

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON SIMON O'BRIEN (South Metropolitan) [5.06 pm]: Madam President, thank you very much for once again calling me to address this important question. Prior to question time, I indicated that I wanted to canvass a couple of matters in the course of my contribution. One of those matters relates to the aftermath and wash-up from the recent state election and the change of government and what goes with it. The other, which I will come to a little bit later, is about some matters that I think will be of interest to all Western Australians, particularly those living in Perth who are concerned about traffic congestion. I will come to that in just a moment.

Firstly, I want to acknowledge the very kind remarks of Hon Darren West earlier in this debate. In response to an unruly interjection from me he said, as recorded on page 594 of *Hansard*, "I look forward to the honourable member's contribution." To Hon Darren West I say, hug yourself in delicious anticipation because the moment is nigh but, sadly, my dear friend is away from the chamber on urgent parliamentary business. We hope he gets well soon; I mean that genuinely, of course. He will have to have the benefit of my experience via *Hansard* or, if he is really desperately, deliriously ill, via some electronic means if he is monitoring this debate remotely. In the course of his contribution, he raised some matters post the election that I think command a response. Firstly, the demeanour of his remarks, to me, was seriously very encouraging. It encourages me that regarding the degree of rot that has already set in to this government before it has even started, in this particular interlude—which came after a crushing defeat from our point of view on 11 March—there is light at the end of the tunnel.

One of the responsibilities that I have to assume as the father of the house is to say certain really irritating things from time to time. That is a heavy responsibility that I will accept, so members will now hear me say, and not for the last time, the following: all governments come and go. That is one of the things that is true and not debatable, in this place or any other. Sometimes members can get a bit carried away with themselves after an election result and think they are bulletproof. I know. I warned a whole heap of them about it in 2015, saying, "I'm going to be here at least until May 2017. I'm concerned that a lot of you aren't going to be here after March 2017." Nobody wanted to hear that, because they had won their seats by big margins in 2013, thanks to the efforts of Julia and Kevin and the issues of the day. They did not want to hear from me; they did not want to hear a discordant note. They did not want to hear about whether any person, be they prince, pauper or emperor, wore any clothes or not. I never wanted to be in a position to say "I told you so" to those then colleagues. When the time came to say "I told you so", if I wanted to, it was pointless anyway because none of them were left! That is what happens sometimes when people do not understand how they came to be here in the first place, how their party comes to the government benches and how they think they are the best thing since sliced bread and they can do no wrong.

Hon Darren West reassured me that the very substantial seed of decay is already alive and well in the Australian Labor Party, which convinced me, as with all other governments, that this government will go as well. It might well be sooner rather than later. Thanks very much for that, but I have to correct him on a couple of things that he raised. Firstly, my attention was drawn to his remarks in *Hansard*, in which he was telling us —

... how tiresome it is for Labor governments to come into office and have to clean up the mess.

That was his conclusion. In effect, he said that not only had the Barnett government recently been the government that saw a downgrading of the state's AAA credit rating, but also we were serial offenders, because the Court government left a similar legacy that had to be cleaned up by the Gallop government. I do not know about my short-term memory but my long-term memory is pretty intact, and there is a two-syllable word to describe that claim. Members might know what it is; it is nonsense—absolute nonsense. The facts have to be placed on the record because we cannot let those assertions stand. I have recourse to relevant parts of history. I am not sure where the honourable member gets his information from but it certainly does not gel with my understanding of what happened, and I was a keen observer of politics at the material time. Back in the days of the Lawrence Labor government, the state's AAA credit rating was downgraded and it was a political scandal of the day. Yes, my side made a great deal of mileage of it, as well we might, but it certainly was not the Richard Court government that presided over the loss of the AAA credit rating. That was the government that worked hard to have it restored.

I remind members of an article by Colleen Egan, a journalist of repute, writing in *The Australian*, a journal of record, on Tuesday, 5 December 2000. Under the heading "Premier gets a AAA-grade present for election lead-up", she stated —

THE Court Government was handed a modest pre-election gift yesterday with the retention of the AAA credit rating for Western Australia by Standard & Poor's.

Another interesting comment states —

But the good report card appeared to be tenuous, with the ratings agency citing recent privatisation as the main reason for the tick.

It went on to state —

Premier Richard Court said yesterday the Government had struck a good balance between tight fiscal policy and reasonable budgets for public works and services.

He was clearly pleased, if not relieved, to retain the rating, which was restored in 1998 after being downgraded to AA in 1991 after the disastrous WA Inc years.

If we look at the available documentation, we can find a number of credit rating histories from Standard and Poor's and others. I wonder whether these are the things that perhaps my friend read in a particular way, because it is possible to read and interpret ratings listings in different ways. I do not want to go into whether he was looking at local currency ratings, long term or short term, or whether he was looking at foreign currency ratings, short term or long term. A range of ratings can be held at the same time. For example, AAA, stable, A1+ was one of the ratings held during the time of the Court government. I do not think that really matters. Suffice to say, it is a matter of historical record that the Lawrence Labor government presided over the downgrading of a AAA credit rating. It is also a matter of historical record that the Barnett government was in office at the time of a downgrading of the credit rating. What that means is perhaps an argument for another day. Certainly, in political terms, it is dynamite. There is some practical effect, but I am not going to get into that now. Suffice to say, if the member opposite wants to make an issue of it, it is one—all. In terms of fixing up the mess, it is one to us and it is zero to the ALP. That is the record. The ALP has said it is now charging to the rescue, and Hon Darren West is very enthusiastic about that. The Labor Party is coming to fix up the mess. He told us what the parameters are but he needs to be aware that at this stage, in terms of downgrades, it is one—all, and in terms of "fixing up the mess", as he wants to term it—as if it were that simple—it is one—nil, our favour. The ball is very much in the new government's court. I wonder what the government is going to do. I wonder what Hon Darren West's response will be to a further downgrade of the state's credit rating. That might change the dialogue that I have just highlighted. I imagine it will be someone else's fault when that happens. I remember the look on the face of the Treasurer in recent days when he came face to face with the reality that changing commodity prices have a dramatic negative effect on the budget outlook. Welcome to the real world, Treasurer, I would say to him. The former Treasurer would like to point out to the new Treasurer that sometimes we have to deal with the hand we are dealt, even though it is not the one we engineered or asked for. We shall see, but if the member is determined that credit ratings and upgrades and downgrades will be a key criterion, that is fine. Let us find out what this government proposes to do about restoring the state's credit rating. Let us see if it is capable of taking responsibility for the credit rating not being further downgraded. Those matters will no doubt be touched on as bills yet to come before the house are finally received.

I have been listening with great interest to the debate that has been going on between the Leader of the Opposition, a former education minister, and the Leader of the House, the current Minister for Education and Training. That is very interesting, and we will find out a bit more about the Perth Modern School saga in due course. I have listened with great interest to what the respective leaders have had to say, and I do not believe that a solution like the one that was announced this morning could be arrived at overnight, and yet that is what the government would have us believe. We do not want to be bamboozled with talk about whether we do consultation about this or that, or something else. I never thought "consultation" was such a dirty word, as it apparently is with this government. I know that is not possible to backflip from an undeveloped proposal to move a school from the Perth Modern School site to a central office site, and then replace it with another—I will not even call it half-baked—completely unbaked idea to create a new high school in a place that has never been contemplated for use as a high school. That is not how governments should go about developing infrastructure. It cannot just be done on a wing and a prayer. How on earth is the government going to get a high school in place in Subiaco by 2020? It can only be done if all the classes are held in tents. It will not be possible to do all the things that are necessary and prudent to create such a school in the time available.

I am a former minister for works, so I know what is involved in what the government is contemplating. There is no business case that I am aware of. If anybody can tell me by way of interjection or otherwise that there is a business case, that is fine, but are members on the government side seriously saying that they intend to go ahead on this course that the government has outlined to build a senior high school in the Kitchener Park area in Subiaco, come hell or high water? Where on earth is the work that is necessary before embarking on such a course of action? It does not exist. How many millions of dollars will be spent on this? The government does not know. What environmental and other considerations have to be complied with before it can go ahead? I do not believe the government knows; if it does know it could easily tell us. I do not know how the government proposes, or whether it has even considered, getting around the A-class reserve status of Kitchener Park. So many other things on the

one hand cause me concern, but on the other give me some comfort that this government is not as good as it thinks it is. It is carried away by a dramatic result which is no more dramatic than the result we had in 2013.

Before I move off that subject, I wish to make one other point. I heard a bit of bleating, from not only my good friend Hon Darren West, but also the Leader of the House and others, asking why, if the election result delivered the government 75 per cent of seats in the Legislative Assembly, it does not have a similar result in the Legislative Council. Why does the government not have 75 per cent of the seats in this chamber? It is not fair, is it? I can almost see the foot stamping and the breath holding. It is not fair. Again, members opposite need to understand how politics works in this state, and they also need to show a little bit of humility, and they might comprehend this. The result that the Australian Labor Party got in the Legislative Council is exactly what it should have got, give or take. The number of seats that the government holds is roughly proportionate with the vote that it received across the state. The Liberal Party has nine seats out of 36, which is 25 per cent of the seats. I think that even we did a little bit better than getting 25 per cent of the vote across the state. Is the government going to stand up and say that we were duded? We are not saying that at all. If I look at the other parties on the crossbenches and correlate the number of seats that they have got with the votes that they got, it is a darn sight closer than members opposite might have us believe. Conversely, did the Labor Party candidates—I have already congratulated them on a great and very personally satisfying result—get 75 per cent of the vote across the state? No, they did not. They got 40-something per cent, or 45 per cent, just off the top of my head, as a ballpark figure. That is a very high proportion to get for a major party. It is a high-water mark. We will find out again what a high-water mark is when the tide goes out. It was a significant part of the vote and it was enough, with preferences, to secure the vast majority of the seats, and the government benches. However, the government did not get 75 per cent of the vote, but it got 75 per cent of the seats in the Assembly. Why is the government not crying foul about that? That is the aberration, if there is one—75 per cent of the seats on 45 per cent of the vote. We know how that happens, with single-member constituencies, and I am not arguing against that. However, the government should not come in here and try out some voodoo logic that suggests that it should have 75 per cent of the seats in this chamber, just because it got such an overwhelming result in the Legislative Assembly. Why would the government want that? It wants that because it could then push through anything it wanted without regard for what the people want. Would that be good for Western Australia? No. Acknowledging that the ALP is so clever—because a whole lot of people in the Labor Party were saying how wonderful they were on 11 March and how they were untouchable—does the Labor Party ever get it wrong? Yes, it does. It is quite capable of getting things wrong.

Hon Peter Collier: It only took two months—Perth Mod.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: They got things wrong before then, but that is a noticeable one for today—talk about a backflip with a full pike and a half twist!

All governments get things wrong and have to be held to account. I heard some people sucking in their breath—at least mentally—when I described an occasion on which I pointed out a deficiency to my party room a few years ago. The fact of the matter is that governments of all kinds come and go and governments of all kinds occasionally get things wrong. That is when it comes to this house and our responsibility to do what the other house cannot do. We are not necessarily dominated by the government party. It does not happen in this day and age. We can be a genuine and impartial house of review, whereas that place over there cannot be. By definition, the government of the day has the numbers down there and the Premier of the day has the power. By and large, those who give him the power watch their p's and q's because they are brand-new. They are very delighted to be there and think, "How clever we are! Aren't we lucky that the leader has bestowed his benign countenance upon us—so we'd better watch out." We cannot rely on the good folk down there to keep the bastards honest because it never happens. It is up to us in this place to do it. It is absolute tripe for anyone, whether they are from the ALP or wherever else—I have not heard anyone else saying it—to suggest that because Labor has 75 per cent of the seats in the Legislative Assembly, it should have 75 per cent of the seats here as well. Rubbish! If anything, if we follow that logic, Labor should have 45 per cent of the seats in the Legislative Assembly. I am not saying that that is how it should have come about, but in a place where we have proportional representation, we are more representative, in the purest sense, in this house than they are in the Legislative Assembly.

I want to return to a speech I made on 20 February, 2014. I moved the motion —

That this house encourages the government to make greater efforts to inculcate better driving habits in Western Australian motorists.

This motion struck quite a chord at the time. Hon Rick Mazza might recall that members on all sides were keen to get up to contribute to the debate in which I challenged members to contemplate whether Western Australian drivers were really useless or just spoilt. I was born and bred in Perth; I remember the good old days when it was an overgrown country town. Is it the case that we are spoilt by all those big open roads and wide open spaces? As our population becomes more and more dense—I am talking about population density here!—and the traffic

becomes more and more congested and there are proportionally a greater number of cars and other vehicles on the road per linear kilometre, are we having trouble getting used to these newfangled freeways?

Hon Rick Mazza: I think you determined that it was both.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: It is a bit of both. I thank Hon Rick Mazza.

Hon Ken Travers joined in the debate with gusto and it was taken up by media outlets as well. We had the Ken and Simon show, us both being past transport spokespeople for our respective parties over many years. We had some great bipartisan discussions. We were almost a tag team on one or two radio stations. The theme of useless drivers, merging and people who cannot merge—all of that—was taken up. We offered some constructive comment. Ken is another member who came in on the day I started but he has now left this place. We had a good constructive debate. I pointed out a number of things on that occasion. If members are interested, they can look up *Hansard* from 20 February, 2014 and follow that debate. I wanted to get a couple of key elements across. One of the points was that we have lanes where people are expected to merge where the dotted line between two adjacent freeway lanes simply stops and later on the road converges. Somehow Western Australians, with their uncanny inability to merge, are expected to work it out. I said, “No, that’s not how you do it.” I can see Hon Diane Evers smiling. Perhaps she will relate to what I am about to remind the house of. When we go overseas and hire a car in Europe—the UK was the example that I gave—that is when Western Australians learn how to drive. When we are on the M1, which is four or five lanes wide, bumper-to-bumper and we are all going along at about 130 or 140 kilometres per hour, that is when we have to learn how to drive, merge and what have you. One of the examples that I described of the engineering of the roads in the UK was of a lane discontinuing and the driver having to merge into—in most cases—the right-hand lane. There are big arrows for some hundreds of metres in the terminating lane that show a turn to the right. That lane actually stops; the dotted line closes to the end so drivers literally run out of lane. The point of those arrows is in the right-hand lane—the continuing lane, if you like. The psychology of that—it works very well—is that everyone, whether they are in the terminating lane or the continuing lane, can see those big white arrows that tell drivers in the left-hand lane that it is about to terminate and they will have to move over before they run out of road. The arrows indicate to those in the continuing lane that the traffic next to them will be merging so they have to make sure they let that traffic in. If everyone understands it that way, that is how it works.

What was the response that we got for years and years from plenty of people in Main Roads? It was that we could not possibly do that here. Blow it! This time we actually succeeded. In the couple of years since then we have seen that tried and installed on many of our roads; the on-ramp north at Canning Highway onto Kwinana Freeway is a very good example. They got a little wrong at first but now it works very well indeed. I think that today we can declare that Western Australians are learning how to merge. They are doing it by a change in road geometry, without spending hundreds of millions of dollars on engineering solutions that provide extra lanes. We have a percentage improvement in road behaviour simply because we have a greater understanding inspired by different road markings and a slightly different road layout that is enabling people to merge. Is everyone there yet with the merging? Tragically, no.

My attention was drawn to a letter in *The West Australian* just last Wednesday, 7 June, from a dear lady from East Victoria Park. I will read out a little bit of the letter in a minute but I want to make it quite clear, Mr Acting President, that if the President is listening or becomes aware of this debate that I would not dream of casting any sort of aspersions on or make generalisations about the driving ability of women drivers through East Victoria Park. The Leader of the House similarly would be reassured that I would not dream of doing any such thing. However, this dear lady from East Vic Park says in part in her letter to the editor —

Sometimes you have to exceed the speed limit to merge. With the road running out, and the driver on your right accelerating to prevent you getting in front of him, you have no other course but to exceed the speed limit to avoid an accident.

I do not think that that dear lady has quite got the merging idea right yet. We are not there yet; we need to keep reinforcing but I am seeing a great deal of improvement on our roads, and I am someone who takes a bit of notice of this having worked with successive Commissioners of Main Roads over the years. There is more that we can and should do, and I want to put this out there. Firstly, we need to congratulate Main Roads Western Australia for doing what it has done—it is actually working and we would like to see more of it. However, a few people need to work out what they can contribute. Back in the 1950s when the Americans brought in their freeways, they worked out how to educate people and Walt Disney produced instructional cartoons to show people how to go about it. Later the WA government brought in its program called “It’s Child’s Play”—members might recall—from late last year I think it was. They were simple messages but good messages. On 20 February 2014, I pointed out that what we do not need, for example, the Canning Highway on-ramp to Kwinana Freeway is a 60-kilometre-an-hour zone that then suddenly it becomes a 100-kilometre-an-hour zone 50 metres before the freeway and a driver has to somehow come up to freeway speed from there. I indicated that what we need is

perhaps not a sign but the general understanding, particularly by those who have speed cameras in their hands, that a person on an on-ramp to a freeway needs to be able to come up to speed. If we put up a sign, it would have to say something like this: "Freeway starts. Come up to freeway speed." I am not suggesting that we have a 300-foot sign saying all of that, but that is what a driver is meant to do. But what happens? Sometimes we end up with a police officer on the other side of the 100-kilometre-an-hour sign with his speed gun up to make sure that people are not exceeding 60 kilometres an hour on an on-ramp to a freeway where there are no pedestrians or driveways and people should be coming up to freeway speed whether it is 100 kilometres an hour and flowing nicely or crawling along at 30 kilometres an hour; that is what people should be concentrating on. We have this big-country-town mentality that we have not quite ironed out in officialdom or drivers.

The other thing that I would like to see improve and needs to improve is that with the introduction of more and more roundabouts to the exclusion of traffic lights we need to make sure that all drivers collectively understand how we are meant to go about using roundabouts, because at this stage it is something that is fairly new. I am seeing some signs of hopelessness around the chamber, but I am sure that if we can do it with merging, we can do it with roundabouts as well.

Again, we need to understand that the whole purpose of a freeway system and making it work is to avoid to the extent possible the need to hit the brakes. It is all about keeping the traffic flowing. It does not matter if the notional speed limit is 100 kilometres an hour but the traffic is moving at 40; that is not a terrible thing. That just recognises that it is really busy, but if a person is travelling at 40, they are doing very, very well. The problem is when people hit their brakes and their accelerator too often. They come up behind people and then stop, and that then causes a ripple effect of stop-start, which causes dysfunctional traffic. I encourage everyone to ease off the accelerator. To the lady from East Victoria Park who reckons we have to speed up in a race to get to the merge point ahead of the other person, that is not what we do. One of the drivers needs to back off and just let the other one in. If people understand that it is not a burden to ease off the accelerator, it will actually make their journey a lot easier and smoother. Perhaps on another occasion I might even dare to venture into the highly problematic and controversial area of variable speed limits, about where we make use of our freeways best by all driving at a speed that enables us to keep moving. Do members remember when the Narrows Bridge was being duplicated? Lanes were shut on the approaches to the old narrows and I think the maximum speed limit was 60 kilometres an hour along the area just in front of Parliament House. I have never seen the traffic flow better than it did at that time. The speed limit was 60 kilometres an hour, a lane was shut and yet the traffic flowed better than it does on any other day of the week. Perhaps that was because people then were, by necessity, having to back off and travel at a speed that did in fact allow the traffic to keep flowing. Anyway, we will talk about that no doubt many times in the future, but we need to be prepared to challenge some traditional ways of doing things and work out what we are trying to do as a community to address this question of congestion. Opposition members will talk about congestion this and congestion that. I have done it in other decades and what have you, but it is part of the game. The fact is that we all have to be part of the solution.

Finally, I want to conclude with some comments to the Leader of the House in her capacity as Minister for Education and Training. I dropped some remarks earlier in my speech about some matters, and she would not have wanted to hear any of that about Perth Modern School and Kitchener Park and so on.

Hon Sue Ellery: I was here; I heard everything you said.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: Yes, and the Leader of the House probably did not feel like sitting through more of that. Although critical in part, those comments are actually offered in good faith. I would like to see value for money and good outcomes for the students of this state and their parents. I think that the Leader of the House would share those sentiments very much as well. Congratulations on having the guts to recognise that that was not going to fly and making a decision collectively to revisit that path. I mean that because she knows she is going to get the sort of flak about backflips that a minister gets when they change their mind, but good on her for that decision. I am sure the Leader of the House was involved in it and was not just told to do it or anything. In the same spirit, I urge her to have a look at what was done under the previous administration and she might find that some very good work has been done on not only the plans for City Beach and Mt Lawley, but also a range of other measures. I hope she will do that. I only encourage her to do so.

Finally, I was at South Fremantle Senior High School the other day. South Fremantle Senior High School, of course, is going to become Fremantle College, a new institution on that site. I do not know whether the minister has had the opportunity to go back to South Fremantle since she has come to government.

Hon Sue Ellery: I haven't, but I spoke yesterday to one of the deputy leaders at the new Fremantle College.

Hon SIMON O'BRIEN: No doubt she will find her way down there sooner rather than later. It is coming along; there is a lot of work going on. The principal will be Myles Draper, who came from Applecross Senior High School. He showed us around. To give some feedback to the minister, I think the new operation is coming together pretty well and we would all like that to be a success. Perhaps I will get an opportunity outside of the house to pass

on some observations of mine to the minister if she is interested in how we can make sure that it goes even better. I think it will be a great success. I want to join in making it a great success for the benefit of the people of Freo and the South Metropolitan Region generally.

May I conclude by again offering my support to the motion. I value the opportunities to vent matters of some interest, and this is a splendid vehicle by which to do that. I commend the motion to the house.

HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral — Deputy Leader of the National Party) [5.51 pm]: I rise just before the dinner break, but I will make some further comments after we have had the opportunity to have dinner. I rise in the first instance to express my thanks to Her Excellency Kerry Sanderson, Governor of the state of Western Australia. It is always a great opportunity to be involved in such an important occasion as the opening of a new Parliament. To have the first female Governor address the Legislative Council and, indeed, members of the other house as we formally opened the fortieth Parliament was definitely a memorable moment in many ways. As has been said repeatedly by many members of the house, the very fact that Her Excellency Kerry Sanderson was the first female Governor to address the Legislative Council and members of the other house on the opening day was something that I, as a female member of this house and the Parliament of Western Australia, was exceptionally proud to be involved in.

The fortieth Parliament has created quite a few historic moments in its infancy, with the first female President of the house and the first female Leader of the Government in this house in Hon Sue Ellery. It is exceptionally important to commemorate those moments of history making, because they forge a path forward for us as a society and as a Parliament representing the people when we come here and debate their issues. It is exceptionally important that we remember those moments and record for history the momentous occasion it was for each member to celebrate those firsts in this fortieth Parliament.

When I spoke to my daughter, who turned 18 last weekend, about the fact that we have the first female President of the house, the first female Leader of the Government and, indeed, the first female Governor of the state, she thought it was incredible that it had taken this amount of time to get to that position. It made me reflect on when I was a young woman—that was some time ago—and the real progress we have seen in the landscape of female representation in the business sector and in the field of education, and in the Parliament, which is the ultimate leading organisation in the nation. My daughter's take on that was that it should have been done sooner, and I agree with that, but we have got there. That is why we have to commemorate those moments. It is not just about women commemorating other women as they make those achievements; it is something that the fortieth Parliament—I have heard this from other members of the house—needs to celebrate jointly. This is not about men or women; it is about how we progress as a representative society and while representing 50 per cent of the population, as women do in the houses of Parliament. As I, as Deputy Leader of the National Party and Leader of the National Party in the Legislative Council, and Mia Davies, as the first female Leader of the National Party, seek to work out how we will serve our tenures as leaders of our political party, one of the points that we would like to be a legacy of our leadership is that the National Party has a process in place to provide incentives for women to come into Parliament and to provide role model leadership and mentorship to young women and men as they seek to be involved in the greater debates within our organisation of the National Party. In turn, that means they can become involved in the greater debate that we have as members of Parliament. That is a great thing. If I can leave that as part of my legacy once I leave that role—hopefully, sometime into the future, but not tomorrow—I will be very happy about that.

I also recognise Hon Simon O'Brien and congratulate him on apparently being the first male Deputy President for some time. Well done. It is not a milestone. Many men have held that position, but I note that he felt the need to mention it in the house tonight. I congratulate him on that role.

I also welcome and congratulate the new members of the Legislative Council. One of the greatest honours that anybody can undertake in their career is to seek to represent the interests of the people in their electorate, as they do that in their role in this house. Sometimes it will be fantastic and sometimes it will be demoralising. Sometimes members will have a win and sometimes they will have to make some really tough decisions, but they will be in the interests of the greater community of Western Australia. It is a great privilege. It can be a great challenge as members balance the expectations of people within their organisations respectively and those of the people who voted for them. They expect members to robustly come to Parliament and represent their interests, as they should, not members' personal interests. That is not our job. We do not get to come here and talk about what we solely believe. It is about forming a responsible, reasonable position as we, as legislators, move forward the interests of regional Western Australia. It is a great achievement and members should celebrate it. We are not here for a long time. The great point about democracy in Australia is that people get to decide whether we stay or go, and I for one will always support that. It is one of the reasons we choose to live in Western Australia.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Dr Steve Thomas): Hon Jacqui Boydell, I note with interest that when we return, we will listen with pleasure to another first speech. On that basis, I invite you to seek the leave of the house to continue your remarks at a later stage of this day's sitting.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of this day's sitting.

Leave granted.

[Continued on page 729.]

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

HON TIM CLIFFORD (East Metropolitan) [7.30 pm]: Kaya, hello. I pay my respects to the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on today, the Whadjuk people, and the contribution they make to the life of the city and this region. Thank you, Madam President, for giving me this opportunity to address the Legislative Council of the fortieth Parliament of Western Australia, and congratulations on your appointment in becoming the first woman president of the Council; it is truly a historic occasion.

We are back! I am so proud that the Greens yet again have a presence in the East Metropolitan Region. I am looking forward to continuing the great work started by the previous member for East Metro, Hon Alison Xamon, who is now back representing the North Metropolitan Region. I have really valued Alison's support throughout the years and am looking forward to working closely with her, and also with my colleagues Hon Robin Chapple, member for Mining and Pastoral Region, and Hon Diane Evers, member for South West Region. The pathway to where I stand now has been lined with people who have prodded me along, stood strongly beside me, inspired me and helped me feel proud to be standing here today, not just as an individual elected by the constituents of East Metro, but also as a part of a strong, supportive community. There are too many people to thank individually; however, I would like to thank the following people in particular: Chantal Caruso, Chris Redman, Jonathon Hallet, Zia Hakimi, Mary O'Bryne, Andrew Beaton, Sophie Greer, Katrina House, Jo Campbell, Emma Pringle, Grace Turco and Phil Jenkins. I also thank my family, my mum and my dad and my three sisters; and my close friends Luke Barker and Janelle, who I am sure are watching tonight; Aaron Olszweski; Hayley Stinson and little Fred at home; Ashley Large; and Jesse Millea. I also thank the fantastic East Metro candidates Anthony Pyle, Sarah Quinton, Bhuwan Khadka, Iwan Boskamp, Gene Marshall, Lee-Anne Miles, Caroline Perks, Matt Biggs, Rafeif Ismael, Anne-Marie Ricciardi, Matt Roberts, Evan Webb, Don McAleese, Beth McMullan, Robyn Walsh and Sarah Nielsen-Harvey. I would also like to thank Scott Ludlam, Rachel Siewert, Jo Vallentine, Alison Xamon—again!—Giz Watson, Ruth Greble and Trish Cowcher. These people have had a big role in helping mentor me throughout the years. I would also like to thank especially again Caroline Perks; she was really supportive throughout this whole campaign and she can stop knocking on wood now, because we did it! Finally, thank you to the thousands of volunteers who took part in this amazing campaign, because without you I would not be standing here today.

I grew up in the quiet south west town of Albany, where I lived with my mum, Linda Graham, and my three sisters, Kerianne, Shenade and Nicole. My father, Dennis Clifford, worked away as a service man in the mining industry for months at a time. We did not have much, but we did not ask for much either. We did, however, live under a roof provided by the state and also relied on health care provided by the state. We knew and respected the value of those services, services that are at the core of our community and that should mean that no person, child or family goes without the home, health care or education that they need—yet, unfortunately many do. After leaving Albany, like so many, I began working in the construction industry as a labourer, which then eventually led to working in the mining industry as a fly in, fly out worker. I worked for a company that used workplace agreements as a tool to crush workers. They knew full well the personal circumstances of any given worker and would use it against them. Knowing the worker had a mortgage or a family, they would deny them pay rises or offer them something not to rock the boat. I know what it is like to carry the stress of a mortgage and battle with your employer, knowing that they might try to get rid of you if you take a stand, make any noise or create any waves against the unfair working conditions under which they operate. The odds are resoundingly stacked in favour of the big mining companies. Most people do not hear about the constant battles workers have with their employers over safety conditions, allowances, salaries and wages. Their voices are kept silent, but it is the workers' voices that the members of this chamber need to listen to most closely.

This was the impetus I needed to say enough is enough and to get involved and challenge the system. We need to challenge the status quo and fight for those who for too long have been denied a voice by the very rich, by the vested interests and by the neoliberalism that has seen the pursuit of financial reward at the expense of those things that truly matter. I am here to make sure that the current government does not sit back and regard its election as a job that has already been completed. Its political capital must not sit on the shelf for four more years. The challenges that existed under the Liberal government still remain today. I expect this government to expend capital on decreasing the housing waitlist, combating climate change, pushing for a 100 per cent renewable energy grid and ridding politics of the corrupting influence of corporate donations. If it does not, what is it here for? Is it to remain popular in the polls? That is not enough. It is never enough. I say to my colleagues from all parties: we are here to solve problems—homelessness, inequality, climate change, growing the renewable energy market and transforming Perth into a more liveable city. I am here to see real change and to ensure that in four years' time the people of Western Australia have

a better community than they have today, to ensure that people are being listened to and to ensure that we are working to deliver a better future for those who follow us.

The generations who follow us are our children, our friends and our future. I believe that in recent years they have had a bloody raw deal. During the election campaign a 22-year-old woman told me —

I'm sick of older people telling me that we are wrong. Just because we're young, it doesn't mean the science is wrong. Because we're young, doesn't mean that donations are any less corrupt when we point out what they're doing to our democracy. We're definitely not wrong when we say it's unfair that students are barely surviving and need to a full-time job while they study just to make ends meet.

I am 13 years older than her and I am bloody sick of it too. This is just one of many hundreds of similar conversations I have had with younger people throughout Western Australia. Make no mistake: there is no justice when massive tax cuts are being handed out to the rich while life is being made much harder for young people across the state. I call out to all young people in the state: this is the people's Parliament; it is your Parliament. Parliament is not a place reserved for the elites of this world; it is for everyone, and each and every one of you should have the opportunity to stand where I am standing right now. Change does not happen easily, but I know that through movement, building and continuing to push for what we want, we can effect real change. If I can start a campaign with three people in a park and build it to hundreds of people willing to fight for the changes that really matter, then I know that there are others out there who can do the same as me. Remember, this is your fight to address the biggest issues of our time.

We live in a privileged country with immense resources and incredible talent. We should be the envy of the world in relation to our approach to reducing carbon emissions, and yet Australia is one of the world's biggest carbon emitters. Our level of carbon pollution per capita is nearly double the average of what other developed nations are emitting today, and more than four times the world average. In Western Australia we emit 86 million tonnes of carbon dioxide every year. This is the equivalent of 18 million cars on the road every year. We need our young people, our brightest minds and our sharpest entrepreneurs operating in a policy environment that encourages innovation, and we need our government to truly listen and implement these good ideas. We need to be living in a state where people can store energy generated from rooftop solar panels. That energy would be put into batteries in their own homes and provide excess unused power back to the grid so that other people could use that energy. We must focus on structural incentives to continue to foster and grow consumer-led decentralised energy generation, whereby households harness their own renewable energy and sell it to their neighbours, providing a choice for consumers. We need our state's energy market to be economically sound and to operate in a way that reduces emissions and lowers our carbon footprint. We need to make sure that the cheapest renewable energy options are available for all and that electricity is charged at an appropriate rate so that those most at risk are not disadvantaged.

We cannot keep subsidising dirty energy. This is a cycle that needs to be broken. We need strategies that support low income earners to pay for solar installation and battery storage solutions for their homes. Western Australia has just nine per cent renewable energy in its power mix. Over eight years, the Barnett government hampered construction of renewable energy projects in the state. We must turn this around. The Greens look forward to seeing the new Labor government take up this important and urgent challenge. We need to improve our performance. We need to encourage the market to invest. Currently, there are 3 900 megawatts of renewable energy projects in the pipeline across Australia to meet the Large-scale Renewable Energy Target. Embarrassingly, only 180 megawatts of these are in Western Australia.

Across the world, exciting technical innovation in electric vehicles is changing the way we commute around our cities. However, electric car sales in Australia have stalled. Other countries such as China, which set a target of five million electric cars by 2020, are putting us to shame. We can do many things, such as offering free registration for these vehicles, funding infrastructure and transitioning our government fleet to electric vehicles. We know that the renewable energy sector has the potential to provide real jobs for people, so let us put these jobs at the centre of a strong, green economy. We can keep vibrant communities such as Collie alive, with clever installations of renewable energy such as pumped storage hydroelectricity. We can invest in people by upskilling and providing training so that they can continue to live in Collie after the coal has been phased out, and it will be phased out.

Climate change is a global reality and we all have a part to play. I do not hold with statements that suggest we are just a small bit player and that our contributions will not count. In fact, that is a short-sighted and potentially dangerous view. Every individual country, state, city or town across the world is either adding to the problem of climate change or working to fix it. The choice is ours. At the moment, WA is adding to the problem. We are the leading state in the country for all the wrong reasons and we need to fix this. With a federal government that is actively undermining the efforts of states to take meaningful action on climate change, it is more important than ever that WA stand strong on this issue.

The Greens have a plan. It is called Energy 2030. It is a plan that would install solar in community housing, install battery and electric vehicle infrastructure across the state, and give household power generators the choice to sell on their power to whomever they choose. Our modelling shows that this is possible. We could power the south west interconnected system with 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030. These are the kinds of initiatives that people in Western Australia want to see. In the lead-up to the election, my team doorknocked on over 12 000 doors in the East Metropolitan Region and listened to people from all over tell us that they wanted more renewable energy and battery storage solutions for their rooftop solar. I intend to continue to have these conversations with constituents so that I can respond to the issues that matter most to our community.

The previous government appears not to have listened to anyone other than the fossil fuel companies that fuel climate change. It is time we changed this. Climate change is the greatest challenge of our time and self-interest should not prevail. I have watched successive governments fail to address this issue, and enough is enough. We need to take action. The state needs a dedicated minister for climate change. We need a dedicated government department that will develop policy, implement strategies to ensure a reduction in Western Australia's emissions, plan for the future and be accountable.

We are currently witnessing a dramatic unwinding of the social fabric of our society. Our most vulnerable people, including students and pensioners, are seeing their living standards decline. Let me be clear: there can be no justice as long as the gap between the rich and poor continues to widen. With successive governments putting political donations ahead of the needs of their constituents, it is no surprise that our society has shifted towards valuing stuff and material wealth over valuing its people. The pursuit of growth has left many casualties in its wake, and at the heart of the issue is fairness. Tax concessions for multinationals and the wealthy few have led to an unacceptable level of inequality within our society. We are currently witnessing a criminal extraction of resources from the poor and middle class of our society in order to line the pockets of people who do not need it.

There has recently been a lot of discussion about people having difficulty accessing the housing market. Property prices are so high that even police, nurses and teachers are struggling to afford a modest home in today's market. This serious problem needs addressing, but I am even more concerned about the thousands of people in our community who are having difficulty accessing even a roof above their head every night. Someone on a youth allowance will not have any luck finding a rental on their budget. Even someone on a minimum wage will have access to only one per cent of rentals. It is perhaps unsurprising that 42 per cent of homeless people in this country are under 25 years old. I believe that the success of a society is based on how it treats its most vulnerable and the number of people living on the streets every night. A decade ago we would not have seen the level of homelessness we see today on Perth city streets.

Let me share a story with members. This happened a few years ago when I was walking to work on St Georges Terrace. I was walking past an alleyway and a woman called out to me. She was asking for money. I had an awkward conversation with her, but I really wanted to know how she and her two small children came to be there. She slept the night in her car and had found a spot in the city to camp for the day, begging for some coins to keep her and her two kids fed. She lived in fear that the authorities would take her children, but had no way of finding a permanent solution to her problem. The shame of her situation showed on her face, but the shame should not be hers; it is ours. Every night our car parks, alleyways and park benches are the beds of thousands of people across this state. What is most alarming is that women and children are the most at risk. Domestic violence is the biggest single cause of homelessness in WA, and it does not have to be this way. If we are going to be serious about homelessness, service providers need to be sufficiently funded. Every day, people are turning up to ask for help and walking away without having received the assistance they so desperately need.

Housing is an issue close to my heart. I will work to address structural issues to support affordable housing for everyone, including pushing for reforms to increase the supply of social housing for the people most in need in this state. We are in the midst of a housing crisis—a housing emergency—and the public housing waitlist times must be reduced. It is simply not good enough that there are still over 2 000 people with priority needs waiting for a home in this state. This is unacceptable, and we must understand that housing is a human right and it should be for everyone.

I am not here to do what is popular at any given time. My positions on issues will not be based on which way the political wind is blowing; they will be based on my values and informed by strong, well-thought-out policies. I regard my election to this chamber as an opportunity to take politics to the people and say, "This is your Parliament." You expect someone with values and integrity and with a strong moral compass to be standing for you and speaking up for you. I can guarantee that my voice will not be drowned out by lobbyists and business interests. I am prepared to take risks and to look beyond the short-term gains of politics. I am here to change society in a thoughtful and considered way that provides all people with access to the things that matter. And I do not do this alone. I have colleagues here to support me and the backing of a party grounded in social justice and equality to guide the policies that I will be advancing during my term in office.

I am here speaking for the community, for those who voted to see real change, who have been discontented with politicians and who are cynical of politics. I promise to take on long-term issues and to expend political capital to change things. I am here to make sure that people get a decent show at succeeding in life, whether it is defending the healthcare system, reducing wait times for social housing, ensuring a healthy environment or tackling climate change. I am committed to holding this government to account and to making sure that decisions are not based on single budgetary cycles and that projects have long-term visions to solve complex and difficult issues.

We can choose a world that continues to allow the vested interests and the failed ideals of neoliberalism to flourish; one that ignores the workers and ignores the need for better schools, more access to health care and social housing; one that ignores the reality of people facing poverty and homelessness, and ignores Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; or we can choose the alternative. If we choose to do that, there is nothing that can stop us. There is nothing that can stop us from ensuring that everyone has safe shelter and that every child can go to school, have a meal and see a doctor or a dentist. There is nothing that can stop us from working with our first peoples to close the gap and deliver treaties and reparations. There is nothing that can stop us from ridding politics of dirty money and the undue influence of vested interests. There is nothing that can stop us from standing up to big business and business-as-usual politicians and saying, “We are done with you acting in your own interests and not in the interests of us all.” There is nothing that can stop us from taking genuine action against catastrophic global warming and climate change. I choose this alternative and it is a choice I will make every single moment I have in this job.

I will never apologise for my idealism, nor will I let it be shouted down. The job of a politician is to be idealistic and to turn those ideals into reality. This is a job that I begin today with pride, purpose and humility. Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral — Deputy Leader of the National Party) [7.53 pm]: Congratulations to Hon Tim Clifford who has given his inaugural speech tonight. I look forward to his contributions in the house as we move forward. Picking up on one point made by the honourable member, all members of this house come with the same basic principles—to represent the interests of the people who elected them and to consider and review legislation that comes to the house. That is what we are here for. That is our job. Although we may have differing opinions about how that is delivered, every member has that interest in their hearts as they join us in the chamber at the start of every day. It is the great ideal of democracy that we get to do that in this house. I look forward to different contributions from members throughout this fortieth Parliament.

Having been a member for the Mining and Pastoral Region for the past four years, this being my second term, one of the things that I have loved about being here is the opportunity to represent those communities that are close to my heart and advocating on their behalf in this Parliament. It is enormously rewarding being able to do that. As I said earlier, sometimes that can be difficult when we cannot achieve the outcomes we set out to achieve. Sometimes members have to give a little, which can be difficult as those issues are worked through. The opportunity to represent regional communities in particular and the interests of regional WA as a whole in this Parliament has been my absolute privilege. My colleagues within the National Party and I hold representing our regional constituents in the highest regard, as I am sure all members do. Representing regional Western Australia is a difficult job. We represent large regions. Sometimes people who live in very remote communities have unique issues. Because they choose to live in those smaller remote communities does not diminish their issues. Too rightly, they expect their members of Parliament to advocate on their behalf as we find a way to move to a scenario that allows them to continue to live where they choose to live and raise their families. When regional Western Australia is prosperous, the state of Western Australia is prosperous. That has been said many times in this house. The Pilbara, in the heart of the Mining and Pastoral electorate, is well-known as being the engine room of the national economy. We certainly want to see that continue. That does not mean the Pilbara region is purely a mining pit for the resource industry to come in, dig up and move on. The National Party is about ensuring regional communities benefit from the assets that are sold from their communities. The people of Western Australia should benefit from the sale of assets. Assets are sold only once on behalf of Western Australians. It is our job, and indeed the Premier’s and the government’s job, to represent the interests of the people of Western Australia. Mining companies are a part of my electorate, but a large number of people in communities in regional WA and in Perth expect the government to act on their behalf and in their best interests. I have no doubt that members of this house will hold the Premier of Western Australia and his government to account on their behalf because we expect nothing less from him.

Fundamental services like health care, education and beautification projects for regional communities or funding in general being spent on people in regional Western Australia is something that I have been proud to be a part of. The National Party’s royalties for regions program while we were in government delivered real change and outcomes for people in regional WA. It was absolutely outstanding for me to have been personally involved in that. I hope to see that continue, because investment in those regional communities is warranted. It is my responsibility and that of my colleagues, especially in this tight fiscal climate in which we find ourselves, to ensure

our regional constituents are represented in this Parliament—now more than ever! I intend during my tenure in this fortieth Parliament to continue to do that, because when the budget is under pressure, historically it is regional communities that suffer. I hope that the Minister for Regional Development, whom we are lucky enough to have as a member of this chamber, has the capacity to take up that fight on behalf of regional Western Australia every single day. It will take all the minister's capacity to argue with her government and cabinet colleagues that it is worthwhile continuing royalties for regions investment in regional communities. I hope that is the number one priority for the minister. The Nationals WA will continue to raise those issues in Parliament and to scrutinise legislation. We will critique legislation brought to this house, particularly through the lens of regional constituents and regional development, on how it affects those communities.

During the Address-in-Reply other members commented on the role of the Legislative Council. I want to make a couple of comments around that, but particularly in response to Premier Mark McGowan's comments that the Legislative Council needs to understand that his government has a mandate in the Legislative Assembly and that it won a landslide victory. I say to the Premier that that is not our role. We will not rubberstamp legislation that is brought to this house. It is the job of government members to make sure that they bring responsible, reliable legislation to the house and we will scrutinise it fairly. It is beyond belief that the Premier of Western Australia would ask members of the Legislative Council to rubberstamp legislation brought to the house because he thinks he has a mandate. That will not be happening, Premier! I look forward to members in this house debating legislation as it comes through.

The people of Western Australia delivered to the government an upper house that was structured to ensure that scrutiny of legislation is done in the best interests of the people of Western Australia. That is what the government has to work with. Just as we have to work with the numbers in the Legislative Assembly, the government has to deal with the numbers in the Legislative Council. That is the government's and the Premier's responsibility. The Premier should not suggest that members in this house purely respect the government's mandate. That is not the role of the Legislative Council in any way, shape or form.

The Nationals WA have proven to be strong advocates for change in regional WA, and the next four years will be no different. Thanks to our former leader, Brendon Grylls, and our bold visionary plan for regional WA called royalties for regions, over the past eight years the Liberal–National government was able to deliver on the royalties for regions policy. I have personally seen some amazing transformations.

[Quorum formed.]

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: As I was saying, the Nationals WA have been strong advocates for regional Western Australia over the past eight years, particularly in government through the royalties for regions program. I have seen some amazing transformations take place in regional communities, in particular targeting agriculture and infrastructure, and changes in community spaces, which have been well regarded and welcomed by people in the Mining and Pastoral Region. Indeed, as I have travelled throughout regional Western Australia, the changes that royalties for regions has brought to regional WA are unprecedented and are held in high regard by the people of regional WA.

Royalties for regions has been described to me by members of the Mining and Pastoral Region in many different ways. It has been a lifeline. It has been a facilitator to allow not-for-profit groups to continue and for community organisations to operate. It has been a revitaliser of town spaces and community centres. When I go to those community centres, I can see people enjoying facilities that they would never have had otherwise. Royalties for regions is a supporter of regional Western Australia, and that is why at every single opportunity I will champion the cause of royalties for regions and continued investment in regional WA.

I do not think anyone can deny that royalties for regions has enabled regional communities to be revitalised. Royalties for regions has a dedicated funding stream. It has a strong vision, and it had a strong vision from the outset. It has a decentralised structure, and it had a ministry and department solely working with regional WA. It is a little disappointing that that department has been rolled into a supersized department. We will see the outcomes when that comes to fruition. I am glad the Minister for Regional Development has joined us in the chamber. It might be the first time I have seen the minister in the chamber today!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Robin Chapple): We have one speaker, and you should be addressing the Chair.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: It might be the first time I have seen the minister in the chamber today taking an interest in regional Western Australia, apart from question time, so it is refreshing to have her here.

After absolutely years and years of neglect, regional Western Australia was finally on the government agenda. Did that all work well? Of course, it did not. No government program or project is without fault. I can say to the minister, when she has the audacity to call investment in regional Western Australia a petunia on the main street

of a community, that it is insulting to the people of Western Australia. I am sure that when the minister was the Mayor of Vincent, or serving with whichever government she decided to be involved in that suited her at that time, she felt it was okay to have a beautification project in Leederville or a main street project anywhere else in the city, but when it is outside the city, the minister calls it a petunia. That is unbelievable and highly offensive, and shows the minister's lack of understanding of how royalties for regions has assisted regional communities. I am sure that the minister is seeing that as she travels around the state and re-engages with regional Western Australia—since she may not have been there before. She certainly has not been in this Parliament since 2009. A lot has changed in that time, so we will give the minister time to catch up. We are very proud of what royalties for regions has delivered.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Members!

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Members! The Chair, please! Thank you, honourable member; please continue. If people want to have a discussion, I suggest they do it outside the chamber.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: Thank you, Mr Acting President. We are very proud that the National Party and the Liberal–National government were able to deliver through royalties for regions nearly \$7 billion into regional Western Australia. That cannot be removed from the history of regional Western Australia and it is something that I will remain very proud of.

We all know that the regions generate the nation's wealth. People who live and work in those communities are no less deserving of health care, child care, twenty-first century communications or education than people in Perth who like renewed beaches and city spaces or facilities like the new stadium, Perth Arena or Elizabeth Quay. I love all those projects in Perth. They are fantastic and make Perth a gateway to the rest of Western Australia from a tourism perspective and they enable the people of Perth and the greater regions of Western Australia to enjoy absolutely fantastic facilities. Building all those facilities was the right decision for the government to make, but our regional communities also deserve investment in infrastructure that they believe beautifies their communities and delivers more viable and vibrant communities for people to live in and for their families to enjoy. I will never back down from that position.

As I alluded to earlier, we are being told by the government—even today in question time—that everything is under review. I understand that upon forming government, it has a right to take time to understand where things are at and to get up to speed on issues. We all accept that. However, the election was in March. It is now June and we still have no direction, particularly in regional Western Australia. It has been a shambolic approach, I have to say, because nobody I talk to in regional Western Australia has any understanding about the priority of regional development under this government, how that will play out and what projects will or will not continue to be funded. A number of projects are coming to an end and I think the government owes the people of regional Western Australia an answer to those questions.

Hon Peter Collier: Who's the minister?

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: I am not sure. Is she in this house? I suggest to the minister that we need an answer.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Members! It was going splendidly up until a few seconds ago.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: Just one answer would be nice, because that may start the formulation of a plan. Let us see how we can work with that. That would give some real indication of what is happening in the supersized ministry that the minister apparently has control of. I am not sure which minister has control of that super-ministry or super-department, but I am sure that that will play out in time. I look forward to getting an understanding of that.

There is a very real risk that this government will revert to the dark old days when city-centric thinking was its priority. I implore regional members of the government to please advocate for regional Western Australia when they have discussions with their cabinet colleagues. I ask them to meet with the Minister for Regional Development. I will try to do that also, although she may tell me no. However, I certainly will try to work with the minister because that is what we are here for—we are here to try to actually get an outcome.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: I am sure Hansard is having some trouble.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: I would like to start the process to get some idea about what the government's ideas are—if it just has one.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Members! Just one second, please. I apologise for having interrupted you, but the Chair controls this chamber. There were too many interjections. I am sure Hansard is having a great deal of trouble making your contribution accurate in *Hansard*.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: I apologise, Mr Acting President. I did not hear you.

Members of the opposition ran a campaign during the state election about the terrible state of the budget and Western Australia's fiscal situation. They should not now pretend that they did not know that. Do not now pretend and say, "Oh my gosh! Things are so very terrible that we cannot make a decision." That is what the government has been voted into government to do: to make a decision. I would ask them to do that. I am exceptionally concerned that royalties for regions will be stripped of funds that were to be invested in regional Western Australia and that those funds will be reinvested into city areas. The minister knows—she knows that I know this—that she will be under extreme pressure to find a way to gut investment in regional Western Australia at the behest of the Premier, who wants to deliver Metronet. I ask the minister to make sure that she advocates for regional Western Australia, because I do not see that happening yet. I look forward to seeing that happen. It is an easy and lazy option for the government to use the money from royalties for regions to fund projects in densely populated areas like the city so it can appease the majority while forgetting about the minority who happen to live in regional WA.

I now want to comment on the state election. I start by thanking supporters of the National Party and its candidates and campaign team. We ran an exceptionally hard-fought campaign and the whole team worked together. It is not easy to run those sorts of campaigns, particularly when there is an unprecedented campaign by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, and BHP and Rio Tinto in particular, running against us. It was incredible to watch, I have to say. We would not have run that campaign any other way. We believed that it was our job in government to bring an alternative to the table to help repair the budget, and we did that. We had an idea, we backed the idea and we funded the idea through our state election campaign. We still believe that there is an alternative for government other than cutting jobs, stripping funding from regional Western Australia and stopping funding for other projects in regional Western Australia because the government is too scared to have a conversation with the two big miners. What the Premier and what the Treasurer think about this issue are different. The Treasurer says that he likes the idea of a cash out. That was not the alternative we took to the election, but I applaud the Treasurer for recognising that an alternative revenue source is required by government. This stuff is hard. It is hard to make those decisions. I applaud him for openly and honestly putting that on the table. The very next day the Premier said that it was not on the table, so I am still not sure which way the government wants to go on that. Again, it cannot make a decision and it has a bit of a shambolic approach. I really look forward to seeing the government bring an outcome to the table, because at the moment there is not one. The government's only outcome is to tax mums and dads, increase their utility and electricity charges, and continue to ask them to pay. The government is not prepared to have, on behalf of the people of Western Australia, the hard discussions with BHP and Rio Tinto about them paying their fair share. As I said before, it is the Premier's job to act in the interests of this state, and I ask him to do so. It means he has to find an alternative to cutting services in regional WA, because that will also affect services in the city and will be felt tenfold in regional areas. I look forward to hearing about a plan and an alternative, because one is required.

The last election campaign really was unprecedented, particularly in the north of the state. I again applaud the efforts of our campaign team and our candidates in delivering the outcome we achieved.

I also want to touch on the GST, which is an issue I have spoken about in this house more than any other. There is bipartisan agreement in this house that there needs to be a change to the GST system. We are now hearing more people adding their voices to that argument and I note that now even BHP and Rio Tinto also believe there needs to be a change to that system. I am glad that the state is united on this issue; I think we have been for a while. I hope we will see some outcomes at the federal level for Western Australia on the GST issue, perhaps during the next federal election campaign, but I will not hold my breath. There are many varied and different ideas about managing GST returns to Western Australia. In her address at the opening of the fortieth Parliament, the Governor also made some comments about the GST, and I applaud her for those comments, particularly as they related to the inequitable treatment of the state of Western Australia in the GST return.

The National Party has long called for a fairer GST distribution and we have been strong advocates for that. In 2010 Tony Crook, the former federal member for O'Connor, brought a motion to the House of Representatives to put a floor on the GST of, I think, 75c. He raised that issue in the federal Parliament.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan: Who actually signed the agreement?

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: If the Minister for Regional Development was in federal Parliament at that time—I am not sure which government she was a member of at that time—I wonder what side of the house she would have voted on. I can tell her that none of her members voted in the interests of regional WA. They —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Members! Order! I have never raised my voice in this chamber, ever, even when I was down there. I do not want to start having to do it here. Please, members, continue the debate, and try not to incite people.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: When that motion was moved in the House of Representatives, two members supported the 75c floor on the GST—Tony Crook and Bob Katter. Every other member of the House of Representatives voted against that motion, including members representing Western Australia. That was probably not a high point in the interests of Western Australia being represented in the federal Parliament.

Some seven years on from that time—that is a long time ago—this issue has continued to burn along, and we still see members representing Western Australia in the federal Parliament who are not prepared to tackle this issue. That is the greatest disappointment about this issue for regional Western Australia, as the government in this state tries to address it. We all know that it has long been an issue and it is now the Labor government's job to address it. We all know about diminishing GST returns to Western Australia and federal members who purportedly represent Western Australia not doing anything about it. That will probably play out in the federal election.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: I hope members who represent WA in the federal Parliament can find a way to make some change in this space, because the minister never did. I never heard her speak on this issue—not one time in the one term —

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Member, please address the Chair.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Member!

Hon JACQUI BOYDELL: I will address the Chair.

I never heard the Minister for Regional Development, while she was a member of federal Parliament—I do not know which seat she had; she was there for a short time—make any public commentary on this issue. I am not talking about Liberal members and I am not talking about Labor members; I am talking about the issue of all members from Western Australia, in the Senate and the House of Representatives. I have said this about three times now, and maybe the minister is not listening, but I think it is disappointing that none of those members has been able to effect change in this space. I hope there is an opportunity during the federal election for Western Australia to have an outcome in this space. That will allow the Western Australian state government some breathing space. We all recognise that it is an issue that the state government does not have control over. It was an issue we faced in government and it is an issue that the Labor government will continue to face unless any Western Australian federal members have the capacity to make some changes. I look forward to seeing that.

I am passionate about representing the people of the Mining and Pastoral Region. My focus, moving forward, is to ensure that this region and all the other regions continue to grow under the leadership of this government, if that is going to happen. As I said, six months down the track I still have not seen a plan, but we hold out hope that we will see one. I hope that my regional communities will be a high focus of government and I hope to see them continue to beautify their main streets and to continue investment in local decision-making and projects run by local people. I look forward to continuing to talk to people in the Mining and Pastoral Region about their issues. That is my job and I really relish the position, as I know all members do. I look forward to continuing to do that in this Parliament.

I will finish my comments by again welcoming the new members. I look forward to your differing and diverse positions within this Parliament, even including the Minister for Regional Development—as a new member, I welcome you to the house! Thank you, members.

HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan) [8.29 pm]: I am pleased to rise this evening on the Address-in-Reply motion moved by Hon Dr Sally Talbot. It has not been too often in my eight years in this place that I have had the opportunity to agree with Hon Dr Sally Talbot, but on this occasion I certainly will support the motion that she has moved. It was particularly pleasing to hear Hon Dr Sally Talbot speak the words —

... beg to express our loyalty to our most gracious sovereign and thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

I certainly support that motion this evening.

In my remarks to the Address-in-Reply motion, I want to consider the outcome of the election and pass some reflection on that outcome. In my eight years in Parliament, this is the third state election campaign I have been involved in, so it is my first experience of being involved in a losing campaign. Having arrived in Parliament following the 2008 early election and being sworn in as a parliamentarian in 2009 and then having a very significant win in 2013, it is quite chastening, which might be the word to use, to experience what we did in the 2017 state election. In particular, what struck me after the March 2017 election result was its impact on certain individuals. In 2013, the Liberal and National Parties had a very significant win. Members will recall well the circumstances of 2013 when the then Prime Minister was Julia Gillard, which no doubt had a bearing on the election result, and my colleagues and I were very enthusiastic and naturally upbeat about the outcome of the election. As enthusiastic as we were that a number of new members were coming into the Parliament, I think it is fair to say that we paid no regard to the members who lost their seats. We were so busy celebrating our own campaign victories that we did not stop for a moment to think about the impact on members on the other side of the chamber. I guess this was particularly brought home to me after the March 2017 election around the state but also in the South Metropolitan Region, because several of my good friends and colleagues lost their seats. I want to acknowledge the contribution of all my colleagues who were unsuccessful in their campaigns and also each of the candidates for the Liberal Party who ran at the election and thank them for their cumulative efforts over an extended period.

As I mentioned, I lost a number of good friends and colleagues in the South Metropolitan Region, including Joe Francis, who was our candidate and the incumbent member for Jandakot; Matt Taylor, who was our candidate for Bicton, having been the member for Bateman; and, of course, Hon Phil Edman, with whom I served a full eight years in Parliament and who is a good friend. I acknowledge and respect the contribution of each of those former members and express my sympathies to their families and their staff on their election loss. However, I am conscious that, unlike the first sitting week in May, when there was an opportunity for retiring or defeated members of the Legislative Council to give a valedictory speech, there is no such opportunity for members of the Legislative Assembly to do that. In my remarks this evening, I want to dedicate the significant majority of what I say to two very good friends, Dr Graham Jacobs and Reverend Peter Abetz, who were also unsuccessful at the election and neither of whom would have had the opportunity to make a valedictory speech in the Legislative Assembly. Naturally, they had hoped that they would win, but were unable to do so. I hope in some way that my Address-in-Reply remarks this evening might properly reflect the type of remarks that those two honourable gentlemen might have made in their valedictory responses.

I particularly want to highlight those two good friends and hardworking colleagues for a number of reasons that will become obvious as I continue my remarks. At the outset, when I gave my inaugural speech in May 2009, one of the main topics I discussed was prostitution in Western Australia. At the time, that was particularly relevant because I was practising law. I heard that the then Labor government was proposing to legalise brothels in Western Australia for the first time and I had come to the conclusion that it was somewhat remarkable that any government of any persuasion could think that the single best thing to do for the citizens of Western Australia would be to legalise brothels. It infuriated me very much having done a volume of work with victims of sexual abuse, and it was that more than anything else that caused me to join the Liberal Party, subsequently get preselected and thankfully elected into the Legislative Council. Members who know the history of this debate will know that quite remarkably after the early 2008 election was called, there was insufficient time for the then legislation, which had scraped through the Legislative Council after some wheeling and dealing, to be proclaimed because the then Premier, Alan Carpenter, had rushed to the polls and forgot to tell his then Attorney General, Jim McGinty, that this would be the case, and the legislation never came to be. Unfortunately, much to my horror, prior to me becoming a member of Parliament, it was decided by my party during the early election campaign of 2008 that we would have a policy on prostitution, but it would be a lighter version than the Labor Party's policy. The Labor Party was going to legalise brothels everywhere; our policy was that it would just be in commercial and industrial areas. At the time, that was staggering to me and it certainly brought into sharp focus the realities of politics.

Part of the reason I want to pay tribute to the roles of Dr Jacobs and Mr Abetz is that more than anyone else those two are responsible for the current situation in which brothels are not legal in our state. Again, for those who are students of history and the passage of that legislation, the Prostitution Bill 2011, which was brought into the thirty-eighth Parliament, was never voted on. The single biggest reason that was the case was the principled position taken by those two gentlemen. Under extreme pressure and duress, they held the line and said, "Sorry, we are not going to participate in this. We are not convinced at all that having legal brothels in industrial and commercial areas does anything positive for the citizens of Western Australia." That issue is very close to my heart and it is probably the single biggest reason I suddenly became interested in politics. I pay tribute to those two honourable men for taking that principled stand. It is their legacy that has resulted in the situation we have in Western Australia today.

Although I thank them for their significant role in ensuring that they held the line on that critical issue, which is important for women, children and men in Western Australia, I also want to acknowledge Dr Graham Jacobs for another reason. In 2010 I was quite struck by an article in *The Sunday Times*. I have always remembered this article and was pleased to be able to find it in the last couple of days. On 19 December 2010, *The Sunday Times* produced an article titled “Political scorecard”. It is found on page 58 of that edition of *The Sunday Times* and states —

There was Troy Buswell’s sacking as Treasurer—and then his reinstatement to Cabinet this week. Premier Colin Barnett created heat with his airconditioning faux pas. In Ken Wyatt, WA boasted Australia’s first indigenous member of the House of Representatives, while Eric Ripper maintained a tenuous grip on the ALP leadership.

Boy, things have changed in seven years. In this article the relevant political journalist scores or rates particular winners and losers in politics in Western Australia. The person he described, if you like, as the biggest loser in politics in 2010 was none other than Graham Jacobs. This is what the journalist had to say about this honourable man —

Jacobs is WA’s biggest political loser in 2010. He has lost his job after just two years in the ministry and is in Esperance licking his wounds. Jacobs has lost a golden opportunity to make a mark and will be remembered for little else than sprinkler restrictions in winter —

I might add that we still have those sprinkler restrictions in winter and I do not hear anybody complaining about them. In fact, I hear a lot of people saying that they have been a most excellent initiative. Nevertheless, apparently that is all that this honourable man will be remembered for. The article then goes on to state —

and organising prayer meetings at Parliament House.

The prayer meetings that are held at Parliament House are not something I have ever talked about before in eight years in this place and it would not normally be customary for me to do so because I consider them to be a private matter. However, the reason I have chosen to mention them this evening is that it always struck me as bizarre that somebody would choose to suggest that a person is a loser because one of his legacies is the organising of a parliamentary prayer meeting. Dr Graham Jacobs was instrumental in organising those meetings each sitting week—at least for the time I have been Parliament, but I understand he did it well before then as well. They have been meetings that I have very much treasured. I have appreciated his willingness to coordinate those meetings. They are quite humble meetings held discreetly in Parliament and, as I say, they have not been something that we have been interested to publicise. But it is just unbelievable that a person could be, if you like, effectively pilloried for it and the article suggested that that will be his only legacy and what a loser he must be. I disagree with that so much that I have taken it upon myself to speak to the member for Moore, Shane Love, MLA, and he and I have agreed that we will co-host the parliamentary prayer meetings for this fortieth Parliament. To demonstrate that this is truly a non-partisan event, our guest for the first prayer meeting will be Hon John Kobelke, who of course is a very eminent and experienced former member of the Labor Party. I pay tribute to my good friend Dr Graham Jacobs. In fact, in my eyes this guy is a hero—far from it for him to be considered a loser. This man is a hero for having the courage and integrity to hold such an important and humble set of meetings weekly at the Parliament for an extended time, and I thank him for that.

I also want to make some remarks about another reform that will no doubt come about some time in this Parliament, and the catalyst for this reform will be the work done by Dr Graham Jacobs—that is, our Limitation Act in Western Australia. For newer members who may not be familiar with this issue, briefly, we have a significant problem with the Limitation Act in this state, particularly with respect to minors—that is, children under the age of 18. What is the problem? The problem is that those under the age of 18 are currently obstructed in their pursuit of their rights and justice. They are obstructed because terrible reforms, and I use the word “reform” very loosely, were passed if memory serves me correctly around 2004 or 2005. Previously these minors, these children, would have had six years in which they might be entitled to lodge a claim to pursue justice after they turned 18—from the age of majority onwards. After 2005 that was no longer the case. Indeed, they must claim within six years of the date that the incident occurred, and sometimes less than that. For example, if a five-year-old child suffers a particular set of events that might entitle them to put in a claim, they must put in their claim by the time they turn 11. It is incredible that in this state there can continue to be this level of injustice for children under the age of 18. It has been my longstanding view, and I have spoken about this previously in the chamber, that minors should never be obstructed before the age of 18, and preferably people should have until the age of 24 to make that claim. They are some general remarks on my view about limitation reform. How this is relevant to Graham Jacobs and his legacy to the people of Western Australia is that this honourable gentleman brought in a private member’s bill in 2015 called the Limitation Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse Actions) Bill 2015. That particular bill received a lot of publicity and created a lot of controversy last year. Interestingly, I assume that the new government will be getting cracking to bring in some legislation along those lines in the very near future. In fact, I am staggered

that this legislation has not already arrived. The reason I am staggered that it has not arrived in the Parliament of Western Australia is that when I look back at the remarks made in October last year by the members I will mention, it seems extraordinary that no bill along these lines has been brought in by the new Labor government. On 13 October 2016 the now Attorney General, who at the time was shadow Attorney General, Hon John Quigley, as he now is, said the following —

This is all unnecessary. Let us just deal with the kernel of the bill. It is a very short bill for a law that has been adopted in other states of Australia—that is, to do away with the limitation period for actions brought by victims of child sexual abuse ... Let me make it clear that this bill could pass this afternoon. As publicly announced by the Leader of the Opposition, it is firm Labor Party policy to do away with the limitation period in cases of child sexual abuse. The legislation is quite simple; it contains only six clauses and we would not need to go into consideration in detail. This is a very short, clear piece of legislation that offers redress for people who have suffered the horrors of child sexual abuse.

...

There is no argument against this legislation—none. There cannot be any. All the other states have done it and the royal commission has already recommended it.

Hon Mark McGowan is now the Premier of Western Australia and of course at the time he was the opposition leader. One week later on 20 October 2016 he said the following —

The Limitation Amendment (Child Sexual Abuse Actions) Bill 2015 could be passed by this house today. It can go to the upper house today and be passed there and everything can be resolved.

...

The opposition says: let us deal with it today; let us ensure justice for the victims of child sexual abuse today. If this Parliament wants to be magnificent, decent and to set an example for everyone, let us deal with this today in both houses.

...

I will give the government this assurance: if it allows this bill to come on, we will support its passage today in this house and the other house—and it will be done. We will not hold the government up; we will have two speakers in each house. We will have quick efficient legislation dealing with the issue in the way the public wants it to be dealt with. I guarantee by five o'clock today that this bill will be passed in both houses.

The very honourable Graham Jacobs brought in an important private member's bill to do with child sexual abuse, and the then opposition—the Labor Party now in government—made some incredibly supportive comments. How else can I describe the remarks made by Hon John Quigley and Hon Mark McGowan in October last year? They wanted the legislation passed there and then. Apparently it was a simple piece of legislation, there was no reason for it to be held up, it was unbelievable that the government had not agreed to pass it there and then, and it should have flown through both houses in October last year. It is very interesting that in June 2017 there is no sight of this bill anywhere in the Parliament. I have searched high and low for it, and it is nowhere to be seen. Indeed, I asked a question on or around 11 May 2017 of the Minister for Education who was representing the Minister for Child Protection. I asked —

I refer to Labor's promise to introduce a bill that there be no limitation period in a civil action that relates to personal injury resulting from child sexual abuse.

(1) Has the minister or the department been consulted on the promised legislation?

The answer was no.

So, it is distressing to think that supportive remarks were made by the then Labor opposition in October last year, but if we fast forward to the time of it being in government with responsibility for progressing the matter, there has been no consultation with the Minister for Child Protection about a bill in favour of victims of child sexual abuse. There has been no consultation with that minister. I have said that I have searched high and low for any evidence of the bill; it does not appear anywhere in this magnificent building. I trust that the now Labor government was not making cheap, easy political points in October last year at the expense of victims of child sexual abuse. I trust that that was not what was happening last year and that it was genuine in its support for the bill brought forward by Dr Graham Jacobs, and that it will, with expediency and haste, bring in the legislation that it was so in favour of in October last year. It can rest assured, as members from the other side will no doubt attest, that there is no prospect of me forgetting about it and allowing it to in any way forget about this important commitment. I again pay tribute to Dr Graham Jacobs for his magnificent legacy—despite what *The Sunday Times* might suggest: that it only has to do

with sprinkler restrictions and, could you believe it, prayer meetings—of the other very significant issue of reforms for victims of child sexual abuse.

In my view, the now Labor government should not in any way interpret my remarks this evening to suggest that the only thing it needs to do for victims of crime is to pass a bill either identical or similar to that that Dr Graham Jacobs progressed last year—far from it. I believe that the now Labor government has a responsibility to take a position on the national redress scheme. This is something we have heard deathly silence from the Labor government about, and it is time for it to take a position and explain to the people of Western Australia and victims of child sexual abuse what its position is on the national redress scheme. For members who are unfamiliar with it, I draw their attention to the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse, which has tabled a number of reports. I particularly draw members' attention to the "Redress and Civil Litigation Report". That report contains 99 recommendations, but this evening I will draw members' attention to recommendations 85 through to 88, which read as follows —

85. State and territory governments should introduce legislation to remove any limitation period that applies to a claim for damages brought by a person where that claim is founded on the personal injury of the person resulting from sexual abuse of the person in an institutional context when the person is or was a child.
86. State and territory governments should ensure that the limitation period is removed with retrospective effect and regardless of whether or not a claim was subject to a limitation period in the past.
87. State and territory governments should expressly preserve the relevant courts' existing jurisdictions and powers so that any jurisdiction or power to stay proceedings is not affected by the removal of the limitation period.
88. State and territory governments should implement these recommendations to remove limitation periods as soon as possible, even if that requires that they be implemented before our recommendations in relation to the duty of institutions and identifying a proper defendant are implemented.

I call upon the McGowan Labor government to consider this report and explain to the people of Western Australia what its position is on the national redress scheme, because this is, in my view, a critical component of dealing with victims of child sexual abuse. It is insufficient to simply pass a piece of legislation to remove the limitation period; it needs to be done in the context of the national redress scheme and the various quanta of awards that might be available to victims of child sexual abuse.

I also call upon the now Labor state government to explain its position on the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act 2003. In my view it is, again, impossible to properly effect justice for victims of crime in this state without considering this piece of legislation. In the limited time I have this evening I will raise two minor points that should be easy fixes for the government if it wants to take them up. The first is with respect to section 31 of the act, which sets out the maximum payments that a victim of crime can claim. The maximum available in the current climate is \$75 000. That is for offences that took place after this act came into operation; the date of assent of the act was 15 December 2003. Disturbingly, it was \$75 000 in 2004, and has been ever since. So, in effect, for the best part of 13 years the statutory maximum available for victims of crime in this state has been \$75 000, with no indexation. My view is that the Labor state government could make an easy fix by ensuring there will be indexation of those awards into the future. A whole range of other areas of compensation are subject to indexation, but it is like there is a huge elephant sitting on the war chest of the Office of Criminal Injuries Compensation, ensuring that victims of crime cannot possibly get more than \$75 000 for each offence. That is the same as it was in 2004. It is now a record that the maximum amount payable has not been adjusted for 13 years. Previously, the maximum was \$50 000 from 1991 onwards. For a period of some 12 years the maximum was \$50 000 and it never changed. It then changed to \$75 000, and now we have this new record period of it approaching 14 years since the maximum was changed. The maximum has changed at different increments over the journey—after five years, after six years and after two years, and after another five years on another occasion. We have had this enormous period during which state governments of both persuasions have sat their carcass on top of this war chest at the Chief Assessor of Criminal Injuries Compensation to ensure that victims of crime are unable to get more than the \$75 000 maximum. That should change; it is unfair and it is unjust. A simple solution would be to ensure indexation for the future. Perhaps I will have more to say about that on another occasion.

The other thing that plainly needs to change, and I have talked about this as far back as my inaugural speech, is the gross injustice that occurs between section 13 of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Act and sections 16 and 17. In brief, if a victim of crime is unfortunate enough, first of all, to have a crime perpetrated against them and reports the matter to police, the police consider the crime worthy of investigation and charges are laid, and the

Director of Public Prosecutions then says the case is good enough to go to trial, and at the end of all of that there is an acquittal, the victim cannot make a claim for compensation. If any of that criteria—to get the matter to trial and there is an acquittal—fails on the journey, the same victim of crime can put in a claim for compensation. It is grossly unfair that a person might have a case that is strong enough to go to trial but fails at the last hurdle because the standard of proof is beyond reasonable doubt; yet had they not been able to achieve that standard—for example if the DPP had dropped the charges or if the police said, “Sorry, we don’t think there is enough here to investigate”, or the perpetrator is dead—in any one of those situations the victim of crime can apply for compensation and be awarded it on the standard of the balance of probabilities. It is a gross injustice and I have been saying it for eight years. I hope the Labor government and the new Attorney General will take that up and bring some reforms in. As I say, I pay tribute to Dr Graham Jacobs for his initial work in this space trying to seek justice for victims of crime with regard to their common law right to pursue a claim against their perpetrators. I think it is one part of the solution for victims of crime. It needs to be more than that. At the moment we are seeing nothing on any of these fronts.

I note that I am rapidly running out of time. I mentioned at the beginning that I wanted to pay tribute to my good friends Dr Graham Jacobs and Reverend Peter Abetz for their excellent contribution for a long time in the Parliament—good friends that they are of mine—and I hope that members have some flavour for the types of things that I have appreciated that Dr Jacobs and Mr Abetz have done, including the prostitution bill. There is another matter I want to raise in the time that remains. I have basically entitled it under the heading of the Rally for Life. To give members some context, I heard some very meaningful and strong inaugural speeches last month. Even though I was not in the chamber, I read the *Hansard* of the inaugural speech of Hon Alison Xamon. I am pretty sure I was in the chamber for Hon Matthew Swinbourn’s speech, but if not I certainly read it in *Hansard*. I was also certainly in the chamber when I heard the speech of Hon Kyle McGinn. To the extent that there were similarities in those speeches, as best as I recall I heard or read on all of those occasions a plea for an industrial manslaughter charge to be available. I could hear the members’ passion because of the loss of life that has taken place and the injustice that has occurred and the lack of remedy that is available. What I want to say to those three members this evening is that I am happy to commit to them in this term of Parliament that I will make myself available to be persuaded on legislation that is needed on that topic because it involves the loss of life, if they will do me the courtesy of at least listening to another injustice with regard to loss of life and whether they might support me in this endeavour, which I have mentioned to members previously. It never ceases to amaze me that the Rally for Life that is held on the steps of Parliament on or around 22 May every year, and has been held now for 19 years, tends to attract no coverage from the media. This year 1 200 people were on the steps of Parliament. My experience is that not too many rallies at this place have 1 200 people. There is a rally usually with a couple of hundred people. One can be sure that there will be cameras there, it will be reported on the nightly news, and it will be reported in the newspapers and on the internet. When it comes to the Rally for Life, there is this overt media bias that manifests itself in the form of silence. That is incredibly distressing because I want to raise the case of 26 Western Australians who have lost their lives through no fault of their own. Members who have been here in the last couple of Parliaments will have some familiarity with this issue.

This matter has its genesis in questions asked by Hon Ed Dermer on 14 February 2011 when he uncovered, in questions that he asked in 2011, how many infants had survived an abortion in Western Australia. The answer was 14. Irrespective of a person’s personal view about pregnancy termination, it is incredibly important for people to understand that is not what we are talking about here. I understand that people have a wide range of views and different levels of emotion and passion with regard to pregnancy termination. What I am talking about here is a Western Australian born alive in a hospital in Western Australia. Hon Ed Dermer had uncovered that there were 14 of them. All 14 were provided no treatment. In other words, they were left to die. This was in 2011. I remember having a conversation with Hon Ed Dermer at the time. He indicated that he was looking to retire in the not too distant future and I asked him, “What will you do about this? It is unbelievable that we could have this situation.” We have first class medical care in Western Australia. It is staggering how 14 Western Australians could not receive the same level of health care as any other Western Australian. He said, “If you want to take it up, go for it.” Later that year, after questions from Hon Ed Dermer, a petition was tabled in this place with approximately 5 000 signatures. I cannot recall the exact number. It went to the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs, as all petitions do. The committee responded to the petition in about November of that year indicating it was concluding its inquiries. I was staggered that the committee would be effectively shutting down this inquiry prior to an outcome. I urged the committee to reconsider and, thankfully, it continued the inquiry for a little longer. The committee said that it would keep it open a little longer but unfortunately, in 2012, the committee wrote to me to say that it had undertaken to provide further information about the 14 cases when it received any from the Minister for Health. There was this ongoing conversation happening, if you like, between the environment and public affairs committee and the Minister for Health. The Minister for Health said he needed more time to get to the bottom of these 14 cases. The committee said, “Okay, no problems. We’ll tell you, Hon Nick Goiran, if any further information is provided.” Lo and behold in November 2012, one year later, the committee closed the inquiry. Members can find the summary of the

committee's report. Hon Kate Doust dissented to the closing of that particular inquiry. The committee concluded that the minister's comments were that further research was needed before he could make further comment.

It staggers me to this day that a committee could shut down an inquiry midway when a minister says that further work needs to be done. I commend Hon Kate Doust for the courage she showed in dissenting to that. That was in 2012, about a year and a half after Hon Ed Dermer first uncovered these 14 deaths. Meanwhile, during this time, the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life wrote to the Ombudsman, who has jurisdiction over some child deaths in this state, only to be told that he could not investigate this matter because it was not within his jurisdiction. Around that time, in July 2012, I wrote to the Minister for Health to ask whether those deaths had been reported to the coroner, only to be told that was not the case. In fact, the Coalition for the Defence of Human Life then wrote to the coroner to report the 14 deaths, only for the coroner, in August 2012, to come to the conclusion that the deaths were not reportable. Everywhere we went on this, no-one wanted to talk about these 14 deaths. No-one wanted to talk about these 14 Western Australians who were provided no medical treatment. It was incredible that they survived. Yet, having survived the procedure that they were given—certainly through no choice of theirs—they were left to die. It is incredible, because in this state if a person dies in the back of a prison van, understandably and correctly, there is an outcry that there should be an inquiry into that matter, but if a baby dies on the floor of a hospital after an abortion procedure and incredibly has survived the procedure, no treatment is provided; there is no inquiry and no-one wants to talk about it. In 2011–12, the committee shut down the inquiry, the Ombudsman said it was not his jurisdiction and the coroner said it was not his jurisdiction.

By this time, we are getting to the 2013 state election and I am pretty exasperated. Hon Ed Dermer has retired, so I have to wait for the outcome of the 2013 election before I can continue to pursue this matter in Parliament. I certainly did that; and I asked a ream of questions. I encourage members supporting the government not to hesitate to ask questions. As a government member, they can still ask questions. I did it a lot in the last couple of Parliaments. I am still here, so it is okay to do it. I encourage members to ask questions. If there is a matter they are passionate about, they should pursue it and not allow anyone to suggest that they should not.

I have never revealed this before; this will be the first time I have mentioned it. It got to the point that I was summoned to a meeting with the then acting director general of Health and the following question was put to me, "What is it going to take for you to stop?" My response was that all I wanted was an answer with regard to the death of these children and that being told, "We are not going to report it; it is not our jurisdiction; we have no system to deal with this matter", or there being silence, lack of transparency and no accountability was never going to satisfy me. Thankfully, in December 2013 I was afforded the opportunity to have an appointment in the office of the Minister for Health. I was given the opportunity to review every late-term abortion in Western Australia and the reason given by the panel as to why that abortion was justified. They gave me that information and said that the 14 deaths were somewhere in this pile of data. That was the best I could get. At the time I was grateful to get anywhere, having tried to pursue the matter for two and a half years, and if I was going to have to sift my way through the data, then so be it. To this day it is a mystery why they could not just provide a genuine response to why these 14 Western Australians were not provided the same level of treatment as any other baby. But that is what occurred. In the last Parliament I made a speech detailing the data I uncovered on that day.

To the extent there has been any improvement whatsoever in the system, I cannot speak for Hon Dr Kim Hames, who was the Minister for Health at the time, and I do not know whether he agreed to do this out of sheer exasperation of my constant questioning or he eventually came to the conclusion that this was a problem. That was the sense I got from him in conversations with him. Eventually he had a meeting with the panel that makes the decisions and implemented a regime that it report annually to the Minister for Health justifying all the decisions that it makes. The first of those reports was due out in August 2015, and two of those reports have been produced. They are not available because, of course, we could not possibly want transparency when we are trying to create an accountability mechanism! For clarity, we are talking about life-and-death decisions, and the panel that makes these decisions, for the first time in Western Australian history, now has to report to the health minister annually, but the report is suppressed. It will not be tabled in Parliament. It is top secret, and we cannot possibly hold these individuals to account. That does not wash. That is fake accountability. There is no transparency, and that needs to change. Since I have been pursuing this since 2011, members can be assured that I will continue to pursue it in the fortieth Parliament.

Sadly, I inform the house that those 14 Western Australians who died because no treatment was provided to them were not the only deaths. Remember that a baby born after 25 weeks' gestation at King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women will get the best health care available on the planet. It is incredible what is done at that hospital, and I commend the practitioners who do that work. But if a baby of 25 weeks' gestation is born alive after an abortion, they get no treatment. That is contrary to the law of this state. The law of this state says that a person is a Western Australian citizen if they are delivered alive, breathing. That person is entitled to the same rights that you or I are entitled to. If we have an accident this evening and need to go to hospital, we will be provided world-class treatment in this state. It is a great privilege to live in Western Australia; it is an incredible place. Yet,

for these 14 Western Australians, a different standard applied. That cannot be just. It is plainly unjust and there needs to be reforms. Sadly, the number is no longer 14. We now know that at least 26 babies were born alive and were provided no level of treatment. How do we know that? Because in 2015 I received answers to questions I asked as a government backbencher in this place. I am somewhat encouraged that when someone perseveres, eventually they can get some breakthroughs.

In March last year, I wrote to a committee of the other place, the Community Development and Justice Standing Committee. The chair of that committee at the time was Margaret Quirk, MLA. I wrote to ask the committee to inquire into the role of the coroner. How can it be that the coroner has no jurisdiction to investigate these deaths? To its credit, that committee and its chair, Margaret Quirk, MLA, the member for Girrawheen, took up that issue and raised it at a hearing with the coroner. Everything moves slowly in government and in the Parliament—it is incredible at times. I have been in this place when certain bills have flown through the chamber. Sometimes the priority that certain things are given is breathtaking, but when it is a serious matter things move very slowly, if at all. At the end of 2016, thanks to the work of that particular committee and of Margaret Quirk, MLA, the member for Girrawheen, the coroner reported that these matters could be considered reportable deaths. Interestingly, for those members who are still following, it is a different coroner from the one I referred to earlier. The one I referred to earlier said in 2012 that the deaths were not reportable. Fast forward four years, and Margaret Quirk asks the question of the new coroner and suddenly, guess what, those deaths could be considered reportable. That is great. We now know that the deaths could be considered reportable. Of course, they are. It is unbelievable that they were not in the first place. It is wonderful for the coroner to come along and say that they could be considered reportable, but it is of no use if nobody reports them.

To make matters worse, Madam Acting President, a memorandum of understanding—I think that is the correct and official term, or bilateral agreement, whatever the official title of the document is—between the Department of Health and the Department for Child Protection and Family Support refers to those two agencies speaking to each other when new-born infants are at risk. It is interesting that when I asked questions during the estimates hearings last year, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support indicated that it had never been advised of any of these 26 cases. Therefore, there is a catastrophic communication reporting failure for infants in Western Australia. There is no reporting to the Department for Child Protection and Family Support or the coroner. If neither the Department for Child Protection and Family Support nor the coroner is made aware that these Western Australians even exist, how can they act? I do not find fault with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support or with the coroner for not taking action, because they cannot take action if they are not aware that there is a problem. But there is a need, Madam Acting President, for urgent reform to this system so that these ongoing deaths—on average about one or two a year; it is incredible that they are born alive—to ensure that if they are born alive, the medical practitioners at the time immediately notify the Department for Child Protection and Family Support. How could there not be a child more at risk? If the role of the Department for Child Protection and Family Support is to have responsibility for at-risk kids, who would be more at risk than a child who has just survived an abortion procedure? It is incredible; as I say, there are only one or two cases a year, and the Department for Child Protection and Family Support is not there to look after them. They are the most at-risk kids in our state and the Department for Child Protection and Family Support never gets to hear about it. It is catastrophic non-communication and non-reporting. It needs to change.

We would hope that apart from just notifying the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, the medical practitioners on site would continue to provide the normal standard of care that any other baby would receive in that situation. That is actually what those Western Australians are entitled to. The medical practitioners do not get to choose which Western Australians get to have a certain level of care and others who get to have a lesser standard of care; they have to provide the same level of care to all. That is what I am calling for. I make these remarks because the two honourable gentlemen whom I spoke about earlier—Graham Jacobs and Peter Abetz—were, every year they were in Parliament, on the steps of Parliament House at the Rally for Life, along with a number of other excellent members, including you, Madam President. I pay tribute to those men for taking a stand on this issue. I know that they agree with me wholeheartedly that there is a need for reform in this area. I know that they agree with me that it is a given that in our community in Western Australia there is a divergence of views on pregnancy terminations. That is a given. Although I hold a view that there is a place for reform in this area, I acknowledge that there is no appetite in the current political climate for that to occur. I acknowledge that is the case. I am sad about it, but I acknowledge that is the case. We are talking about something different here. We are talking about Western Australians who are entitled to the full suite of health care services that are available; they deserve it as much as any of us in this place and they are not receiving it. It is a systemic problem, as identified by Hon Ed Dermer as far back as 2011, and it remains unfixed. I hope, Madam Acting President, that the new health minister will take on this issue. I am grateful that his parliamentary secretary is in the chamber this evening to hear my remarks. I hope she will take them up with the minister and seek some form of redress and reform to the system so that there is no longer this communication breakdown. We cannot hide this issue any longer, Madam Acting President.

The PRESIDENT: Hon Nick Goiran, you will get used to it eventually. There has been a change.

Hon NICK GOIRAN: Thank you, Madam President. Thank you for your graciousness.

I hope that this matter will be taken up with the minister so that there will be some reforms.

To be a little more precise about what I would like to see in this area, I would like to see the following: I would like to see a directive, whether it be legislative or otherwise, that every infant who survives an abortion must be treated with the same standard of care as an infant who was born at the same gestational age. There needs to be a directive to the practitioners, because it has not happened on at least 26 occasions. It is unfortunate that there needs to be a directive, but we now know it is necessary. The second thing I am asking for is that a reporting mechanism—again, whether legislative or otherwise—be implemented so that when an infant survives an abortion, the Department for Child Protection and Family Support must be immediately notified. Thirdly, that a reporting mechanism, whether legislative or otherwise, be created so that when an infant survives an abortion but subsequently dies, the coroner is notified and given express power to investigate. I emphasise again that it should already be happening. It is outrageous that it has not been happening. Once again, I make the point that if this type of care or non-care—this neglect—had been found in the back of a prison van, there would be a massive call for an inquiry. There would be an inquiry and it would be undertaken. There would be recommendations and governments of both persuasions would be tripping over themselves to agree to every one of the recommendations. They would not hesitate to agree with the recommendations of an inquiry as sensitive as the matter of someone dying in the back of a prison van. That might happen if there were just one such instance; here I am talking about at least 26 instances. It is ongoing. It is one or two every year. It is a disgrace and it needs to change. I hope that in this fortieth Parliament we finally see some redress to the matter that Hon Ed Dermer brought to our attention—I thank him for that—as far back as 2011.

I conclude my remarks this evening by acknowledging those of my colleagues who were unsuccessful at the election. I thank them all for their contribution, as valued friends and colleagues. In particular, I honour the contributions of Dr Graham Jacobs and Reverend Peter Abetz for their longstanding hard work in these sensitive and difficult areas that they never shirked from and were willing to fight for on every instance. I consider them both to be not only friends, but also heroes for the courage they demonstrated in fighting on these particular matters.

HON COLIN HOLT (South West) [9.29 pm]: I also wish to rise to make some remarks in reply to the address by the Governor, who was gracious enough to come and open Parliament. I had an opportunity at the end of the thirty-ninth Parliament to thank our departing colleagues and wish them well. I take the opportunity now to welcome back the returning members on both sides of the house and also to welcome the new members coming into this place, who I am sure will see it as a great privilege and will take that privilege very seriously in all the matters that come before the house to be discussed on behalf of the Western Australians we represent.

I was just reflecting on the change of roles since the last election, and how members have changed sides. Members sit on that side of the house to implement government policy and to be in charge of the Treasury benches. Although members might come to this side of the house, they still have an important role to play in representing the people who elected them to this place. Whatever region members represent, they still have a role to play, and they should take that role very seriously every step of the way.

I find myself in a couple of interesting positions. I am the opposition spokesperson for housing, racing and gaming, forestry and, would members believe, women's interests! We heard quite a lot from Hon Dr Sally Talbot in her Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech about women's interests in this place, and we have had quite a focus on the roles women play in this Parliament and the new ground they are breaking. It is interesting because both the Leader and the Deputy Leader of the National Party are female, and they are the only two women in our parliamentary party, yet they appointed me as the spokesperson for women's interests! I think that might be a bit of a challenge for me, but I am up for the challenge. It will be a challenge because it will be hard for me to put myself in the position of actually looking at the world from a woman's perspective, but I am sure there will be plenty of people to give me some advice on that as I go into it. However, I am more than happy to take up that challenge, to hear those views and to do whatever I can to put forward women's interests, not only in this Parliament but also in this state.

I remember going to a Bunbury Geographe Chamber of Commerce and Industry dinner at which the guest speaker talked about women in leadership. It was actually very, very good. At the end I posed the question, "What do you think about quotas, not just in leadership but in any sort of way where you set yourself a target that you're going to have a certain representation or a certain component of whatever it might be, maybe a sporting team?" Her response to me was that she thought quotas have a real role to play.

I thought about it after that; I am quite a reflective person. I remember listening to the cricket commentary about the same time. They talked about the quota in the South African team for players who came from a non-white background. They actually set active quotas to make sure non-white players were represented on that cricket team.

I thought to myself, “Does that mean they pick people who aren’t good enough to play in the South African cricket team? If they were to put everyone side by side and said, ‘Let’s pick the best team’, does that mean they are going to pick some people who aren’t good enough just because of the colour of their skin?” I thought that Cricket South Africa’s only response could be that it would have to put resources into developing the game amongst the non-white or coloured population. It would actually have to build the skills of those people to play cricket at the highest level so that when it went to pick a team, it would not pick players on the basis of colour, even though there is a quota system; it would pick players on the basis of their ability to play the game at the best level. I thought, “That actually makes a lot of sense to me. You actually put resources in, and you look for opportunities to promote people who can play the game as well as anyone else.”

I am very reticent about making the leap into women’s interests, but it seems to me that unless we are thinking about how we can promote people of other sexes, races or religious backgrounds to participate in political parties, we are probably not even going to think about quotas, let alone invest time in finding the right people to come and join our political teams. Undoubtedly, I would say that there are plenty of people out there who are not from my typical background—let us face it, I am a white, middle-aged male—who have plenty of skills and abilities to contribute to the arena of politics in which we find ourselves. The same goes for any other business, community, or local government—everywhere we look, we need the participation of a wide range of people from a wide range of backgrounds.

I just wanted to point out that I am the spokesperson for women’s interests in the Nationals —

Hon Sue Ellery: Are you really?

Hon COLIN HOLT: I am! I am looking forward to that challenge, like I said, but I am not going to repeat it. I am sure there will be plenty of advice coming my way, including from the Leader of the House, who I am more than happy to listen to for some advice.

Hon Sue Ellery: Happy to give it, my friend; happy to give it.

Hon COLIN HOLT: I am happy to take it!

I have been in this house for eight years—two terms—and I have been very privileged to serve on the government benches over that whole time. I came into this place on the back of a mood for change, especially in regional Western Australia, which the Nationals represent. In 2008 the National Party was, arguably, on its knees and about to exit the political arena, but we pulled through it and put forward some policies, as one does in election campaigns. We put forward some policies that had some momentum and acceptance amongst the communities we now represent. They said, “Let’s give these guys a go, to see how they can help out with regional Western Australia.” I have to say that during the period 2001 to 2007 regional Western Australia was actually not receiving much focus from the state government. That is what happens; there was a mood for change and people voted their representatives into this house and the other place to reflect that mood in the electorate. We all accept it; we accept it at every change in every election, and we accepted it in the election just gone. There was obviously a mood for change, and we accept it. We play our roles on either side of the house to ensure that the people we represent are well represented and that their views continue to matter.

I believe that through the implementation of the royalties for regions program we have, without a doubt, invested a large amount of funds into and put a large amount of focus on regional Western Australia. I was very interested to hear Hon Darren West’s contribution to the Address-in-Reply, which I think he will continue at some point. I interjected on him at the end when he was talking about regional representation and the fact that there are now 13 Australian Labor Party members who are regional members. I interjected to ask, “Does that mean you guys do not support changing how regional representatives are elected to this place?” When he gets back on his feet to continue his remarks, I look forward to hearing him address that. I would like to hear him give some indication to the people he represents in regional Western Australia about what he actually thinks about regional representation and the proportion of it that sits in this house.

In saying that, with regard to royalties for regions and the focus on regional Western Australia, I have no doubt in my mind that over eight years of implementing that policy, we have delivered some great outcomes for every community in regional Western Australia. I have often stood in this place and invited members from across the chamber to visit those communities and see what royalties for regions means for regional members, regional communities and regional people. I am sure they would hear the same things I hear—that there is now a feeling that regional Western Australia matters.

I have often talked about this in here, but for the benefit of new members, I think one of the biggest changes is the change of aspiration in regional communities that had ideas and goals to achieve without any real means to an end. They would often rely on the occasional chook raffle at the footy club to try to raise enough funds to get a project across the line. Royalties for regions created an environment in which those aspirations and goals are funded. I am

sure if members asked those communities what that meant to them, they would say that is exactly what it meant. There was a means to an end. All my work in the first term of government was with regional communities to see how we could make the opportunity real for them. It was a big program. We started from a zero base and it took a little while to bed it down and to find a way to meet all the aspirational needs of communities as well as the big projects that would add great economic and environmental value and social wellbeing for those communities. Did we get the balance right? I think in the majority of cases, yes. We can look at a range of projects across the board, and there might be some that we might think never met the mark and left the community in a worse state, but I would be surprised if it can be proved to me that there are many of them. Again, I welcome people giving me some feedback on whether that is the case. In eight years, with \$7 billion worth of investment and three and a half thousand projects, there is no way royalties for regions has not touched people's lives and I am absolutely convinced that it has changed people's lives for the better. I remember the debate in 2007–08 when the royalties for regions policy was floated by the Nationals and we did not find too much support across the political divide for it. That is fair enough. In a way it was a divisive policy because it certainly pitched regional Western Australia against metropolitan Perth.

Hon Adele Farina: You left out the South West Region in the ad for TV.

Hon COLIN HOLT: Did we? I think it was because when we looked at the map there were 48 seats in metropolitan Perth extending down to Busselton and 11 seats outside that region. That came about because there was a 48/11 reference that was about politicking and promotion of the idea. Hon Adele Farina has raised many times how the south west has been left out of the royalties for regions equation, but I would challenge that.

Hon Adele Farina: I am happy to have that debate with you on another occasion.

Hon COLIN HOLT: We can have that debate any time she wants. I am sure she will be batting for the Busselton Airport expansion, given some of the commentary that that project may be curtailed and that the \$56 million or so from the state could be at risk as a result of the review. That is a massive project for the south west and will set it up for the future. Everyone in that region worked hard on that project. They had a strong business case and they would not let go. We committed to it and it went through to cabinet. Everyone committed to it and everyone funded it in the budget. When we talk about it being put at risk, as a member for the South West Region, Hon Adele Farina should ask her own team how that can happen to the south west, specifically the Busselton Airport community, because it will bring huge economic benefits to them as much as to the state. We need another entry point to this state. We have been working on the Margaret River region brand for a long time now. It is world known and Australian known. Whenever I talk to colleagues over east, they want to come and see Margaret River. We need an entry point to Margaret River. In my mind, that project was well documented, had a strong business case, went through cabinet, got support and is funded in the budget. The funding needs to continue for that project. I look forward to Hon Adele Farina's advocacy, as a member for the South West Region who holds me to account on every project in the south west. Is she holding her own government to account in that space? I am sure there is plenty of discussion to be had on that.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.