

APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2015–16) BILL 2015

Third Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah) [2.52 pm]: I rise to continue my remarks on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2015–16) Bill 2015. I would like to acknowledge the former member for Dawesville in the Speaker's gallery today, Mr Arthur Marshall, and his wife, Helen, and guests—the best member for Dawesville there has been. I am sure we could have a comeback, Arthur, because the current member is retiring. I reckon Arthur Marshall should come back because he would stand up for the Peel sport and recreation office that is going to be gutted under this government and under this Minister for Sport and Recreation. I know that Arthur Marshall would be concerned to learn that the office in Peel will now no longer have a regional director because of, and I quote —

There are challenges across the board for the public sector. There are resourcing pressures on salary levels and on a range of costs across the system.

What has happened? In the region with the second highest population in the state, the strategic position of the regional district director of sport is going to be taken away. How ridiculous is this government and where are its priorities? Before question time, the member for Dawesville interjected and said that I keep attacking him. I keep attacking him because he does not stand up for the constituents of Dawesville and, more importantly, he does not stand up for the people of the Peel region. It is time that all those who represent Peel stand up in this place and stop the erosion of services that have continued under the Barnett Liberal–National government. Before question time, I highlighted a list of them, and that list is growing—that is the problem. I am not saying this to personally attack the member for Dawesville, but I want him, when these decisions are made by his parliamentary cabinet colleagues, to stand up and ask why this is happening in Peel.

Dr K.D. Hames interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Health, I call you to order for the second time. Just because somebody refers to you, there is no need to shout out.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: When issues affect people in the community of Peel, many of whom are very vulnerable and need financial counselling services, whose voice do we hear standing up for those people? It is my voice—the lone voice. We do not hear from the member for —

Point of Order

Dr K.D. HAMES: Mr Speaker, you have asked me to stop interjecting but it is very difficult —

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It hurts! It hurts, because you know it is true!

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I call you to order for the second time.

Dr K.D. HAMES: It does not hurt at all.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Health!

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: It would help if you lived there. Arthur Marshall lived there. You do not live there!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Mandurah, I call you to order for the third time. Minister for Health, I call you to order for the third time.

Mr F.A. Alban interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Swan Hills, thank you for adding a pearler at the end. I call you to order for the first time.

Mr P.T. MILES: Mr Speaker, you often ask members to speak through the Chair and not directly to other members of the house. I ask that you direct the member for Mandurah to direct his comments through the Chair and to not engage the member opposite.

Ms L.L. Baker interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Maylands. I ask both the member for Mandurah and the Minister for Health to now calm down. Member for Mandurah, address your remarks through the Chair and let us proceed.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Through the Chair, it is my responsibility as a representative of Mandurah, a resident of the region, to stand up when government decisions impact on the people who live there. It is my

responsibility. It is the responsibility of anybody who is elected to this place to stand up on behalf of their communities when their communities are affected by cuts made by this government, and that is exactly what I am doing. I am appealing to any member who may represent the region, whomever they may be, to do the same. That is what I am saying. The problem is that when services have been threatened over the last eight years of this government, when services such as education have lost its regional district director—a director who has direct influence over the autonomy of schools in Peel—it is the responsibility of the elected members to stand up for that. I am pointing out that there are some members in this place, members who are in the seats south of me, who do not do that. That is the point I am trying to make. When there are issues affecting people in my community who are vulnerable, people who need financial counselling services —

Dr K.D. HAMES: You are a show pony.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: No, I am not a show pony! Why does the minister not stand up and start to represent the people he purports to represent, because he does not. That is the problem.

Point of Order

Dr K.D. HAMES: I reiterate my previous point of order.

The SPEAKER: What was that?

Dr K.D. HAMES: I have been called three times; I am not allowed to interject.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: That is not a point of order. The fact that somebody makes comments at you, minister, across the house does not give you the right to interject at will. You are quite at liberty to get up and make a speech and say whatever the member for Mandurah has said is not true.

Debate Resumed

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: I was called a show pony. If a show pony is standing up for the people who are affected by changes to financial counselling services —

Dr K.D. Hames: You do it in the media.

The SPEAKER: Minister for Health, you are on your last warning. If you want a rest, I will oblige you.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Tomorrow a decision could be made on whether or not the Peel Primary Behaviour Centre, which is in my electorate, in the Mandurah Primary School is to be closed and relocated somewhere else out of the region. Will my colleague from the other side stand up against that decision if it is made? It is imminent! That is my point. I have a right to make these statements in this place and I have a right to appeal to those on the other side to support the region that they purport to represent. If I am the sole voice and I am a show pony, then I will keep being the show pony because I am the only one mentioning these issues in this place; they are not doing it at all and representing their communities. It is as simple as that.

MR F.M. LOGAN (Cockburn) [2.59 pm]: Congratulations to the member for Mandurah for that stirring speech not only in defence of his own electorate, but also in defence of the region.

Mr W.J. Johnston: Somebody has to do it.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Absolutely. It is a pity that the Deputy Premier did not follow his fantastic pattern of defence. It is a pity he did not do anything to defend his own area. How long has the Minister for Health been a minister? How long has he been in this chamber? He did not rise to defend his own electorate. It is unbelievable. He complained to the Speaker on his fourth warning that he did not have the right to interject against someone who was trying to defend his own region. He wanted to interject on a fourth warning.

I will just continue with my criticism of the budget process and the announcements and cuts that have been highlighted in this year's budget papers, one of which we discussed in question time. The Leader of the Opposition just referred to it now—the \$54 million worth of taxpayers' money that needs to be spent on the bridge between East Perth and Burswood Stadium to supposedly carry the vast bulk of people to the football stadium. This bridge was designed by an Italian design house. I am not too sure whether it was designed here or in Italy; I presume it was designed in Italy. The contract to build the bridge has been delivered to a South Australian construction company. Despite asking two questions without notice and a question on notice about whether the taxpayers of Western Australia will get any value out of this bridge construction—that is, the physical creation of the bridge itself—we will get nothing. I cannot believe that the Minister for Transport continues to dodge these simple questions. He will not be drawn on these questions of where the steel will be sourced and where the bridge will be manufactured. At least the Treasurer, when questioned about the sourcing and fabrication of steel for the stadium contract, gave clear indications to this house, prior to the announcement of the awarding of the fabrication contract, that he and his government would look favourably on sourcing that

material from Western Australia. He gave a number of clear indications that that would occur. Sure enough, he followed through and announced that Civmec had won the contract to fabricate the steel for the stadium.

What we are asking of the Minister for Transport is no more than what we asked of the Treasurer. Yet for some reason the Minister for Transport will not follow the example set by the Treasurer and at least indicate to this house that the bridge will be fabricated in Western Australia and that materials will be sourced in Western Australia, let alone give a guarantee that that will be the case. He will not even indicate that, which is exactly what the Treasurer did. We are asking the Minister for Transport no more than we asked the Treasurer about the stadium contract. That fills me with real concern. If the minister will not even give a guarantee to this house that this bridge is to be fabricated in Western Australia, despite now being asked three times, I have a very strong feeling that the government and the minister will allow either the design company or the construction company to source the materials, and possibly the entire bridge, from overseas. They could come from Indonesia, Thailand or direct from China. That is the concern I have. I can assure you, Madam Deputy Speaker, that they are the concerns of the industry as well. We should remember that at the moment fabrication is at the lowest point it has been in the past 20 years. Some of the largest fabrication workshops in Western Australia have closed their doors. They employ no-one. I was at a fabrication facility the other day that is just about to complete the bridge for Elizabeth Quay. It is doing a very good job on it. Once that work is complete, that is it. It has two fabrication workshops. One is completely closed—nobody is employed there. All that is in the other one is what is left of the bridge.

Dr M.D. Nahan: What fabrication company is that?

Mr F.M. LOGAN: That is Phillips Engineering in Henderson, which is in my electorate. Once that work on Elizabeth Quay is complete, that is it; it has nothing left on its books.

Mr J.H.D. Day: So we can be thankful for Elizabeth Quay at least.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: Absolutely. In terms of awarding the contract for that bridge, I grant the minister that, but in terms of how many empty blocks will be around Elizabeth Quay, as we have seen in the media, I am not too sure the minister should be congratulated for that.

Mr J.H.D. Day: You wait and see in 10 years' time.

Several members interjected.

Mr J.H.D. Day: Come here in one year's time; you will see the wonderful benefits.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: In the long term, it will work. As Keynes said, "In the long run we are all dead."

Mr J.H.D. Day: But there are people who follow us. There are generations who follow us and will benefit.

Mr B.S. Wyatt: But they will be there to pay the debt.

Mr F.M. LOGAN: As we know, the minister will not be around to worry about the debt.

The other issue that I want to refer to is training. Today is National TAFE Day, as I announced to the house just a minute ago. What an appalling situation we have in Western Australia and nationally on National TAFE Day. Federally, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet's green paper, which was released today, has effectively shown a secret plan by the Abbott government to walk away from vocational education and training entirely. The Abbott government has already cut over \$2 billion from skills and training, including \$1 billion to apprenticeship training in all states in the Federation. According to this green paper, there is a plan to abandon vocational education and training altogether because there would be a further \$1.8 billion cut to state funding of skills and training. Given what was happened to the TAFE system over the past five years, it simply will not be able to survive cuts of this magnitude that were revealed in this federal green paper today.

As I have announced in this house over and over again in criticism of the minister's handling of her portfolio, there have been massive funding cuts, and in this year's budget again there was a further \$10 million cut to the funding of TAFE training. Between 2012–13 and the out year of 2018–19, there is a total of \$128 million worth of cuts directly to the delivery of training in Western Australia. If the federal government gets its way and cuts a further \$1.8 billion from vocational education and training in Australia, of which we would assume 10 per cent, or \$180 million, would be for funding to Western Australia, I seriously cannot see how TAFE as an institution can survive. Of course, it will not be just TAFE; it will also be the registered training organisations that receive about \$101 million of state funding.

As we can see from today's Auditor General report, what they do with that funding is nothing short of disgraceful. Thirty-five per cent of the 400 private training providers that were assessed were found to be critically noncompliant and 60 per cent were found to be noncompliant with national standards. Some RTOs employed people who were not competent to teach the training that they were employed to teach and had no industry experience whatsoever. These people are delivering training to students who are paying for it, as is the taxpayer. That is why I asked the Minister for Training and Workforce Development when she is going to take

action against these rogue private providers of training. It is exactly what happened in Victoria. The provision of private training was an absolute shambles because the conservative government in Victoria, prior to the election of the Andrews government, did exactly the same; it cut its TAFE system to pieces, contracted out all the training to the private sector and then found that it had basically employed a bunch of carpetbaggers to deliver training. When it checked exactly what they were doing in the delivery of that training, it found that many of them were defrauding the taxpayer.

When we look closely at what has been happening in Western Australia, it is not surprising to find that, lo and behold, it is very similar. Engineering apprentices who have been trained by private training providers have not even been practically tested. We do not know whether they can do the job that they have been employed to do. When we look at the state of training in Western Australia through the prism of this year's budget, we can see that it is a disaster. Five apprenticeships have been completely wiped out in Western Australia. Most of those apprentices are from country regions, particularly people learning wall and floor tiling. Those apprentices have been told that if they want to complete their apprenticeship, they will have to go to either Brisbane or Sydney. Obviously, the parents of a 17-year-old who has been told that they will have to go to Sydney to complete their apprenticeship would be a bit concerned, because that 17-year-old will have to go over there for block release. They will not go over there for one day; they will go over there for weeks. It is no wonder parents would be concerned about sending their kids to Sydney for weeks at a time simply to complete their apprenticeship. Five separate apprenticeships have ended up in that situation. Eighty-four training courses have been cut in this year alone and there have been 240 redundancies from TAFE between last July and 30 June.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.