this contest. Under this approach, equality of opportunity is touted as the aspirational precondition for human advancement. This belies the fact that we all begin life from different starting points, and face different hurdles once here. What is the value of equality if it is not the outcome that we measure? Dr Bill Garner from the University of Melbourne says this better than me when he argued that “equality of opportunity is the version of equality you claim to believe in when you do not believe in equality at all”. Nowhere is this more evident than in Australia’s education system.

Research shows that in this country, the single biggest factor that determines how a student will do at school is the socio-economic status of their parents. The higher the socio-economic status of a school, be it public or private, the higher the average achievement of the student. If education is the lever by which we raise people, then we must do better than accept that our children’s educational outcomes will be determined by the economic status of their parents and that of their community. I am proud of Labor’s commitment to tackle and address the structural inequalities that prevent people from accessing opportunity equally. A clear example of this is Labor’s affirmative action policy, which, for the first time in this Parliament’s history, has achieved nearly 50 per cent representation of women.

I would like to talk a little about my experience working as a teacher. I decided to become a teacher while living in Wyndham in the East Kimberley, where my husband was serving as a police officer. It was in this role that I developed a passion and interest in trauma. After observing the students in my first prac, I noticed something that was confusing and disturbing to me—a pattern of behaviour with some students that ranged from what could only be described as near complete shutdown, to sudden and seemingly unprovoked outbursts of violence and other disruptive behaviour. I searched my field of reference for the cause. Were they bored? Were they disengaged? Was the lesson not at their level of understanding? Was English as a second language a factor? Although some or all of that may have been true to varying degrees, I had a feeling these explanations did not fully cut it.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms K.E. GIDDENS: Determined to connect with my students, I researched until I came across the growing body of evidence on the impacts of trauma on child development. Through this area of study, we now understand that trauma is not in the mind at all, but rather physically in the body. Changes associated with complex trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder can be detected by MRI brain scans. Children and adults who have experienced repeated or prolonged childhood trauma show reduced brain volume, disrupted hormone levels, and both immune system and neurobiological changes. No wonder common appeals in the classroom to try harder or be good do not work for these kids. Science has confirmed a graded dose response relationship between adverse childhood experiences, or ACEs, and negative health and wellbeing outcomes. The higher the ACE score, the higher the rates of behavioural problems, disengagement from education, unemployment, smoking and drug abuse, alcoholism, family violence and early death. What people may find more surprising is that higher ACE scores are also linked to conditions we might not traditionally associate with trauma, such as asthma, diabetes, autoimmune disease, heart attack and stroke. I am passionate about the findings from this field of research because I believe they have powerful implications for the way we understand and respond to some of society’s most “wicked” problems, including our failure to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and in areas like family and domestic violence, mental health, housing and homelessness, education, health, policing and justice. We heard an excellent example yesterday from the Minister for Community Services of a trauma-informed approach, with the success of the Housing First

model in addressing chronic homelessness and disadvantage in Western Australia. I look forward to working with colleagues to build on this approach and further support the incorporation of trauma-informed understanding in policy and legislative settings.

Of course, this election was significant for reasons other than the number of women elected to this place, as noteworthy as that is. With Labor gaining 53 out of the 59 seats in the house of Assembly, Western Australians have overwhelmingly placed their trust in the McGowan Labor government. It is not lost on me that people in Bateman and, indeed, Western Australia voted Labor for the first time in their lives at this election. On the campaign trail in Bateman, people told me they wanted competence over ideology, and they judged the McGowan Labor government to be competent by giving it the most significant win of any government in Australia's history. This trust was forged by the Premier's leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic, which put first the safety of Western Australians, including our most vulnerable.

COVID-19 has created significant challenges for our state and, indeed, the world, but as the saying goes, "Never waste a good crisis." When the COVID-19 pandemic reached Western Australia, the McGowan Labor government did not hesitate to protect Western Australians. In doing so, it kept our economy strong. I have heard protests from the members only figuratively opposite me, who have said, "Yeah, but that's only because of our iron ore." Yes, Western Australia has been blessed with rich natural resources, but the strength of our economy is due first and foremost to the management of this government during the pandemic.

The human side of economic systems is that no-one wants to spend money when the people they love are sick or dying. This reflects a deeper truth—that the economy should always be in the service of the people, and not the other way around! So how do we put our economy, with iron ore undeniably at its heart, to the service of Western Australians? The first thing to do is to enable as many Western Australians as possible to participate in and benefit from the economic abundance of this state. The Premier has unapologetically insisted that Western Australian mining jobs go to Western Australians first. This is important. I came to Western Australia to drive trucks in the mines in this thing I had heard about over east, called the mining boom. At a time when the industry was crying out for drivers, I was shocked at how difficult it was to get a job. In fact, I had to leave the state and go to the Northern Territory before I could return to WA and get a job in the mines here. As a fun fact, Madam Acting Speaker, I may be the only member of Parliament who has ever driven trucks in the mines! I asked the wonderful Parliamentary Library staff to fact-check this, and they have records of two former members who had worked in the mines, but not as truck drivers as far as we know. But I digress.

The second, and more exciting, opportunity that our mining industry affords is the ability to leverage the economic, industrial and intellectual capacity of this \$115 billion per year behemoth to support the emergence of new industries in Western Australia. That is to say that Western Australians should be not only driving the trucks, but also designing and building them. Further, we should be designing, building and managing the sophisticated technological systems that support modern mining operations, and looking for opportunities to apply that technology across sectors. We are, in fact, already doing this, with Western Australia leading the world in, for example, remote and autonomous vehicle operations. However, with the development of the Simandou mine in Africa and given other market forecasts, the canary in the iron ore mine is that we may have only seven to 10 years to build a truly diversified economy.

In addition to our resources, Western Australia is blessed with another natural gift—our proximity to Asia. Western Australia is a trading state within a trading nation. Asia is the fastest growing economic region in the world, and it is right on our doorstep. Although it is important that Western Australia looks to Asia, we must remember that Asia does not necessarily look to us. We must actively promote Western Australia in Asian markets with a committed and resourced plan to build the long-term relationships that underpin successful trade. We cannot have a diversified economy without diversified markets, so this is especially important in new and emerging markets such as Indonesia, Vietnam, the Philippines and Thailand.

I came to WA for adventure, but I stayed for the opportunity. Those of us in this place now have a moral duty to do what we can to create a genuinely diversified economy that will sustain the next and future generations of Western Australians.

On the theme of moral obligations, the need to tackle climate change is increasingly urgent. This is not controversial. Western Australians overwhelmingly accept the science of human-induced climate change and they expect leadership and action on this matter. We must be honest about the fact there will be some pain in the transition to a carbon-neutral society.

My brother-in-law is a diesel mechanic in a coalmine. He wants to know that his job is secure and his children will have jobs in the area they have grown up in. This is a fair and reasonable expectation. We must always remember the human element of change. We owe it to people like my brother-in-law to not walk into Parliament with a lump of coal and promise that change is not coming. Instead, we must work closely and honestly with affected industries,

communities, families and workers to ensure that they have a viable and sustainable future. This is exactly the approach the McGowan Labor government has taken in Collie.

I am proud to be a part of this state government, which is committed to creating new jobs and industries while tackling climate change through the green jobs plan. I call on the federal government to put aside its ideological and intellectually bankrupt failure to act strongly on climate change and instead do what the vast majority of Australians want it to do, which is to provide the leadership so critically required on this issue.

As I stand here today, new to this place, I do so knowing that my time here is borrowed. I say this not as a reflection on my seat or my ability to do my job here, but to prompt me to ask myself: what is the contribution I hope to make to this place in the time that I have? I have outlined today a wide area of passions and interests, but if I can summarise it to just two points, it would be this: the first is that I will always remember that our role in this place is to improve the outcomes of the people we represent. It is in your service that we are in this place, and I will do all I can to act in the interests and aspirations of our state and its people. The second is to have courage to tackle with determination the challenges and issues that are most important to our lives and our future. To borrow the following words, “Courage is not an emotion. It is a decision to act.”

I sincerely thank the people of Bateman for their faith in me. I will work to the best of my ability to be the kind of local member you expect—hardworking, accessible and a strong advocate for our community.

[Applause.]

MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Disability Services) [3.20 pm]: What a pleasure it has been to be in this forty-first Parliament over the last few days and hear such astounding contributions from so many new members. First of all, I would like to congratulate our new Speaker. She is not only the first female Speaker in this house but also a Speaker with immense knowledge of parliamentary process, and I look forward to her treating me with a sympathetic ear during the contributions that I might make!

Coming back to our new members, really, over the last few days we have heard some outstanding contributions and some astounding life stories. Members have spoken about the diversity of life experience, the diversity of work experience and the fact that we now have so many women in Parliament in the Legislative Assembly and the upper house. What a great change the forty-first Parliament is about to bring. I seriously look forward to the contributions that we are going to hear from our new members in the future, because I think we will hear some particularly insightful views around all the topics that the McGowan Labor government stands for, topics around social justice, inclusion, the importance of our economy, the importance of diversifying our economy, looking for new opportunities for the future—in fact, having a forward view of what the future will bring, not looking at life through the rear-vision mirror, which some of the members opposite have brought to this chamber just recently. In fact, I contrast the contributions that we have heard from our new members with those that I have heard from members on the other side, and what a difference! What a refreshing change our new members bring and what same old, same old the opposition benches bring. I look forward to the forty-first Parliament with a great deal of interest. I think we are going to have a very solid contribution from the members on this side of the chamber.

I was very pleased and thankful that the people of Bunbury returned me at the last election—and with a larger margin. I think that was recognition of the leadership of our Premier and this government in taking us through some of the most challenging experiences that we have had over recent history. It has been a tremendous honour and a tremendous opportunity, and I look forward to serving them in the best way that I possibly can over the coming four years.

Looking to the future, we have some great election commitments, not least of which is the South Bunbury Education Support Centre. At long last, this government is going to replace transportable classrooms with classroom that are fit-for-purpose.

On that note, I want to congratulate all the new members and thank the people in my electorate for the faith and trust that they have given me. I look forward to representing them and the new responsibilities that I have as a minister in the forty-first Parliament. Thank you.

MS E.J. KELSIE (Warren–Blackwood) [3.22 pm]: Madam Speaker, may I offer my congratulations to you on becoming the first female Speaker in the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to working with you in the chamber.

I wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the Warren–Blackwood electorate, the Wardandi, Pibelmen Kaneang, Minang and Koreng Goreng peoples of the Noongar nation. I wish to acknowledge and show respect to the elders past, present and emerging and the continuing culture and contribution they make to life in this region.

I offer my gracious thanks and pay homage to Hon Terry Redman, who served the Warren–Blackwood electorate for 16 years. Terry is well respected by many across the region, and I wish him, his wife, Marie, and his staff well.

I am incredibly humbled to be standing here today. I am proud to be not only the first female elected to the seat of Warren–Blackwood, but also the person entrusted to bring Labor back to this seat after 32 years. As we celebrate

100 years since Edith Cowan was elected as the first female representative in the Western Australian Parliament—in fact, in any Australian Parliament—I stand here today surrounded by incredibly strong women, women who also put their hands up to represent and make a difference in their respective electorates. We stand here united, strong and proud—ready to serve our communities as part of the forty-first Parliament of Western Australia.

I am someone who believes in championing others, in finding the good, in taking the time to listen and to act upon requests for help, support or mentoring. I believe strongly in social equality. I am someone who tries to be a positive role model, to inspire others and to seek out and take up opportunities and believe that they can be achieved.

At Worklink WA, where I was CEO for over four years and where Rebecca Stephens, now the member for Albany, was my regional manager, we delivered government-funded careers training and employment services to communities across the great southern, goldfields and Esperance regions. This included the jobs and skill centre services, participation and equity programs, traineeships and the employment services development program for young people who had disengaged from education. My role as CEO was to lead and guide the organisation, ensure innovation in service delivery, provide continuous improvement and rigorous governance and secure and broaden the funding model. My passion, however, sat and still sits with inspiring the youth in our services, in seeing our young people's confidence grow, seeing their self-esteem blossom, seeing them start to believe they are worthy of the opportunities that come their way and seeing them proactively take up these opportunities.

This new chapter in my life is a case in point. I remember talking to our students, telling them that I had put my hand up for a new opportunity—I was going to run for Parliament for the seat of Warren–Blackwood. I explained there was apparently little chance that I would win the seat—you know the drill; a 12.8 per cent swing was needed to topple Terry and the Nats, Labor had not won that seat for over 30 years and Warren–Blackwood was reportedly and historically “a very safe Nationals seat”. I also explained that if I did not win the seat, I would not see it as a failure. The experience would provide me with lessons. I would at least learn about the process of campaigning. I would learn more about our amazing electorate. I would learn more about farming, regenerative farming and carbon farming. I would find out more about how to influence change and I would meet inspiring people. It was all about the opportunity and having a go.

Weeks later, I went back to work to resign from the job I loved. I sought out the kids, one of whom is here today. Breanna Cottrill, I remember going to tell you guys that I had won the seat and that I was going to become a member of Parliament. You beat me to it; you had already seen me on the telly! I say to you today and to other young people: you are worthy of opportunity; aim high; do not be afraid to fail—it is how we learn—believe in yourself and when you need to, seek out others who believe in you. Never think you cannot; always believe you can.

In my new role as the member for Warren–Blackwood, I commit to working hard to help identify opportunities for our youth and to seek out like-minded people and organisations to collaborate, innovate and to create opportunities across our region and further afield.

I look forward to delivering my Warren–Blackwood election commitments, including those to support young people. This includes \$50 000 for Blackwood Youth Action for its driver support program; \$60 000 for the community mental health action team, ComHAT, in Boyup Brook to create a youth zone; and \$40 000 to upgrade the Denmark Civic Centre so that kids will no longer have to stand in the rain or the dunny while they wait to go on stage.

Now, I am sure I am not the only person who did not imagine I would be standing here today delivering my inaugural speech. I was endorsed six weeks out from the election, had a shoestring budget and a campaign team of two: Jackie Jarvis, soon to be Hon Jackie Jarvis and member for the South West Region of the Legislative Council, aka my campaign manager, and me, aka the potential member. I had support from Hon Alannah MacTiernan, for which I am extremely grateful, and I had encouragement from my colleague Rebecca Stephens. In the midst of campaigning, my great friends Raneé Wilson, George Mumford and the ever-inspiring Vanessa Fyfe and I tackled the Rottneest Channel Swim. It was my fourth go and our third as a team. We were never going to break any records, but it was not about that. As with most things in my life, it was about having a go, pushing myself to achieve, getting out of my comfort zone and, most importantly, supporting the team. Jackie, thank you for seeing in me the values of a potential Labor candidate and for cajoling me to take the opportunity, for your incredible support, your industry knowledge and your hospitality and, of course, to your husband Matt for producing an excellent chardonnay that helped keep us hydrated as we pondered our next move on the campaign trail. I thank you for being my campaign manager and my mentor and for allowing me to believe I could give it a crack against all the odds. I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together for Warren–Blackwood.

To Hon Alannah MacTiernan, your knowledge of and energy and passion for regional development, agriculture, innovation and farming is inspiring. Your energy is never ending. Never did I imagine, a few days after being endorsed, that I would be on a road trip into the electorate with Alannah, Ben Johnson and Darcy Duncan and talking to producers and seasonal workers, and visiting farms and small businesses.

Bec, I am lucky enough to call you my friend, my colleague once again and my housemate as we embark on this journey into politics. You, my friend, are inspiring, community-spirited and driven for all the right reasons. I look forward to seeing what we can achieve together for the people in the great southern, where our electorates meet.

Being invited to run is a big deal. I phoned my dad to seek his advice. He confirmed what I had already told myself: opportunities like this do not come around very often, if at all. He said, “You know I’ve always been a Liberal.” I rolled my eyes. He then told me for the first time in his life he was going to vote Labor, and I smiled. Turns out he and many others across the state had decided to let the McGowan government know that they were appreciative of the hard work and leadership shown to keep our state safe and strong. I thank you, Premier, and I thank your team. My dad said, “I think you’d be great. You’re empathetic, professional, you care about people and you always strive to make a difference. Go for it.” So I grabbed the opportunity with both hands. I got out there and met as many people and community organisations as I could in six weeks. I listened, I did not shy away from more controversial issues and I talked to those in our community who wanted to be part of the change. I am stoked to say the people of Warren–Blackwood stood up. They spoke up and they spoke up loudly, saying that they were ready for change. I stand here today proud beyond words and ready to serve. To those who did not vote for me this time around, I say to you I will work just as hard, if not harder, to impress upon you over the next four years that I am a worthy recipient of your next vote. For those who did vote for me, I thank you with all my heart for putting your trust in me to represent you in the McGowan government to deliver for Warren–Blackwood. I will work hard to ensure a prosperous and innovative Warren–Blackwood where our kids are afforded the same opportunities as others; where we have access to child care locally; where investment in mental health services, education and training are a priority; where we look to balance economic growth with environmental security; and where we invest in farming in an electorate where different voices are heard, respected and represented. I will fight for our region. I will be your strong voice at the table in Parliament and I will work hard to represent all areas of our community and make sure that our specific needs are heard and, where possible, are met.

I will work with and listen to our community. I will find ways to work collaboratively across the different sectors of our electorate and embrace new technologies and new ways of working when needed to enable innovation and creativity while also respectfully honouring traditional practices. In between, I will return to the fold of my second family, Denmark Surf Life Saving Club Australia, and to my fellow ocean beach swimmers. I, like Stuart Aubrey, member for Scarborough, and Rebecca Stephens, member for Albany, am an active volunteer in the surf lifesaving movement. I am a surf lifesaver, a member protection officer and a communications representative in our emergency response team. I love all things surfing. I love our family-friendly club. I love the inclusivity of people of all ages and all abilities. I love the intergenerational aspects of our training, our competitions and our social events. I love that we are socially responsible, forward thinking and embracing of all people, and that we have fun. I served on the committee of the club for seven years, four as president—the first female in the club’s 60-year history. I stepped down at the end of the last season. Now, as the local member, I will become the first female patron of the club that I adore. Under my leadership, we nearly doubled our membership base to record numbers and strengthened our member retention, especially with our youth. We won Club of the Year in 2018 and were finalists in 2019.

Imagine being a member of the Warren–Blackwood Labor branch. It has no doubt been pretty hard to keep the momentum going for the past 32 years, but despite our electorate being tagged as “a very safe Nationals WA seat”, here we are. The enormity of the win is not lost on me. I must acknowledge and commend the members of the branch for their commitment to the Labor Party and for believing that one day we would be victorious. Imagine being a member of the branch now—with an elected Labor member in a Labor government. I look forward to seeing our branch grow and to seeing young people, people from diverse backgrounds and people who have not been involved in politics before, join us to build and strengthen our branch, to be a forward-thinking space where people’s voices can be heard.

To the volunteers who not only believed in me as a candidate, but also believed I could win—there were a few—I say thank you. As someone who truly believes we need to nurture our planet, investigate sustainability and invest in a greener future, I am excited to be part of a government that sees the bigger picture, works within an evidence-based framework and not only looks at the impact on the bottom line, but also really invests in the people factor. I am proud to be part of a government that respects and honours our planet and is innovative in its investment and future planning.

Since being elected, I have been asked more than once about how I will cope travelling across the vast electorate. Many of you will have visited parts of my region and you will already know that it is some of the most beautiful country in Australia. It is where the forest meets the sea, where we produce award-winning wine that is exported to the far corners of the globe, where we are known for our diverse agriculture, agritourism and ecotourism, and where we can proudly say we are home to some of the most amazing forests and spectacular coastline.

To my mum, Judy Riley, who is sadly no longer with us, she would be so proud of me today. From her I learnt to work hard, enjoy life, take chances and be a good person. To my dad, Richard Riley, I have always admired

your entrepreneurial spirit and from you I learnt to seek out and take opportunities, to take chances and embrace change. To my sister, Emma Willcox, you are the family’s quiet achiever—brave, courageous, family focused, spiritually aware and up for an adventure. I will forever be proud of you, your determination and your tenacious spirit. To my kids, you are what inspires me the most every single day. My hope was for you to grow into strong, independent women.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms E.J. KELSBBIE: Your strong moral compass, sense of loyalty and support make me proud. Amy, you are a star. As a single mum of three-year-old twins—the “tiny terrors”—you continuously amaze me. Your no-nonsense attitude to the everyday challenges of life are tantamount to your strength of character and determination. You are a feisty wee beast and I love you. Phoebe, you are a gem. You always strive to achieve, you give everything you do 110 per cent, no challenge is too big or too small for you and you always try to do the right thing. You are a strong leader, you have an inner strength and I love you. To my stepdaughter, Megan, you, my dear, are fabulous. Never be afraid to follow your dreams or make them up as you go along. You can create your own path. I love you. And to my partner, Colin, thank you for your patience, support and love, and thank you for coming on this journey with me. Importantly, thank you for pouring the wine, cooking the dinner and taking my dog, Maisie Mouse, for sleepovers and for listening to me witter on about every new thing I learnt. Love ya!

I have had a great and varied career working in communications and stakeholder management, volunteering locally and understanding the value of community connectedness, supporting and empowering people to reach their goals. I have been an arts and entertainment editor in London, worked for the WA Country Health Service as statewide regional telehealth manager, been a barmaid, been a bottle shop attendant and flipped burgers at a beach kiosk. I also worked at the British Broadcasting Corporation as an interactive producer across health, parenting, science, education, entertainment and lifestyle sites, and was then head of production talent for BBC’s Multiplatform Production. Most recently, I was the CEO at Worklink WA.

I think all the positions I have held during my career have led me here. You could say that I have been training all my life to serve the people of Warren–Blackwood. I used to walk up to the BBC building at White City feeling incredibly proud and often wondering how a woman from Perth with no formal qualifications had snagged a job at such a prestigious organisation. I thought I would feel the same walking up the steps to Parliament House, but I haven’t. I feel I belong here, and I will work hard over the next four years to prove it. As someone with no formal qualifications but with over 35 years of on-the-job training, I am proud to be part of a government that understands, invests in and promotes accessible training and education.

I liken my passion for ocean swimming and the rough and tumble of Ocean Beach with politics, where some days the sun is shining and the water is crystal clear and bright blue, while on other days, it is grey and rough and there are stingers out there. I liken it to politics and what I may experience here. But as we say in my swimming group, just keep swimming. I intend to do that—not only keep swimming but roll with the ebbs and flows and ride the waves of success, too, as they happen.

The thing I will leave members with is that I do not rock the boat until the boat actually needs rocking. Thank you.

[Applause.]

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

House adjourned at 3.44 pm
