

**FREMANTLE CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU**

*Statement by Member for Fremantle*

**MS S.F. MCGURK (Fremantle)** [12.56 pm]: Last week I was honoured to attend the fiftieth anniversary of the Fremantle office of the Citizens Advice Bureau of WA. For four decades, volunteers at that office have provided information and referral, a low-cost legal advice service on a wide range of issues and a mediation service. In the current climate of risk management, there is no doubt that there are challenges to ensure that authoritative advice is given. I commend those in the organisation who are working to balance that risk with ensuring that people who need advice still get it.

The Fremantle CAB harnesses the enormous resources of volunteers—largely retired people in my electorate who commit to a regular stint, train themselves and challenge themselves, and are motivated by helping people who just need a hand that those volunteering can give. Despite the array of resources now available online, many people do not have access to basic advice and need assistance. Illiteracy, people who are not literate in English, low numbers of justices of the peace and stretched community legal centres are all factors that contribute to the continuing high demand for services such as the Citizens Advice Bureau. Currently, the Fremantle CAB is trying to manage its latest challenge and source stable and suitable accommodation, exacerbated by the uncertainty around the Kings Square development. I hope that issue can be resolved and I can assist it in securing something appropriate, because it provides a vital service and I can only see demand for these services increasing. If it can secure visible and accessible accommodation, I have no doubt that the Fremantle Citizens Advice Bureau will be celebrating its next 50-year anniversary in due time.

*Sitting suspended from 12.58 to 2.00 pm*