

Extract from Hansard

[ASSEMBLY — Wednesday, 11 October 2017]

p4544d-4552a

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Dean Nalder; Mr David Templeman; Mr Colin Barnett; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Sabine Winton;
Mr Sean L'Estrange; Acting Speaker; Mr Yaz Mubarakai

APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2017–18) BILL 2017

Third Reading

MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer) [2.58 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman) [2.58 pm]: I rise to talk about the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. I must say that I was fascinated to listen to the Treasurer during question time when he started to make all sorts of assertions about what was said yesterday about the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017. I would like to go over some of those aspects because they feed into the capital appropriation bill as well. Yesterday, I said that the \$5 billion revenue writedown was manufactured, and I stand by that because what the Treasurer talked about was that a percentage of it was because they said that GST was written down. It was budgeted to be 38c in the dollar, and we are getting only 34.4c, and therefore there was a revenue writedown.

I said yesterday that the commonwealth government topped it back up to 38 cents in the dollar. The Treasurer said, “Well, the top-up was last financial year. It does not help us in the future”, but it was topped up nonetheless. If we take this one step further, Treasury added a new line in the *Budget Statements* and it is on page 212 of volume 3, for anyone who would like to look it up. It is called “Slippage Provision”, whereby the government reduced revenue by \$500 million last financial year and has put it into future years. Here we are saying that the GST budget was 38 cents in the dollar and it came down to 34c. We said the commonwealth government topped it up. The Premier said, “No, the commonwealth government put that in last financial year.” He was remiss to say, “But we then turned around and took \$500 million from that and put it in future years.” There has often been talk about this Premier being sneaky and slippery. Fancy coming up with a new line in the budget called slippage. I have not seen anything more slippery than the line of slippage on page 212 of volume 3 of the budget papers. These are our revenue numbers below the line, so it is to do with capital appropriation.

I remind the house that there is a debit of revenue of \$500 million in 2016–17, a debit of \$200 million in 2017–18, a debit of \$200 million in 2018–19, a credit of \$250 million in 2019–20 and a credit of \$650 million in 2020–21. We saw this line of slippage whereby capital has been shifted from the current years to the out years. During the budget estimates hearings, we asked what specific projects this related to so that we could understand the basis on which the money has been shifted from one year to another. Guess what the answer was? There is not any specific project. There are no specific projects to shuffle this money around. It is a high-level shifting of numbers. If we can shift high-level numbers without any specifics and not call it a manufactured outcome, I do not know what is a manufactured outcome. We are talking about a deliberate attempt to create a perception that the budget numbers are improving over time. We talked about the faults that sit in the current expenditure yesterday, and I will go back over those in a short while, but I am staying with this capital number and this slippage line.

I really find it a bit bizarre how a government could do this. I know that in the private sector, it would struggle to get away with this accounting standard and be able to justify it without having some specific allocation to a project that is being reallocated to later years. But no, this is just a high-level shuffling of numbers. The budget shows a reduction in the level of debt growth over the forward estimates. When we see that revenue of \$650 million has been credited in the last financial year and it delivers a reduction in net debt by around \$130 million, we start to realise that this was all manufactured to try to deliver a perception that the government has sold the fact that debt is continuing to grow. But it is not real. The debt is continuing to grow; it is just that the government has shifted some numbers around to create a perception that the debt is not growing. That is totally misleading. It is totally deceptive.

Again, I would like to focus on the allegations made by the Treasurer during question time that I made commentary on the forecast price of iron ore. I said yesterday that if we were in government, we would take a more conservative approach to the methodology on forecasting iron ore prices.

Point of Order

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I am sure the member is aware that the debate on capital, the bill that we are debating, is very specific. The previous bill that we debated is a more general debate. I believe that the member is straying into a general debate rather than speaking specifically to the capital bill.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Further to that point of order, although what the Leader of the House says is true, it has been a convention in this house that there is overlap in the responses to the third reading. It is a longstanding convention, although this is primarily capital, because capital and recurrent expenditure is co-occurring.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): There is a bit more leeway under the recurrent bill that we have previously dealt with, but the Leader of the House is correct in saying the debate on the capital bill needs to be confined to the items found in the bill.

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Mr D.C. NALDER: Given that I was talking about slippage, which is 100 per cent focused on capital appropriations and below-the-line numbers, could you please explain what was inappropriate in regard to the capital appropriations bill?

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Members, thank you. That pretty well sums it up. You strayed off and started to make commentary about comments that were made during question time. If you can confine your comments to the bill more concisely, that would be appreciated.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.C. NALDER: I will take that advice. The revenue that is generated for this budget flows through to the capital that is available for the government to spend on its projects. I will talk about the revenue that ultimately impacts on the capital that is available for the government to spend. The Treasurer commented today on comments I made yesterday on the forecasting of iron ore prices, and that directly flows through to the available capital for this state government. At the end of the day, I am talking about budget surpluses that then get used for capital spend. A more conservative approach was taken to the methodology of forecasting iron ore prices. We found out in budget estimates that the government has used \$977 million as a revenue writedown to justify breaking its promises on taxes. I have highlighted one of them being the changes in GST. These two measures alone account for 25 per cent of the \$5 billion worth of revenue writedown. I have said that one of them is completely inappropriate because the federal government topped it up and the other one does not change what the state government will receive in revenue. It is a more conservative approach to a forecasting of future prices. That might be a legitimate thing to do, but the government cannot justify that as an excuse to break its promises and say, "Oh, well, we have this revenue shock and, therefore, we have to introduce new taxes that we wouldn't do if we didn't have to." That is a load of bunkum because it does not change what the state will receive.

The state government went to the election and made a number of promises needing capital spend and it totalled around \$5 billion. It refused to put its promises to Treasury for costing despite the convention of previous governments and oppositions putting up their costings for assessment by Treasury. The Labor Party refused to do it. Labor said that with this \$5 billion spend, along with getting the budget back to surplus by 2019–20, there would be no new taxes or tax increases. It said that it would submit all the revenue measures before the election. Labor made all these commitments, which we said could not add up. We even said that a number of its projects were underfunded. We are starting to see that come true now with, for example, the Ocean Reef marina and a number of other projects that it put forward, particularly in the transport portfolio, whereby all of a sudden we are seeing a requirement for greater capital. We look at Yanchep and Byford et cetera.

These things were not correct. We got to the budget and, all of a sudden, a large number of them were missing without explanation. We raised the concern that the Labor Party made a commitment in 2008 and 2013 to build Ellenbrook rail. In fact, all last term, the current Minister for Transport had a bumper sticker on her car that said, "Just build it." Members would think that, given that it made it an election commitment, the government would be pretty determined to just build it. All of a sudden members opposite tell us, "No. Don't worry. We're still going to build it. This'll start in 2019–20. We haven't put it in the budget but we're still going to build it. We have to do the business plan now—and we are relying on the federal government to fund 80 per cent of it." That was the first time we had heard of that. A large number of commitments were made. We will continue to highlight capital appropriation gaps between commitments it made in the election and this budget. The other thing that feeds into the capital appropriation and allowing the government to spend in the manner in which it does is that the Labor Party continues to contribute —

Mr P. Papalia: The government.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The Labor government, the McGowan government—whatever else members opposite want to term it; I am happy to call it whatever the minister likes. The Labor government continues to spend as fast as it can. It talked about paying debt down like a mortgage. As a result of the capital appropriations and what it is doing on recurrent expenditure, we will see debt grow from \$31.96 billion to \$43.6 billion forecast through to the end of 2020–21. I have already highlighted that the government has fabricated the numbers for the last financial year to create the perception that the debt will drop from \$43.8 billion to \$43.6 billion. We already know that it has done some high-level shifting on port slippage. It is on page 212 of budget paper No 3. The minister should take a look. He will see a \$650 million credit—\$28.8 billion as costed by Treasury. What else would the minister like to ask?

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Mr D.C. NALDER: The minister would like to challenge a couple of things. The former Liberal government put forward its election promises to Treasury and had them costed. The Treasury ruling was that net debt under a Liberal government would have been \$28.8 billion by the end of 2019–20. If members look at the *Pre-election*

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Financial Projections Statement, they will see that it states that if it went unchecked it would be \$41.1 billion, not \$42 billion. The Under Treasurer said in the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* that irrespective of which party wins government, if it is left unchecked, it will be \$41.1 billion by the end of 2019–20, and that irrespective of which party wins government, it will have to tackle debt. The Liberal Party went into the election and committed to tackle it. That would have involved the partial sale of Western Power and all those things. We lost the election—we know. Treasury costed it to be \$28.8 billion.

Mr B. Urban: It is \$27.3 billion—on page 18.

Mr D.C. NALDER: Is the member for Darling Range saying that it is less?

Mr B. Urban: Yes. It is \$27.3 billion, but it is actually \$4.4 billion higher than forecast.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I have \$28.8 billion. The member is confusing me now.

Mr D.J. Kelly: Don't worry about it being right.

Mr D.C. NALDER: I can say it is less if members opposite want, because we are talking about a \$15 billion difference between what the government has forecast at the end of this term and what Treasury costed the Liberal commitments would deliver by the end of the 2019–20 financial year.

Treasury's forecasts on the bond rate is 3.4 per cent. If we multiply \$15 billion by 3.4 per cent, we will find that it is around \$510 million a year. That is \$510 million a year of increased interest expense because of the McGowan Labor government's inability to deal with the debt issue. Part of failing to deal with that issue leads straight from how it is tackling its capital appropriation. Labor said it would deal with it, but it is not. Labor said that it would not sell Western Power. What is it going to do? What is the plan? There is no plan. We have continued to see debt grow unchecked, which is creating misinformation in the community and creating a lot of pain for people in delivering on these election promises.

One of the things we talked about is that if we see this debt grow, what measures are being put in place so that the government can continue to deliver its capital appropriations and its capital spending? It has talked about a gold tax, a payroll tax, and household charges—it said it had to put up power prices by 10.9 per cent—and we have seen the pain delivered to self-funded retirees. We have seen four measures. I have just highlighted that the difference between the Liberal Party's position and the Labor government's budget is \$510 million of interest expense. Guess what? If we look at the gold tax, the payroll tax, the impact on self-funded retirees of rebate reductions and a 100 per cent of the increase in household charges, in 2020–21 it will generate \$280 million versus an increased interest expense of over \$500 million a year. The government talks about budget repair.

I say there is no budget repair in this budget, whether we look at capital appropriations or recurrent expenditure. Debt will continue to grow. The pain the government is inflicting on the people of Western Australia has less to do with budget repair and more to do with funding the unfunded election commitments made by the now McGowan government in the election campaign through a lot of deception of the people of Western Australia. This will not be forgotten. The current government is waiting for a silver bullet. It hopes and prays that the South Australian government gets up the bank tax so that it can introduce it. It hopes that the turmoil in Canberra continues so that it gets capital thrown at it by both the Labor opposition and the coalition government. It is highly probable that it will receive additional capital from the federal parties. That will not solve the issues around the contribution that the capital appropriations will make to our net debt. Unless the government deals with that, it is just trying to kick it down the road for future generations to deal with. It argued in this house for two years that net debt was a problem for this state. Now it is trying to shift away from net debt being a problem. It is a fundamental problem. The government argued that for two years but it is taking the current position and growing it by over 34 per cent over a four-year period. That is not dealing with debt.

I would like to finish with one other point on the contribution that this government has made to the position that the state finds itself in. In 2008 and 2013, the Labor Party submitted its election commitments to Treasury for costing. Surprise, surprise! The Treasury assessments in 2008 and 2013 combined showed that the net debt impact, had the Labor Party won, would have been a \$1.1 billion increase in net debt than what the Liberal government delivered. Those were the Treasury costings of Labor's election commitments from 2008 and 2013.

We faced the challenge of rapid growth in population. I am saying that both parties understood that something needed to be done. There needed to be increased investment in capital for power, water, health, education, roads and other infrastructure. They were necessary, and both parties went to the 2008 and 2013 elections committing to spend capital on dealing with that challenge. As I said, Treasury costings in 2008 and 2013 show that the Labor Party's commitments would have created \$1.1 billion of additional debt on top of what the Liberal government delivered. That is a fact. We can sit here and listen to the arguments advanced by the current Labor government about the financial situation it inherited, and yes, we acknowledge that it is a challenge; but

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I have provided facts in this house today to show that the Labor Party's past election commitments would have had a higher impact on net debt.

I have explained to the house that the government is continuing to spend highly on capital—it has not put all its projects in, but it says it is still going to—and is growing debt into the future, and leaving it for future generations. It is creating the perception that it is slowing down the rate of debt, but as I have highlighted—I keep repeating this—on page 212 of budget paper No 3, there is a line simply referred to as “Slippage Provision”, which has never been in a budget before. The government has taken \$900 million out of last year and the following two financial years, and has reallocated the entire \$900 million back into 2019–20 and 2020–21, with \$650 million of that in 2020–21. If we are reducing net debt by \$130 million in 2020–21, and all we have done is simply deduct \$500 million in revenue from 2016–17 to put at the end, it is not a reduction in the growth of debt, particularly when it does not relate to any specific capital project. It is just a high-level number that has been plucked out of the air.

Those are the points I wanted to make on the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. It fails dismally to deal with net debt. The government is burdening the state with additional interest expense. I talked about the difference between the Treasury costings of what the Liberal position was and the current 2020–21 budget of \$43.6 billion being \$510 million in interest expense. We can give the government credit; 30 June is its start point for net debt, and \$31.96 billion is the audited account. For \$43.6 billion, we are talking around \$11.6 billion, which is closer to interest expense around the \$400 million mark. When we add on the increasing effect of interest rate rises—bond rates are currently around three per cent, forecast to shift up to 3.4 per cent in 2020–21—the extra 0.4 per cent in the final year adds another \$130 million of interest expense. Combine that just on the government's start period, and it is well in excess of \$500 million increased interest expense. We are talking a more than 50 per cent increase in interest expense because of this government's inability to deal with the debt position that the state finds itself in. The government thinks that the position it inherited was tough, but it is guaranteeing future governments an even tougher position.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): The member for Riverton.

MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River) [3.24 pm]: The member for Southern River, if that is okay! I was part of the Riverton Scout Group, but thank you, Mr Acting Speaker!

I speak to—not scout groups—the capital elements of this budget and the third reading debate on the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. Capital expenditure in this budget strikes the right balance, as I said in part of my speech yesterday. It strikes the right balance between working out the mess left by the Barnett government and investing in capital infrastructure in all our electorates.

My electorate received minimal attention from the Barnett–Nahan–L'Estrange government. I say that because I think he might be Leader of the Opposition soon, so I had better start tagging him. After such minimal attention from the Barnett government, we finally have some important capital investment as part of this budget, and these are good investments—good capital investments that are coupled with tough measures. There are lessons to be learnt for the opposition.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

Mr T.J. HEALY: I will always take that interjection. As I said during the debate yesterday, I always get confused about whether the member for Carine wants me to deliver on my commitments or not. He says, “You're out there, member for Southern River, delivering on your commitments”, but if I did not do it, he would say, “You're in trouble”. It is an inconsistent message that always confuses me.

I think there are lessons to be learnt by the opposition. It is important to do what you said you would do and that you budget for the things you want to do. This Labor government is not going to waste funds on silly ego projects. We are not going to spend money on capital infrastructure investment that is not necessary. We are going to do the important investments. I am very proud to be part of the fiscally responsible McGowan Labor government and I am very proud that we finally have a Treasurer with a sustainable and responsible approach.

I would like to now talk about the capital investments in my electorate. They include Southern River College; Canning Vale College; Huntingdale Primary School; the two new primary schools; the two new Canning Vale stations that will be part of Metronet, which are fantastic; the removal of speed bumps and chicanes in Gay Street, Huntingdale; and the cricket club.

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

Mr T.J. HEALY: Plan A? Is plan A where the member remains shadow, or moves to the front bench? Is that plan B, a bit later on today? He is one of the best performers; I think plan B should be moving forward.

I come back to Southern River College. There was \$8.4 million delivered as part of the capital elements of this budget to remove the old gym at Southern River College—part of the old, pre-1980s school infrastructure—and to

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replace it with a new gym. The old gym will be transformed into a new performing arts centre. The new gym will be fantastic. It will be made accessible to the local community as part of that \$8.4 million. There will be specialist facilities built for visual arts, science and music to allow residents in Gosnells, Southern River and Huntingdale—which cover the catchment area for that school—to access those services and academic classes. The dance room will become a lecture theatre. The principal, Everal Mioceovich—a former student of the college—was principal during the 2013 election, when the previous government's promises were made. She is one of the many principals of pre-1980s schools who had promises made to them by the previous government to develop their schools that were later broken. She got excited at the 2013 election; she got excited again at the 2017 election, but by then was wary, I guess, of the previous Liberal government. She was very happy that we were able to deliver this.

With regard to capital investment in Southern River College, for those who are following at home, I refer to page 171 of budget paper No 2, volume 1. In 2017–18 there will be \$500 000; in 2018–19, \$5 million; and in 2019–20, \$2.9 million. Those funds are now available to that school to invest, appoint planners and appoint architects. I think Easter next year will see the peak of that construction, over the school holidays.

I refer now to Canning Vale College, a school I was very proud to teach at. There will be \$2 million for important upgrades and improvements. Canning Vale College is a fantastic school and will put funds into additional sports and music specialist facilities. It has the Da Vinci hall, a beautiful facility, which will be upgraded. The facilities and opportunities there for my students in Canning Vale will be greatly improved. With regard to the student services facilities, it is one of those schools that employs a student services delivery model. It is also investing money there to ensure those students have access to better services. That is where, I guess, other, more complicated, services can come through, better servicing our community.

I refer now to Huntingdale Primary School and \$40 000 towards a nature-play playground. Nature-play playgrounds are becoming very popular. My daughter is only 15 months old and has not gone much further than playing in a sandpit. It is my understanding that the current buzz for primary school kids and the most popular play area is nature-play playgrounds. It seems that \$40 000 will allow for a few logs, grass trees and things like that. Probably 10 years ago, when I was a kid, it would have probably cost about \$50 at the local tip to put a few of those things together, but it now costs \$40 000 for these new facilities. It is what the Huntingdale P&C said it wanted to build after many years of the local member not being able to deliver. I am not sure why but it seems to be quite endemic across the previous government that no-one listened to him. No-one was delivering, but finally a government is listening.

I refer now to the two new primary schools, which will involve a big capital investment. It is really exciting. For eight and a half years no new primary schools were built in Southern River, one of the fastest growing areas in the community. Thousands of new homes have been built there in that period. Many new residents have moved there with very young families. Bletchley Park Primary School took its 10-year anniversary photo today. This school was built by the previous Labor government. That was the last school built in my electorate. A change of government occurred and, unfortunately, I do not know why, these schools were not built. I keep hearing about all the awesome capital investments into building schools. It certainly did not happen in my electorate. There are more than 1 000 students at Bletchley Park Primary School. It is a fantastic school; there are brilliant families; a brilliant P&C, brilliant kids; and brilliant staff, but it is overcrowded. An interesting situation arose last year when, due to overcrowding and the number of demountables on site, it was proposed that the kindergarten move to an off-site location. Former member for Southern River Peter Abetz was on the board and one of the kindies was moved to one of the local churches that he had an association with. The problem with the site was that it adjoined a petrol station. There was a huge community uproar. Families were outraged that no new schools had been built, the clear responsibility for which lay with the Barnett Liberal government. Due to the reluctance to invest in education to build that school, 200 families were being asked to move to a local church site within five or 10 metres of petrol bowsers. I think the community outrage flowed through to the election because people could clearly see that it is one thing not to build primary schools or invest in local capital infrastructure but a clear problem was caused by that Barnett government. We are building two primary schools, one in Southern River is due to open next year for kindy and preprimary because we have to have something onsite. We have to give the community some form of solution. We will then open the kindy to preprimary in 2019. The second school, funded by \$15.8 million in the capital works budget will come two years from now and we will open that just to deal with the population growth in my area. It is a very unfortunate situation. I think the petrol station situation was reported in *The West Australian*. Unfortunately, the previous member for Southern River, Peter Abetz, wrote to a lot of parents saying why the petrol station was not that bad. I think he said that his office was next to a petrol station and it was not that bad. Unfortunately, the papers called him “Petrol Pete” for that, which I thought was a bit unfair, but he probably should, firstly, not have suggested that the petrol station was safe and, secondly, made sure the primary schools were built.

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I move now to Metronet. One of the biggest capital spends in my electorate will be the building of two Canning Vale train stations, which were promised by the previous government in 2008 and 2013. That government said it would do it. I have to say, again, I think a big part of the reason we had twice the state electoral swing in Southern River was because the community knew it had been promised these things. We were not as well publicised as Ellenbrook and the previous government failed to deliver rail there, but people knew it had been promised. It is not a lot to ask that it be delivered after eight and a half years. I will be fair, if we are lucky to be here for eight and a half years and have not built the Canning Vale train line, the community should ask: what have you done? The good news of course is that the capital funding in this budget will allow us to ensure that that funding will now come. The \$535 million will allow for the development of train stations at Nicholson Road and Ranford Road, the tracks to be moved to the north and the relevant bridge works to be done. It will encompass funding for the new 102 railcars, which will be procured locally, using local apprentices. It is very, very important infrastructure. Associated with that is the \$500 000 capital infrastructure in this budget for the Nicholson Road roundabout. The roundabout is a big problem in part of the intersection at Canning Vale. It adjoins the electorate of Thornlie. I wish to mention the member for Thornlie, whose birthday it is today, and I wish him all the best, of course. Our electorates meet at that roundabout. It is an area in which car crashes are extremely prolific. It is a huge traffic area. The \$500 000 will be provided to change the metering of and access to cars, which is very important. About 10 of the speed bumps on Gay Street, Huntingdale, will be removed and replaced by chicanes, which are tight-turn mini-roundabouts—important, key parts of infrastructure—to ensure that cars slow down. That has been greeted with great pleasure by the community and I am looking forward to continuing that conversation as we continue to deliver that commitment.

A cheque for \$150 000 for the Gosnells Cricket Club has been handed over to the City of Gosnells and it is holding onto that. I have to say, that it was wonderful to go out with Minister Murray, the Minister for Sport and Recreation. I publicly acknowledge that it was a wonderful visit out to that cricket club.

Mr M.P. Murray: Thank you

Mr T.J. HEALY: The kids were very appreciative and it shows that although a promise was made mere months ago, this government has already delivered on that capital infrastructure. It means that the students and the community will see the works proceed now as opposed to waiting eight years and seeing nothing. Why did the previous Liberal government not invest in the projects I have just mentioned? They were not brilliant ideas of mine in the last couple of months; they are well-known projects that could have been funded eight years ago. Even if we said other things such as public transport and sports clubs are peripheral issues, which I disagree with—they are all important—but said well over 1 000 students in a primary school is negligent, why did the previous government not try to build even one primary school? Why did it promise to do things but never deliver? Who was in charge? I do not know and I do not want to hurt the opposition's feelings too much but what was the process? I am very new to this; I have been here for only six months and am fairly naive. I am a very humble former high school teacher and a humble local Santa Claus for my local community in Gosnells. I have the ability to talk to my Premier and say, "Mr Premier, this is important infrastructure for my community." I can say to the Treasurer that this is what needs to be done. They say, "Yes, we committed to it and we will deliver it." I commend a government that is cohesive and organised and will do this.

I mentioned that my electorate is only one of 59 electorates in this place but it is important that all our electorates received capital funding. I will mention a few of the items, just quickly—I note the time. I will start with the member for Cottesloe. His electorate will receive \$6.4 million for City Beach residential college capital infrastructure. In the electorate of the member for Kalgoorlie, \$45 million will be spent on the Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School. I mentioned the Cape Naturaliste college in the electorate of Vasse yesterday. In the electorate of South Perth, there is the capital infrastructure for implementing the Manning Road on-ramp construction. In the electorate of Hillarys, there is the replacement of jetties in Hillarys Boat Harbour. I have mentioned the Churchlands Senior High School funding, and primary schools in Wembley and West Leederville. I have mentioned the underground power that the electorate of the member for Bateman will receive. These are fantastic initiatives. They are fantastic examples of how this government will invest in capital infrastructure in all our electorates.

What capital infrastructure did the Liberals build? It is interesting, and I will probably need further time to deal with this later, but I do want to touch on it before there is a by-election for the seat of Cottesloe. What did they build? There were a lot of golden statues of the member for Cottesloe. They seem to be littered around the community—things like Elizabeth Quay, built with the tears, hopes and dreams of our youth, with the rushed, dodgy park; the Perth Children's Hospital that is procured and sent offshore; and the footbridge for the stadium. All of these things are nice projects, but were they essential, when other projects were more important?

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I finalise my comments by saying that Labor is a responsible government. We are returning to an era of responsible financial management. I applaud this government's investment in capital infrastructure that benefits every one of the 59 electorates represented in this chamber, and say thank you; it is appreciated.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo) [3.42 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the debate on the third reading of the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. In particular, I would like to speak specifically about one capital investment that is happening in the northern suburbs. As members know, the government is making significant capital investments in the northern suburbs. The northern suburbs, and Wanneroo, had been taken for granted for a very long time by the previous government, and that neglect is one of the reasons the former government is now sitting on the opposite side, and we are coming right the way around towards it. The commitment in the northern suburbs that I want to elaborate on in particular highlights clearly the difference between the priorities of this government and those of the opposition. I have previously highlighted the government's commitment of \$500 000 towards much-needed toilet and change room upgrades at the Kingsway Regional Sporting Complex. I acknowledge at the outset the member for Girrawheen, whose grievance on 10 November 2016 in this house clearly highlighted the desperate need for upgrades to this facility. I congratulate her for her ongoing advocacy and lobbying for that netball facility.

Before I go to the specifics of the government's capital commitment, the government's record of commitment to women has been proven in this place. I noted very carefully your comments earlier today in that regard, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr S.J. Price). I can see our record in front of me. The government has 15 women members in the Legislative Assembly and seven women members in the Legislative Council. We have elected the first female Leader of the House in the Legislative Council, and the first female President of the Legislative Council. On this International Day of the Girl Child, which is important for celebrating the potential of girls —

Point of Order

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: A ruling was made some time ago by you, Mr Acting Speaker, about relevance to the capital aspect of this appropriation bill. I ask that you make an interpretation of whether the member has strayed beyond the realms of this debate.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price): Yes, member for Wanneroo, if you can keep your comments closely aligned to the capital bill that we are debating at the moment, that would be appreciated.

Debate Resumed

Ms S. WINTON: Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. I am a little bit disappointed but not surprised that the opposition does not see the connection in the point I am making. The capital expenditure that I am specifically referring to is the Kingsway netball facility, and the toilets. Anyone would know that netball is played by girls, so it is particularly significant that I am alerting the house that the government is investing \$500 000 on toilet upgrades for women's sport in the northern suburbs—something that the opposition has not done for years. Placing a priority on the participation of women and girls in sport is an example of what this government stands for. I am a mother of three daughters and they all play netball, so there is relevance in what I am saying. Members would understand my passion for advancing women's issues, and particularly women's sports, and the facilities needed to enable women and girls to participate in sport.

Let me tell the chamber a bit about the Kingsway Regional Sporting Complex, where the government is making a capital contribution. It has 57 netball courts, and is the home of the Wanneroo Districts Netball Association, a fine and mighty association. The centre hosts some 5 500 players in over 500 teams. Thousands of volunteers go to the netball complex every Saturday. This is truly a regional hub for women, who are highly represented in this place, and the great game of netball, which is played by women and girls. The complex was first established in 1974 with six courts. I could not resist showing the chamber a photograph of me playing netball at the complex back in 1976, as a 12-year-old, with my GA bib on. I think I was pretty good back in those days. The reason I highlight this photograph is that in the background, the facilities that I am talking about can be seen. The toilets that existed when I was 12 years old—some 40 years ago—have not changed; they are exactly the same right now. That is why the government is committing \$500 000 to make sure that this facility is upgraded. It is unbelievable that it has taken this long, and that it has taken this government, to identify the need to upgrade this facility. Although I have changed a little bit, the change room and toilet facilities for the girls using this facility and their families have not. The growth that that facility has enjoyed in the past eight years is interesting.

[Quorum formed.]

Ms S.E. WINTON: As I was saying, the growth of this facility, which is used by girls and women, is particularly important to highlight on this day, being the International Day of the Girl Child, a day on which I want to recognise that we have more women parliamentarians than ever. Back in 2008, 363 teams played at this facility, and now, in 2017, we have 556 teams. Over 275 of those teams are under-12s. It has been my great pleasure to work with the

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Wanneroo Districts Netball Association to champion this cause. The association is doing great things under the leadership of its president, Judy McInerney. The growth of the association is phenomenal. The director of the facility, Malcolm Wright, does an incredible job, considering the size and scale of the association and the sad state of the facilities.

There has been little, or no, investment by the state government in this facility. The previous member did nothing to improve this facility during the eight years of the former government. As I have said, the member for Girrawheen brought a grievance to this house on this matter. I note that the Leader of the National Party, who was the then Minister for Sport and Recreation, acknowledged in her response to the member for Girrawheen's grievance that she was made aware of the situation. She said —

For anyone who has seen them, —

That is, the toilets, all five of them —

it is clear that the toilet facilities are not up to the demand of a very thriving club and association.

She said also —

The association would have a very good case because the facilities at the moment are clearly not catering for the number of women who are out on the courts.

The former government did nothing about that situation.

I find it extraordinary that day after day in this place, I listen to members of the opposition—the Liberals and the Nationals—carry on like pork chops about what we are spending money on and what we are not spending money on. This is a good example of the responsible capital infrastructure spend to which this government has committed. We are spending \$500 000 to ensure that up to 40 toilets are provided for the more than 5 000 girls and women who play netball so that they will not have to line up for the five toilets that are currently available. Members should think about the outcome that we will get from that spend of \$500 000. I compare that with what the National Party was able to achieve with its royalties for regions program. Royalties for regions has achieved fantastic things. However, I cannot help but note that \$250 000 was expended from royalties for regions for a prefabricated, automatic, talking, musical toilet for Bunbury. That was \$250 000 for one toilet, when over 5 000 netball players in the northern suburbs have had to endure using fewer than a dozen toilets. I mean, really! That is quite unbelievable.

I am delighted that under the Mark McGowan government, the priorities have changed. We have made significant commitments to capital expenditure in the northern suburbs. The constituents of the members for Kingsley, Joondalup, Girrawheen, Mirrabooka, West Swan and Wanneroo, and the federal member for Cowan, use the Kingsway facility. Guess what? All those members of Parliament are women. That is quite extraordinary. It is no coincidence that the northern suburbs is finally getting representation in this Parliament, and in the federal Parliament, by those women members of Parliament.

During the election campaign, a petition was circulated from the community, with over 2 000 signatures, that demanded that we invest in our girls and give them decent facilities. This government has listened. We are representing the northern suburbs and we are making sure that women and girls get their fair share. We know from the research that teenage girls in Australia face an epidemic of chronic conditions, including depression, obesity and other health issues, unless they get active. The majority of those girls are teenagers. I have three daughters. It is very important as they become teenagers to encourage them to keep playing sport. Members would be amazed if they saw the facilities at Kingsway why any girl in her teenage years would want to continue playing sport at those facilities. There is nowhere to get changed. There is no time to go to the toilet between games because of the long queues. How that is supposed to encourage our girls to keep active and participate in sport is beyond me. I am happy to say that our local northern suburbs members of Parliament have been working closely with the City of Wanneroo to ensure that we deliver this upgrade. At the recent council meeting on 19 September, the council acknowledged the state government's \$500 000 capital commitment as part of its report for progressing these much-needed works. I have played netball and I have been a long-time netball mum with my three daughters. I am absolutely delighted that the female members of Parliament in the northern suburbs are finally advocating and making sure that girls get their fair share of the capital works in this budget. Thank you.

MR Y. MUBARAKAI (Jandakot) [3.55 pm]: I am pleased to talk about the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the capital commitments that the McGowan Labor government has made to the electorate of Jandakot. Other members have discussed the capital commitments to their electorates.

I have spoken in this place previously about how the electorate of Jandakot is very diverse. It is a cultural melting pot. It also comprises a diversity of land uses, ranging from the booming new residential areas of Piara Waters, Harrisdale, Forrestdale and Treeby, to the large semi-rural lots around Jandakot Airport, to urban Leeming, and to Canning Vale's mix of commercial and industrial landholdings. It is important to note that the electorate of

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Jandakot is growing quickly. To give two examples, around 2 000 people currently reside in the suburb of Treeby, and that is expected to increase over the next 15 years to a staggering 9 000 residents. The population of Forrestdale is projected to quadruple over the next 15 years. This level of diversity and growth brings with it many competing needs, wants and interests, and the challenge of ensuring that the needs and expectations of these communities are met in the provision of services and infrastructure. Population growth obviously brings with it the need for more schools, transport infrastructure and services to provide a productive lifestyle for the people who live in those communities. We are all aware, of course, that we need to get on with the task of getting the state's finances back on track. However, I am pleased that with all these factors to consider, the McGowan Labor government has invested in the electorate of Jandakot in its first budget since it gained government. I believe this budget establishes a strong base from which this government can meet the needs of my community in the years to come.

I am pleased to say that having listened to the people who live in the area, this government has brought down a budget that is balanced and diverse. This budget meets the government's election commitments to provide jobs and deliver on key infrastructure projects such as Metronet and essential services such as health and education. It is fantastic that \$535.8 million has been committed in this budget to capital works for the important Metronet project. This 17.5-kilometre rail project will connect the Thornlie and Cockburn Central stations as the start of the new circle line. The project includes two stations in Canning Vale, at Nicholson Road and Ranford Road, which will provide residents and workers in the surrounding suburbs with much improved access to the city and the new Burswood stadium.

The member for Southern River, Terry Healy, and I were fortunate to have the Minister for Transport, Rita Saffioti, in the electorate recently at our Metronet community forum at Harrisdale Pavilion. It was very well attended by over 200 community members keen and interested to hear about the details of the project. This goes to show that the interest and level of engagement from the community will continue as these projects go into the construction stage. I am pleased to report that the Cockburn–Thornlie line will not only create more than 1 600 jobs, but will be a crucial element in improving connectivity along the southern corridor, where in the last decade, as I have mentioned, we have seen a huge increase in urban sprawl.

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.