

**APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2016–17) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2017**  
**APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2016–17) SUPPLEMENTARY BILL 2017**

*Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**MR D.C. NALDER (Bateman)** [3.57 pm]: I will get back to the point at which I left off—it seems so long ago now. I was talking about comparing the government’s current budget with the 2016–17 budget. This government has talked about how committed it is to the regions and to royalties for regions, being the only party committed to it, but what we have seen in this budget process going forward, particularly relative to the 2016–17 year, is that 58 per cent of the royalties for regions budget is now used for things that, historically, were in the consolidated account. It is actually a sneaky way of reducing expense growth. If I compare that and add the cost-shifting that has occurred with the National Disability Insurance Scheme, the actual underlying expense growth in the state budget is considerably higher. It is a little misleading, and that is disappointing. We may not necessarily argue the point of a particular line item, but it is the fact that it has been done by stealth. We are highlighting the fact that the government has not been open and transparent about it.

On the back of that, I want to touch on a point that was made earlier. There was a bit of fun and banter in the house about commercialisation versus capitalisation versus privatisation and so forth. The Premier earlier used the definition of “commercialisation” to try to justify what it is. It is interesting. I took the time, whilst he was reading out the Google definition of “commercialisation”, to look it up myself. The definition is in two parts. One part to commercialisation is that it is the sacrifice of quality for profit—to apply methods of business before profit. The second part of the definition is that it is to do, exploit or make chiefly for financial gain. I was trying to understand what the government is doing with this recently announced sale because it will impact the bottom line of budgets moving forward. In 2016–17, there was a lot of discussion about capitalising Western Power for 50 years. We called it privatisation. We were lambasted for considering privatisation of Western Power, which was about capitalising or commercialising 51 per cent of the revenue stream for 50 years.

Interestingly, while we were in government, we talked about the opportunity to establish a freight charge. The transport industry agreed that we could use less than 50 per cent of the productivity gains to generate a freight charge. There was always the possibility that we could capitalise—or commercialise, to use the current government’s term—that income stream. Main Roads estimated that the freight charge would generate around \$100 million a year. If we look at that as a capitalisation rate and sold it to a superannuation fund at a four per cent or 4.5 per cent yield, that revenue stream could be capitalised. That is essentially what government members are doing. We finally got it out of them. Members opposite critiqued me for using the term “capitalisation” but the Treasurer finally agreed to it; if a commercial property is sold, it is generally done on a yield, which is called the capitalisation rate. The capitalisation rate is because we are taking an income stream over a period and bringing it up front, turning it into a capital amount. That is what the government is talking about doing here in selling off the income stream of Landgate. The government will take a future income stream, bring it forward, and turn it into capital. At this point, I am not going to argue the merits of whether that is privatisation. The issue here is about what happens in the future in a budgeting sense. We will lose the revenue stream; we are giving away future revenue. That is all we are doing.

I think it is right that we ask the government serious questions about this. What we got from the government today was totally political spin. If the income stream on a commercial property is capitalised when it is sold, that is called capitalisation. Labor is using the term “commercialisation”, but it is still selling the property. Members opposite are saying that they will hold onto the titles but sell the income stream. I do not know why this government has not been more transparent about doing that. I think it is because of the political spin—because government members argued so heavily in the election campaign to stop privatisation and because these were sugar hits that did not do anything to fundamentally underpin the budget. The argument made by members opposite was that this can be done only once, but they are now doing the opposite of what they argued 18 months ago. I think they are embarrassed so they are trying to change the definition used to somehow muddy the waters. They tried to link it to the redress scheme yesterday to try to take away some of the heat, but then they admitted that the redress scheme would be funded irrespective of the sale of Landgate. Then they tried to use a different word to get away from the term “privatisation” by saying it has been “commercialised”. I think that is totally inappropriate.

To sum up the 2016 capital appropriation, the outcomes of the final results were a lot better than what was forecast prior and I am pleased that we were able to hand over the books in a better position than what we thought they were going to be in. I remind members opposite that net debt was at \$31.96 billion, not \$40 billion, which the Premier loves to claim. He is using the forward estimates of the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* to justify the forward estimates of the future debt rate. If he does that, because they are estimates from Treasury, then he must take the last forward estimates of Treasury; they indicate that if a Liberal government had been returned,

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net debt would be at \$28.8 billion. We are saying it will be at \$31.96 billion, but if we look at the forward estimate used in arguments made by members opposite, is \$28.8 billion. What is happening and what we are seeing from this capitalisation—the net debt position at the end of these books; what the appropriation is for—is net debt at \$31.96 billion. Mark my words; the budget shows that by the end of the next financial year, net debt will be above \$39 billion. In two years, this government has shifted debt from under \$32 billion to over \$39 billion. That is what members opposite have to take responsibility for.

**DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition)** [4.05 pm]: I will not be long but I want to make a couple of comments. The subject is the *2016–17 Annual Report on State Finances*; I had a lot to do with its framing and outcome, but not the report.

I want to bring members back to what might be perceived as a bit of history to highlight a few aspects of this report. As the member for Bateman, the shadow Treasurer, pointed out, when we started on the 2016–17 budget, we forecast a deficit of \$3.9 billion. That was huge; it was easily the forecast record. It was brought on for a number of reasons but, most importantly, the collapse in revenue. We then undertook substantial efficiency activities throughout the public sector so that expenses in 2016–17 were not only forecast to decline, but also declined substantially faster and more significantly than expected. The declines in expenditure in 2016–17 were larger than any of the declines, forecast and actual, made by the McGowan government. In other words, fiscal restraint was on, was working and was implemented by the former government. Members opposite inherited some of it; I would like to make a comment on that. The key thing is that, again, this shows that the major factor we faced was a complete collapse in revenue. For the four years from 2013–14 to 2016–17, revenue was lower each year on year and declined over that period despite population growth and despite increase in demands for services by over two per cent. In other words, revenue went down. There is only one instance in the history of the states since World War II in which revenue declined in a state; it was in Victoria in the 1990s. We had three years of that—phenomenal.

Turning to page 10 of the report, that led to the tightest and lowest expenditure growth in over two decades. It was substantially lower expenditure growth than was experienced under the Gallop and Carpenter governments. To read from a graph on page 10, the budget that we inherited from the Carpenter government had expenditure growth of nearly 14 per cent in one year. Over the three years from 2014–15, it averaged two per cent growth. We often hear the rhetoric of members opposite saying that we ruined the books, did not do anything and that we spent too much and we spent too little. The reality is that we had the largest revenue hit in our state's history and no-one could have avoided budget deficits from that. I have done a little analysis, although this is history and I will move off it in a minute. If we had the grants—tied grants and GST grants—for the last four years of the Barnett government that the McGowan government is now experiencing, even with its relatively low share of GST at about 48c, we would have never had a deficit and when we handed over government, the debt would not have been \$31.9 billion, but less than \$24 billion. That shows the importance of revenue, the importance of the volatility of our economy, and the difficult times we have been through. A very large proportion of the \$31.9 billion debt that members opposite inherited—\$7.3 billion—was basically due to utterly collapsing revenue. That is history.

I will not go into the budget too much. We can wander widely in the debate. All I can say is that the latest budget of the McGowan government is fraudulent. It made commitments to a whole range of capital infrastructure. It not only made those commitments to the electorate, but also signed on the Turnbull government to fund those in partnership. The state government's share of the funding for the \$2.8 billion worth of those committed projects, including the Tonkin Highway extension, is not in the budget. The government spent a huge amount of money in the campaign that ended last weekend on saying that it is committed to the Byford rail line and the Tonkin Highway extension, yet none of that money is in the budget. If the government does not have money in the budget, it is not committed to it. It is very easy for the government to reduce its debt levels if it commits to expenditure and does not put the money in the budget. It is particularly easy if it takes commonwealth money; it lowers the deficit by bringing it in and spending part of it or it books it and does not spend it. Indeed, the so-called reduction in debt of \$2.8 billion over the forward estimates, as claimed by the Treasurer, is entirely due to the government leaving out the \$2.8 billion of infrastructure that it has committed to in a joint venture and that it promised to the electorate. In any other words, that is fiddling the books. If a private firm did that, the Australian Securities and Investments Commission would be all over it like a rash. Luckily, the government has a large number of people who are not looking. We will be. One of the lessons from last weekend's by-election is that the electorate, unlike the government, is focused on what the government is doing, not what past governments have done. This government is still trying to govern by looking in the rear-view mirror, and that is why it is getting into trouble and hitting all sorts of problems.

I would like to summarise the debate we have just had. Let me put this in context. The government talks about the important redress scheme. How will it fund that legitimate issue? Maybe it should not spend as much on Metronet. Let me put aside how the government will fund it. It is an appropriate commitment and I congratulate successive commonwealth governments for driving that through the royal commission. It was largely a commonwealth issue.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 28 June 2018]

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All the state did is agree to the findings of the commonwealth Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse that was originated by Julia Gillard, and appropriately so.

The government has said that it is going to commercialise an asset. That is a weasel word for privatisation. Landgate is already commercialised. The Treasurer admitted that. The press release states that. It was put on a commercial basis some years ago. It has been proving itself. Indeed, in the past two years, it has reduced its FTEs by 17 per cent. It is making itself more efficient and is digitising its entire activity. That is great. That is what it should do. It is a very important asset. The government has said that it is going to commercialise it, but it is already commercialised. What the government really means—this is what we tried to get out of it—is that it hopes to get in the vicinity of \$600 million for it. It is transferring a right, an income stream and an asset to the private sector. That is all we know. We asked government ministers questions and they were as evasive as they could be. They used weasel words. They did not describe it. They have not put anything on the table. They have not briefed us in any detail. They have not given a ministerial statement. When we asked questions during question time, they were evasive. People who have children will know that that is a clear example of someone trying to avoid the truth. That is what they are doing. As usual, the Treasurer did the best. The Minister for Lands' response was basically useless. As I understand it, the Treasurer essentially said that the whole business of Landgate is commercial; it makes a profit. In fact, in four years, it will make about a \$50 million profit. That is the forecast. That is a good rate of return. The government is the largest buyer of services from that business. The Treasurer said that the electronic services of that business will be sold to a private vendor. That is possible. Basically, the government will sell an income stream, as the member for Bateman described, but that is not what it is going to do. That is what the Treasurer implied, but that is not true. We are looking at shadows, because the details are sparse. This is a very important asset and the government is talking about handing over for potentially a long time a major income stream, but it has not come clean on what it plans to do. If we had tried to do that in government, there would have been a riot, and appropriately so.

The press release states —

Pricing for services provided under the contract —

In other words, there will be a contract with a private provider that will take over the provision of those electronic services that will be commercialised, so the Minister for Lands is right—sold. It continues —

will be capped at CPI or CPI plus one per cent, ...

In other words, there will be a contract with a private provider and that private provider will have a degree of control over the pricing of those transactions. That is more than just selling an income stream; that is allowing the provider to determine the income stream. This is what is happening in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, so it is not a surprise. But government ministers did not say that. They refused to say it. The press release continues —

... meaning a new operator —

In other words, the government is going to sign a contract with the new operator and that entity is going to operate the electronic services business. It is not just going to buy an income stream, as the Treasurer said; it is going to operate that business and have some degree of control over the pricing of those services. In other words, it will provide a number of services using the Landgate database. The government is going to sign a contract with a private provider and that private provider is going to have a degree of control over the operation and pricing of those services. That is privatisation. It will not necessarily own the database, but it will have access to it in a wideranging manner. The electronic processes, which are probably the most valuable asset of Landgate, will be sold and transferred to the new contractor. In this business, it is an electronic service provider based on the database. The proposal is to sell to a private provider the right to provide services using Landgate hardware and that provider will determine to some degree the prices and the services provided and it will pay an up-front fee of an undetermined amount for that right. That is privatisation. That is selling a services business. That is what the government is doing. There might be some other details but there are a lot of questions to be asked.

Why did ministers not just come out and say it or put it in a press release? They could have put this in a press release. They were as evasive as hell. Do members know why? It is because the Treasurer did not want to do this, and the Premier and all his minions campaigned against privatisation not only at the last election, but also last week. The government campaigned strongly against privatisation and now it has announced the privatisation. That is what it has done, but it cannot cop it sweet. It is trying to be evasive. It is not going to get away with it. It could just say that it had a change of mind and cop it sweet. Let us debate the details; they are important. But the government has not provided those because it is avoiding what it is doing, and then in the process it has not provided adequate details to us and, therefore, the public of Western Australia. There is a range of issues. The member for Bateman highlighted a very important one. In the budget, Landgate is forecast to provide over \$100 million of dividends and incomes tax equivalents to the state. How much of that is going to go? In other

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words, how much will this securitisation sale cost the budget? What is the net? The government has not told us. In fact, it has avoided the issue. When we look at Landgate's documentation, the government plans to digitalise its whole business. From reading what Landgate states in its documents, this government is going to sell to the contractor all the activities of Landgate that are currently digitalised. The government plans to digitalise all of Landgate. The question is: when the government digitalises the remaining activities of Landgate, will it sell them to the same business? Will that be part of the contract? I do not know, but it is very relevant. Do members know what that would mean? The government will eventually sell all of Landgate. These are really legitimate questions to ask.

The second issue is privatisation. The proposal, as I hear it, is that the database will be maintained, owned and controlled by Landgate, the government entity—fine. But the private provider will have almost unfettered access to it because it has to provide the services to it. What restrictions will be placed on the contractor to stop it from taking the database holus bolus, moving it somewhere else and selling it to third parties for big data usage? Because that is a real value there. Let us be honest, that is the value in the process. That is the value that was sought and paid for in New South Wales, that is the value that was sought and paid for in South Australia, and that is what a third party seeks. The government might have put some restrictions on the contractor, but we have no idea. Another point is: will we be able to scrutinise this down the track? The Minister for Transport made it quite clear when she announced this that it would not be subject to legislation even though Landgate is involved in over 48 pieces of legislation—no legislation, no way to scrutinise, no study, no detail, an evasive description and a broken promise. This is appalling public policy. We on this side of the house are not totally against privatisation. We went to the election on the basis of a wideranging plan of privatisation doing exactly what this government is doing; that is, to contract out on long-term lease certain government assets and services. But do members know what the difference is? We were honest, we disclosed it in detail, we identified the total economic impact on the state and we went to an election with that information. The Labor Party did the opposite. It campaigned against it, it won government on that basis, it has decided it has to do it because it is a problem that it does not have a solution to, and now government members are sitting here trying to privatise assets and hide the fact it is doing that. The results are twofold. In the process of trying to hide it, the government is not disclosing to the Parliament of Western Australia what it means. The Treasurer has said that we have to fund redress—yes, we do. But the reason that the Labor Party has a real problem is: first, that it does not have a debt program and, second, and more importantly, it went into that last election promising too much, too soon on Metronet, which has gobbled up every cent of capital money that it has for investment leaving no money for hospitals, schools and everything else, including redress. Therefore, it is Labor's own lopsided policies on capital spend and its own policy to fight against privatisation that is causing the problem. In other words, the problem is yours!

**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale)** [4.25 pm]: This Parliament, from time to time, has the ability to come together and make significant statements that hopefully allows those to whom they are directed, to feel some sense of relief, joy or vindication. Over the history of this Parliament, there have been some of those occasions, one being the apology to the so-called stolen generations back on 28 May 1997. The then Leader of the Opposition, Dr Gallop, moved a motion that stated —

I move, without notice —

That so much of the standing orders be suspended as would allow me to move a motion of apology for past policies under which Aboriginal children were removed from their families.

The government at the time agreed to the suspension of standing orders for that motion to be debated. The Premier, Mr Court, also spoke about the Aboriginal stolen generations. That motion was debated in this Parliament a day or two after the tabling in federal Parliament of the report, "Bringing them Home", which delved into the history of the stolen generations in Australia. In the last paragraph of Dr Gallop's address he states —

An apology may well be a symbolic gesture but symbolic gestures can be very powerful. Nor do we expect Australians to forget our non-indigenous history. Anzac day commemorations and the call "Lest we forget" is one example that would go to the hearts of most Australians. In turn, let us offer a similar dignity to indigenous Australians about their own history and its effect on our national history, by acknowledging the past forcible removal of Aboriginal children and offering our deepest apologies for what happened.

Mr Court, the then Premier, rose to his feet and stated —

It is difficult for many people to understand the depth of emotion that Aboriginal families have felt for some time, and will continue to feel for some time, as a result of their families being forcibly separated. I can think of no more difficult issue for a family to come to grips with than having to cope with such an issue. One cannot ignore the past; one can try, but there is no point in trying to ignore the past, because it is important to learn from the past. There is now a growing acceptance in our community that some

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policies that were implemented by previous Governments have caused a great deal of pain, not only for one generation but for a number of future generations.

He went on to talk about that, which was in contrast to the federal Leader of the Liberal Party, the Prime Minister at the time, John Howard, who refused to agree to a parliamentary apology to the stolen generations.

We then move on to this Parliament on 13 August 1998 when Dr Gallop, the Leader of the Opposition, again moved a motion to amend a motion that was moved by Mr Barnett, the then Leader of the House, about the British child migrants, although some did come from what was then called Rhodesia. Dr Gallop moved —

That this House apologise to the former child migrants on behalf of all Western Australians for the past policies that led to their forced migration and the subsequent maltreatment so many experienced, and express deep regret at the hurt and distress that this caused.

One of the commissioners in the recent Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse is Andrew Murray. He was a former child migrant who I think went to Rhodesia, as it was called at the time. The Parliament on 13 August 1998 came together to express its regrets and apologies for the history of the child migrants. Then in the other place on 19 December 2001, a motion was moved to make an apology to Vietnam veterans and the way that they had been treated on their return. I think that was spoken to by Hon Derrick Tomlinson, who was then followed by a number of parliamentarians on both sides of the aisle. Since I have been in this Parliament, we had on 19 October 2010, which is about two weeks after I was sworn into this Parliament, an apology for the removal of children from unmarried mothers. The Premier, Hon Colin Barnett and the Leader of the Opposition, Mark McGowan, came together and spoke as one voice to apologise for the mothers that were forced to give up their children.

More recently, on 1 November 2017, we had an apology and an expungement of historical homosexual convictions, and Premier McGowan read a statement on that. Leader of the Opposition Hon Mike Nahan started his presentation by stating —

On behalf of the opposition, I rise to support the apology the Premier has offered to those people who have criminal convictions for a consensual relationship they were involved in, which, although deemed illegal in the past, is not illegal today.

The Acting Speaker (Mr R.S. Love) spoke on behalf of the National Party and supported the motion. Those were occasions when this Parliament realised what needed to be done—that was, to make an apology for injustices of the past. We had that chance yesterday. I found what happened yesterday very upsetting and incredibly disappointing. I must say that I was also incredibly surprised by what happened yesterday. An apology is an important issue in reparations for human rights abuses. I do not think anyone would deny that child sexual abuse is a major human rights violation. There are many academic writings and United Nations resolutions on the need to give an apology to victims of human rights abuses.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Abuse published the “Redress and Civil Litigation Report” in June 2015. There were a number of reports before we had the final report. Recommendation 5 mentions that appropriate redress for survivors should include elements of direct personal response, counselling and psychological care and monetary payments. In respect of that report, the government yesterday outlined that it had accepted most of the recommendations that are applicable to the state government, because the recommendations of the royal commission are to the federal government and to the various state and territory governments and institutions, particularly the churches. This government, as members know, has provided a redress scheme and has removed the limitation period for child sexual abuse so that people may undertake civil litigation. Yesterday, on 27 June 2018, the gallery was full of people who had been victims of historical child abuse and who had been invited to this Parliament; they were hoping and anticipating that this Parliament would speak as one voice while providing an apology to victims of historical child abuse. It started off very well. The Premier got to his feet and, as we know, mentioned the royal commission and he also apologised. He said, in part —

... on behalf of the Western Australian government, I apologise unreservedly for the sexual abuse of children in Western Australian government institutions. The government had a duty ... to the children in its protection, and the state of Western Australia failed in that duty. For that, I apologise. More broadly, for children in WA who experienced sexual abuse in any institution, I apologise. You experienced something horrible—unimaginable to many of us here. You had your innocence stolen, your faith and trust in society broken, and authorities did not recognise the pattern. For that, the government of Western Australia and myself are truly sorry.

Then he concludes his speech by saying —

I am sure I speak for all Western Australians when I say this can never happen again, and we are truly sorry for what has occurred.

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I will move on to the statement of the Leader of the National Party, Hon Mia Davies. Hon Mia Davies also understood the gravitas of the situation and the necessity to speak to the people in the gallery and the many other Western Australian victims of historical child abuse. In her speech, she talked about the royal commission et cetera. She said —

I urge everyone to take the time to understand the body of work conducted over the past five years. It is so very important to understand our history—it is fundamental to ensuring we will never need to conduct a royal commission of this nature again.

I join with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition to apologise to the survivors, and to those who have suffered and are no longer with us.

Hon Mia Davies understood what was needed yesterday. The Minister for Child Protection also outlined the government's responses. Who could not be moved by the poem that she read out, which was called "Who will cry for the little boy?" by Antwone Fisher? It was a very moving poem. The statements of the Premier, the Minister for Child Protection and the Leader of the National Party were punctuated by the statement by the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Mike Nahan. Yes, he apologised and he stated —

I join with the Premier in apologising for past wrongs. I am deeply sorry that previous governments and institutions turned a blind eye to the horrible crimes perpetrated on children. I am sorry that when children spoke up, they were ignored.

Of course, that was appropriate. But he spent the majority of his speech making a political point about what the government did under Alan Carpenter, seeking guarantees. I am not speaking for the minister—she will speak for herself—but can anyone guarantee that no child in Western Australia will be subject to child abuse? We need to put in place systems that will make that unlikely, but no-one can guarantee it. As fathers or mothers, we cannot guarantee that our children will not be subject to sexual abuse. It is a silly question that the opposition keeps asking of the Minister for Child Protection. Hon Nick Goiran in the other place keeps driving that issue. I say to Hon Nick Goiran: if he has been told by anyone of the potential or the likelihood that sexual abuse is happening or likely to happen in Roebourne, he has an obligation to report that to the authorities. If he has done that, good on him. If he has not done that and seeks to try to play games in the political process, shame on him.

I was absolutely appalled yesterday, when I heard the Leader of the Opposition's statement and we had a parliamentary gallery full of victims of historical child abuse. These people are not children anymore. They will not be subject to child abuse tomorrow. We have to do everything to we can to stop child abuse happening. They were here as a result of a long process, a long royal commission into historical child sexual abuse, which has gone on for many years. One of the recommendations of one of the earlier papers is that an apology should be made to those victims by any institution responsible. Of course, the institution of government in Western Australia holds responsibility for some of those historical child abuses. What did we hear from the Leader of the Opposition? It was an apology, but it was lost. It was lost in the rest of his speech, which sought to score political points. Talk about a person not understanding the severity of the situation or the appropriate speech that needs to be made.

The people who came to the gallery yesterday were coming to hear an apology and hoping that we would speak as one. I came to this Parliament expecting that. I cannot speak for the Liberal Party. If it was discussed in the party room and they agreed to it, shame on them. If it was not spoken about in the party room, I would hazard a guess that most of the Liberal Party members would have been surprised by the speech presented by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday. In my nearly eight years in this house, the speech by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday has to go down as the most disappointing speech I have ever witnessed. We were here for a historic occasion, and, as I have relayed, bipartisanship on the issue goes back to 1997. There have even been motions moved by the Leader of the Opposition of the day agreed to by conservative Premiers, because they understood the gravity of the situation. Richard Court understood the gravity of the stolen generations; he understood the gravity of the British child migrants. The current Leader of the Opposition last year understood the gravity of convictions for consensual homosexual relationships. How could he not have understood the situation yesterday? It called for leadership and bipartisanship, and what did we get? We got sentence after sentence of the Leader of the Opposition trying to criticise former Labor governments and the current Labor government, and trying to seek guarantees that are impossible to give. The Minister for Police might bring in the most draconian traffic laws and the opposition might ask, "Can you guarantee that no-one will go over the speed limit or that no-one will be killed?" Of course she could not guarantee that. Shame on the Leader of the Opposition for yesterday. I may differ from some of my colleagues in that I think he is a good man; generally, I think he is a good man. I cannot understand how he could have come to the Parliament yesterday and present the speech that he presented. We had a chance yesterday to speak as one organisation—the body politic of Western Australia—to the many people in the gallery, to their supporters, to the deceased and to their family members, but we unfortunately failed. We on this side of the house did not fail; the Nationals WA did not fail. Hon Mia Davies made an appropriate

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speech. I do not even think it was the Liberal Party that failed yesterday; I hope it was not, but the Leader of the Opposition definitely failed.

[Member's time extended.]

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The Leader of the Opposition failed yesterday, and if members of the opposition were not privy to what was going to be said, they will have failed if they have not criticised the Leader of the Opposition since that speech and if some of them do not stand up at some time to express their disquiet or disgust at the speech that was presented yesterday by the Leader of the Opposition.

Reparations for human rights abuses require an unreserved apology and there should also be monetary compensation attached, which is what will happen under the government's response to the redress scheme. If the opposition has political points about child protection, it should talk about it at a different time. It should ask questions during question time or bring it on as a matter of public interest. It could have brought it on as a matter of public interest yesterday, but when the gallery was full of victims, their supporters and probably family members of deceased victims, the opposition let that opportunity slip. I was disgusted, saddened and incredibly disappointed.

I was not going to make this speech today, but when I went home last night and thought about it, I thought I had to come to Parliament today to make this point. I still cannot believe how the Leader of the Opposition thought it could be appropriate to make such a speech. Shame on the Leader of the Opposition, shame on any opposition member who has not pulled him up on that speech, and shame on any of them who knew about it—shame, and incredible disappointment.

**MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth)** [4.44 pm]: Before I make some comments on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Bill 2017 and Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Bill 2017, I would like to say to the member for Armadale that, as a member of the Liberal Party, I can guarantee him that all of us support the National Redress Scheme. We all support the government's decision to join in. A lot of us have spoken in this place about people who were victims. There was a person in my electorate who contacted me and I spoke to him a couple of times. I said, "What actually happened?" He said, "I can't talk about it, but you can go to the royal commission. I gave evidence at the royal commission." I asked my adviser to have a look at it and I asked, "What did you find?" He said, "I couldn't keep reading it; it was so terrible." We are very cognisant of the fact that this issue needed redress, we support what the federal government has done and we support what the state government has done. I am speaking on behalf of our members.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Do you support what was said by the Leader of the Opposition yesterday?

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Actually, I missed what was said by the Leader of the Opposition. I was late getting in here and I missed his speech, but we are all very supportive of the redress scheme. Obviously, from what the member says, he was very disappointed in what the Leader of the Opposition said in his speech. He agreed with the apology, and then he made some other statements. The member for Armadale does not agree with those statements and thinks that they may not have been parliamentary; that is for him to —

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** I am not going to comment on it, and the member should not expect me to comment on it. He is the leader of our party. No, I am not going to comment on it. I am saying that members on this side of the chamber, to a person, all agree with what has happened, and we are all appalled at the shocking way in which these people were treated as young boys, and we have all spoken about it. We have all supported it over a long period of time and made speeches in this Parliament about it.

That makes it very difficult for me to now speak about what I was going to speak about, because it is a pretty sombre note on which to go into the winter break when we are debating something like this. It is something that we all agree on. If politics got in the way, sometimes that happens, but it should not have happened. It should not have happened.

I want to make a few comments. We are going into the winter break and the Treasurer said during the budget debate and in his budget speech that he wanted to bring to an end any speculation about the possible sale of the Totalisator Agency Board. I want to make a few comments about the racing industry. I am aware that the Treasurer and Treasury officials are working towards making a decision one way or the other on the sale or non-sale of the TAB.

We talked about Landgate. In government, I was a big supporter of privatising the TAB. People said to me, "You're selling the TAB?" I said, "No, we're not selling the TAB at all. We are privatising the right to operate the TAB, which someone will pay the government for, but the government will always own the TAB." Yesterday I asked the Minister for Racing and Gaming a question, and it was brought about by a story that appeared in *The West Australian* last week under the heading, "TAB needs 'cost cutter'". It was a very brief story. It states —

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 28 June 2018]

p4200b-4222a

Mr Dean Nalder; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mrs Jessica Stojkovski; Mr Zak Kirkup; Mrs Lisa O'Malley; Dr David Honey; Mr Ben Wyatt

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Investment bank Morgan Stanley feels a buyer of WA's State-owned betting agency would cut its "relatively high" operating costs to push it back into profit.

The TAB recorded a \$5 million loss last financial year, mainly because of its "significant" cost base, the bank's analysts say in a research note that explores the potential purchase of the agency by Tabcorp.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr R.S. Love):** Members, could you just keep the conversations down, please? I think it is getting a little loud.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** The article continues —

Morgan Stanley estimates the TAB's operating expenses make up 55 per cent of its \$340 million in annual revenue, compared with just 21 per cent at Tabcorp and 23 per cent at NSW betting house Tatts, which was taken over by Tabcorp last year.

I raised that with the minister yesterday because as a member of Parliament and as a member of the Western Australian community and a person interested in the racing industry, I was concerned about that fact. I said to some people, "If you owned a business and you had an inventory done of your business and you found out that the cost of running the business was 55 per cent of the annual revenue, you'd have to have another look at how you were running the business." I am asking the Treasurer, who is handling what is happening with any future sale or non-sale of the TAB, to have a good look at this, and during the winter break maybe come up with an answer for us as to what the future of the TAB will be. It would be good when we come back for the spring session if that further work had been done with the industry to come up with a solution one way or the other. I know that the Treasurer has been working on this.

Regardless of what people may see with the big races and the people who race the champion horses, the racing industry is in a period of decline. Fewer mares are going to stud each year, and fewer foals are being born. Attendances at the tracks are down. Offcourse wagering figures are down. It is a tough time for the racing industry.

I was particularly shocked last night to hear of the exit of Neil Pinner as chairman of the Western Australian Turf Club, otherwise known as Perth Racing. He has gone from the board. Trevor Nisbett, the chief executive of West Coast Eagles, has also departed the board of the Western Australian Turf Club. I believe this highlights the fact that there are problems in the racing industry. Perth Racing has been trying for some time to develop its racing headquarters at Belmont park as part of a billion-dollar redevelopment plan that will take in massive high-rise residential areas around the racetrack. The club has been able to come up with sufficient funds to build the new grandstand that is required. A lot of people believed that Neil Pinner in his role as chairman—not that he has been there for long—would be able to drive that redevelopment. It is a shock, and that will resonate through the industry, that he has now stood down as chairman. The new chairman is Colin Brown. He has a big challenge ahead. He is a horse breeder. I have met Colin a few times at the races. Paula Sutherland has been elected deputy chair. She is the first ever female deputy chair in the history of the Western Australian Turf Club. I think that is a big story in the racing industry. As I have said, Neil Pinner, and his deputy, Trevor Nisbett, have stood down and have been replaced by Colin Brown and Paula Sutherland as chair and deputy chair. Matt Birney is staying on. Trevor Nisbett and Matt Birney were seconded onto the board by Neil Pinner to provide knowledge and capabilities on corporate matters, and, in Matt Birney's case, knowledge about politics and things like that.

This has come at a very difficult time because of the redevelopment plan for Belmont Park, the announcement of which was attended by the Premier and maybe also the Minister for Planning. That reminds me of how long we have waited for this plan to come to fruition. The redevelopment plan was announced in 2004, with the headline in *The West Australian*, "Billion-dollar Belmont plan". The story by Steve Butler and Peter Austin states, in part —

Belmont Park, Perth's ageing wet-weather racetrack, is set for a billion-dollar redevelopment which would transform the venue into a high-rise residential playground with a monorail to the Burswood Casino and provide a new home for the WA Museum.

This was said in 2004, 14 years ago.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** Bring on the monorail!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** We could have bought it from Sydney and had it stacked somewhere.

It continues —

WA Turf Club officials yesterday outlined to Premier Geoff Gallop the proposal which will be set on what has been described by real estate experts as the most prized piece of residential land in Australia. The 73ha peninsula site is owned by the WA Turf Club.

That was the plan. The industry has been waiting 14 years for something to happen, and I do not think a shovel has been put into the ground yet. It is a challenge for the industry. It is also a challenge for the government, because



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I am sure the government would like the racing industry to establish a winter headquarters and a possible night racing venue at Belmont Park. I am aware that the Minister for Racing and Gaming has been in talks with Perth Racing and also with Racing and Wagering Western Australia about whether they can raise some funds. That was one of the reasons that I suggested at the time that the only way to get those sorts of funds would be to privatise the TAB, because whenever that sort of thing happens, we get an upfront payment from the buyer, and that might have created an infrastructure fund that would have enabled the industry to do that work. It is interesting times. I look forward to when we return from the winter break, and hopefully at that time the Treasurer and the minister for racing will be able to give us more advice on progress about the future of the TAB.

I repeat the warning that the racing industry is facing tough times. The racing industry is very important to our state. It employs a lot of people. It is an important part of our entertainment and tourism in Western Australia. Belmont Park represents a huge opportunity, because it is in the entertainment precinct right opposite the new stadium. The government and we as a Parliament need to get behind this.

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary)** [4.56 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak to the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017. As members know, the purpose of these bills is to authorise unforeseen and extraordinary recurrent expenditures that were charged under the previous government. I am very proud to be part of a state government that is restraining agency expenditure. We know from this government's latest budget that this state now has the lowest growth in recurrent expense in more than 20 years, at just 0.9 per cent.

This state is facing some significant challenges. One of the key challenges is urban sprawl. That will put major pressure on the budget in future years and major pressure on infrastructure expenditure. That is a topic that I talk about regularly in numerous speeches as the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Planning. There is no doubt that urban sprawl will be one of the biggest cost pressures for Western Australia and the state budget into the future. This government is undertaking three key reforms that are critical to addressing this issue—strata reform, planning reform and local government reform. At the end of my speech on local government reform, I will also address the comments made by the member for Carine about the City of Perth and his conduct in this Parliament.

We have been told again and again about the cost pressures of urban sprawl. Reports indicate very clearly that if we do not tackle urban sprawl in a meaningful and serious way, the costs will be astronomical. Back in 2013, the Committee for Perth was out front leading the charge against urban sprawl. In an article titled “Urban sprawl fuels Perth's traffic congestion”, it makes a clear connection between urban sprawl and traffic congestion and says that not only do people living in Perth's outer suburbs have higher rates of car ownership than those who live closer to the city, but they are forced to drive to work because they do not have a choice. In 2014, the Environmental Regulation Authority said that the cost of congestion in Perth is forecast to rise to \$1.6 billion by 2015 and over \$2 billion by 2020. In 2015, the “RAC BusinessWise—Chamber of Commerce and Industry Congestion Survey” revealed that 87 per cent of 250 businesses had experienced lost productivity due to problems related to traffic congestion. Infrastructure WA predicted that congestion will lead to \$16 billion a year in lost productivity by 2031. It is predicted that urban sprawl and congestion is costing the state of Western Australia \$2.5 billion a year. What do we have to do? We have to drive density. Density done well is the answer to addressing urban sprawl.

The member for Cannington said yesterday that Metronet is not just a transport plan; it is also a density plan. It is a plan to create hubs to make sure that people live close to public transport and close to services and have a sense of community. As I have just pointed out, the government is driving three key reforms to make that happen. The first is strata reform, which the minister introduced into the Parliament today. I know that some people roll their eyes and are not particularly interested in strata reform. It is not going to make the top 10 sexy policy items. People's eyes may glaze over at the thought of strata reform, but it is actually critical to curbing urban sprawl because it will ensure that we have a modern, flexible strata scheme that encourages density and apartment living. The most pivotal part of that is the community title scheme, which will allow more flexibility with large developments, to break them up into separate schemes. This is critical for metro hubs; it is critical for future density around railway stations. Strata reform is good. Other states are doing it. I hope the opposition comes to the party on this. There is unity among the Property Council of Australia, the Urban Development Institute of Australia, developers and property owners to make this happen so that we can bring property and density development into the twenty-first century.

The second part is planning reform. This is also critical to providing greater density and curbing urban sprawl. We have released a major green paper led by Evan Jones, which maps a way forward for greater transparency and accountability, but also on how to cut red tape and streamline processes so that we get those density hubs. It takes too long to amend schemes. It takes too long to get structure plans up. It takes too long to get development in our city and, again, density developments. We need to actually reform the planning system. It has not been reformed properly. We have seen a piecemeal approach. It is fair to say that the development assessment panel system

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introduced by the previous government has been controversial. We need an overhaul of the planning system that not only simplifies it but also allows us to meet our density objectives.

While we are talking about transparency and accountability, the third area is local government reform. That reform is also critical for planning and greater density. Some councils respond regularly and often hastily to a small and loud element that does not want density. The reality is that we should provide affordability and choice for young people and for people who want to downsize, and that is done through density. It is not just about choice in the outer suburbs. The local government reform that we are progressing and on which we have undertaken consultation will also look at changing the culture of local governments by making them more robust and more forward-thinking organisations. As I understand it, public benchmarking will be included for the first time for planning, which is critical. There are very good councils that are doing their best to take their communities on a journey and to facilitate good density and density done well. There are other councils that are well behind. The City of Joondalup is a classic example of a local government that is repeatedly failing on density. It does not have proper design guidelines to guide future density development. It has failed miserably on its consultation on housing strategies. As a result, it has communities in uproar because they have not been taken on a journey or properly engaged. Where we see conflict over density, it often comes back to poor local government, which is not showing leadership and is not engaging its communities. Fremantle, Victoria Park and Vincent do it well; Joondalup does not.

**Mr M. Hughes:** The City of Swan doesn't do it well either.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** There we go; I am getting more commentary from others about councils that do not do it well. I want to talk about local government reform. I have had members from the opposite side come up to me as a mayor of four years. Another critical part of changing the culture is that we also need to have greater scrutiny and accountability of local government CEOs, because they often set the culture of local government. Mayors and councillors come and go; CEOs stay. It is very clear that councillors are unaware of their responsibilities in terms of engaging and performance-reviewing CEOs. Local governments are great recyclers, not of rubbish but of CEOs. They are brilliant at it. They brilliantly recycle CEOs. That is the best thing they do. I see it all the time. If a CEO does not work out here, they will employ him over there. That is not necessarily good for local government. It does not create a culture of innovation or change.

The last thing I want to address in talking about local government reform is the comments made by the member for Carine in his budget statement. In politics, we hear a lot of rumours—that is the nature of politics. We have heard rumours about the City of Perth and so forth. Allegations have been made and we have seen some of them raised in the paper. Everyone knows that I have been critical of the City of Perth and particular councillors, but I have not used this Parliament to raise any allegations that I have heard. I am not aware of any other member of this Parliament who has raised any of those allegations that we hear about local government, except the member for Carine. The member for Carine came into this place and made allegations that were unsubstantiated and false. He did not actually say where those allegations came from.

**Dr D.J. Honey** interjected.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** They were unsubstantiated and false. He did not say where those allegations came from, but he decided to bring them to Parliament. Yesterday, he did not even have the temerity to apologise and say he got it wrong. We know that other members of the opposition have been calling and apologising on this matter. Other members of the opposition are deeply embarrassed by the conduct of the member for Carine. They have apologised personally to Mr Fini. There is an inquiry into the City of Perth to deal with all those matters. That is the place where it should be dealt with. The member for Carine's allegations were discredited; there were two negative stories in the press. That has discredited his position in the local government sector. He looks like a patsy for particular people. I think the member for Carine is an incredible conspiracy theorist. He has people whispering in his ears and telling him what to say in Parliament. I went shopping the other day and came across a hat that I thought would be perfect for the member for Carine. It is the kind of hat to which a former Lord Mayor or suspended Lord Mayor could transmit all their conspiracy theories to the member for Carine so that he could relay them in the Parliament. I have the hat here. I understand that it will be very useful for transmitting all those conspiracy theories to the member for Carine!

*Point of Order*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I understand there is a clear ruling of no props.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Members, it is actually okay to use props, but you have to clear it with the Speaker before you do it.

**Extract from Hansard**

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**Mr J.N. CAREY:** I am happy to table the tinfoil hat for the member for Carine—“Na-No, Na-No”! The conspiracy theories are coming in for him! There could be information coming out!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, if you would just be quiet for a minute? Thank you. You cannot lay it on the table. Could you pop it down out of sight somewhere? I understand the spirit. It is Thursday night but you did not clear it with the Speaker. Continue to speak.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Further to the point of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Yes, minister.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** There is quite some precedent in this house for people laying objects on the table for the remainder of the day's sitting. I have seen, for example, people lay foodstuffs there, a brick and material from a truck arrester bed. It is one thing to use something as a prop, such as a chart or whatever, but sometimes people bring in examples of produce from their electorates or something of that nature, which they will refer to in their speech. Then it is simply a matter of seeking leave —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** No. At the time you refer to it, it is a matter of seeking leave of the Speaker, or Deputy Speaker in this case, for permission to lay it on the table for the remainder of the day's sitting. I believe that has been the practice of this house in the past when members have brought in produce or other items of interest. In the case of a backbencher, they have sought the leave of whoever has been in the chair to lay something on the table for the remainder of the day's sitting. That has been permitted. Sometimes we have had quite an array of things laid on the table.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Further to the point of order, Deputy Speaker —

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Can you just let me respond to that, member?

Thank you, minister. I quite understand the history to this, but it is still my decision that issues like this should be cleared with the Speaker before they are laid on the table, particularly when it is a prop to support a speech. This is not so much a bag of apples or something from a member's electorate. It is kind of a cute stunt. I appreciate the spirit in which it was made, but I would like the member for Perth to continue his speech, please. Thank you.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** I will make sure that the tinfoil hat will be set aside for the member for Carine so that he can continue to receive special conspiracy theories. They can be directly transmitted to him. He is like Mork from *Mork and Mindy*—“Na-No, Na-No”. I do not know who would be Mindy, but Mork gets the transmission of all the conspiracy theories.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts** interjected.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** That is right! The point I am making is jovial but it is a serious thing. Parliament should not be used in the way it was used by the member for Carine. That is my point; he made unsubstantiated and false allegations. If there are any issues to be addressed, inquiries are underway but instead, he brought them to Parliament. That is why two members of the public made complaints to the Procedure and Privileges Committee, which were read out. That is my point. It is a serious issue. I respect that other members in this place have not done that but I believe all of us—both opposition and government members—want to see serious local government reform. We want greater transparency and accountability. I know that because I speak to lots of members of the opposition, but there are right ways and wrong ways to go about doing things. The member for Carine discredited himself, in the sector and in this Parliament, when he did that.

**MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley)** [5.15 pm]: I would like to make a short contribution to the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and related bills.

As a mother of two small children, the horrific cases outlined in the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse makes for harrowing reading. No child should ever be subjected to this type of treatment, and we as a community should never let anything get in the way of ensuring we do everything possible in our power to right the wrongs of the past or, at the very least, accept responsibility. Yesterday, the Premier delivered a heartfelt apology. I quote —

... for children in WA who experienced sexual abuse in any institution, I apologise. You experienced something horrible—unimaginable to many of us here. You had your innocence stolen, your faith and trust in society broken, and authorities did not recognise the pattern. For that, the government of Western Australia and myself are truly sorry.

Mr Dean Nalder; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mrs Jessica Stojkovski; Mr Zak Kirkup; Mrs Lisa O'Malley; Dr David Honey; Mr Ben Wyatt

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When I listened to those words yesterday—that unreserved apology—I felt proud of this McGowan government for taking a stance, drawing a line in the sand, and giving an unreserved apology. In stark contrast, we heard the disgraceful response from the Leader of the Opposition, who, instead of giving an unreserved apology for the failing of our society to protect vulnerable children, chose to use this important and sensitive issue to attempt political pointscoring. I was disgusted and ashamed for this Parliament that those survivors sitting in the gallery yesterday had to listen to the ill-thought-out ramblings of the Leader of the Opposition, who is yet to grasp that the Liberal Party lost the election and they should support things such as unreserved apologies to survivors of child sexual abuse. It is no wonder that respect for politicians is at a low when the Leader of the Opposition is so narrow-minded and arrogant that he believes a solemn occasion, such as an apology to survivors of institutional sexual abuse, is an appropriate time to play politics. The shameful and insensitive behaviour of the Leader of the Opposition again exposes the lack of substance evident on the opposition benches.

Today we have seen the opposition's complete disregard for the conventions and structure of this place in the continual suspension of standing orders to discuss topics that should be discussed during other times allocated to the opposition. Opposition members' continuous use of parliamentary time for vanity debates that serve no-one but their own egos is a prime example of everything that is wrong with modern-day politics. People in the community do not want to listen to their incessant whinging and they despise parliamentarians who continually reflect upon themselves instead of getting on with the job of governing. They want governments that take action, get the job done, connect to them and understand their interests.

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I refer you to standing order 1 and the footnote regarding reading of speeches in the chamber by a non-minister.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** This is a general debate, member. You have been in this house long enough to understand that you cut people a bit of leave in this speech; we always have done —

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** It is a year and a half, Madam Deputy Speaker.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** I do not need you to talk back to me.

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member, continue with your speech.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

*Point of Order*

**Mrs M.H. ROBERTS:** Whilst you were giving that ruling, you were interjected on by the member for Churchlands, who was not showing proper respect for you in your role as Deputy Speaker. I ask you to note that he interjected and that he should be called to order. It is highly disorderly—always has been highly disorderly—to interject in this place whilst the Speaker, Deputy Speaker, or anyone in the role of Speaker is responding to a point of order.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Thank you, minister. I believe that I did warn the member when he interjected not to do so when the Speaker is making a ruling, so I am trusting that he will respect that. Can we continue, member for Kingsley.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mrs J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI:** Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

On Thursday, 22 September 2016, I sat in the public gallery to listen to a grievance by the then member for Fremantle, Hon Simone McGurk, who was speaking up for community-based childcare centres when the former government cruelly cut accommodation funding support to them. I was here because my daughter attended before and after-school care and vacation-care run by Moolanda Care and Learning Centre—a community-based childcare centre—in Kingsley and my son was on the waiting list to attend full day care there.

When I spoke to the staff at the Moolanda Care and Learning Centre about the impacts that these cuts would have on the organisation, the message that I got was very clear. The City of Joondalup was going to impose on the centre rental accommodation fees in the vicinity of, I think, \$80 000, and the decision was going to be to either close the centre or pass on substantial increases to parents. I listened to the Leader of the Opposition, who was Treasurer at the time, attempt to smear these community-based childcare centres, claiming, in his arrogance, that these centres were mismanaged. I find this mistruth appalling as, in my experience, community-based childcare centres such as Moolanda consistently provide in-demand services. They are connected to their communities and

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provide not only childcare services, but also other services to the community, such as parent workshops, first aid and child behaviour management workshops. For any parent, that is a godsend when they are dealing with a toddler—trust me!

As not-for-profit community organisations, these centres have the community's interests at heart and, with parent and community management boards, can often respond to community needs quicker and more appropriately than others. It was for that reason that I joined many people in the gallery that day. I was keen to understand the justification for the cruel cuts of \$1 million in the budget—a penny-pinching exercise—that would have impacted so greatly on my community and many others around the state. It is for this reason that I am proud that the McGowan Labor government is continuing accommodation funding for these community childcare and neighbourhood centres, including not only the Moolanda community childcare centre, but also the Kingsley family centre and 62 other community childcare and neighbourhood centres. They are an integral part of communities and a lifeline for working parents like me.

**MR Z.R.F. KIRKUP (Dawesville)** [5.21 pm]: It gives me great pleasure to speak to the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 on behalf of the opposition. Before I get to the substantive points of my speech, I reiterate the point made by the Leader of the Opposition and the member for South Perth in reply to the comments of the member for Armadale: of course all members on this side of the house support the apology that was given yesterday by the Premier, the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the National Party on behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia. It was an important, momentous occasion in the history of the state of Western Australia. Members would do well to look back at the apologies given in this place, as the member for Armadale did quite rightly, and reflect on the importance that they have had in this place and in our state's history. Another point I would make is that having been part of an office that put together at least one of those apologies that the member for Armadale spoke about, I know that significant notice and publicity was given about those apologies prior to their delivery in this place. As the opposition leader noted, it would have obviously been preferable if all members of this place had had a bit more awareness of what was happening so that we could have spoken. I noted that due to yesterday's motion to suspend standing orders, we were given until 2.00 pm to respond. I suspect that that was because there was anticipation that all members of this place would speak to the important apology that was given by the Premier, the Minister for Child Protection, the opposition leader and the Leader of the National Party. There were only four speakers. I suspect that, had more notice been given to Parliament, which I think has been afforded in apologies past, all of us could have made a meaningful contribution. I certainly would have liked the opportunity to speak to the apology, and I am sure that other members also would have liked that opportunity. I put it down to the fact that we have a relatively new government. I do not think there was anything nefarious or the like in it. Perhaps in the future, a better process could be worked out so that all members could be included in a historic occasion.

I take the opportunity to talk about the recent victory in the Darling Range by-election. It is an important time to reflect. All members on this side of the house congratulate Hon Alyssa Hayden on her successful bid to secure the seat of Darling Range. I congratulate my good friend Samuel Calabrese, state director of the Liberal Party. This was his second by-election, if we count the district of Cottesloe by-election.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Why are you calling her Hon Alyssa Hayden?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** The member for Midland is questioning why I called her Hon Alyssa Hayden. I believe that members of the upper house who have served two terms are given the honorific title.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Twelve years.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Twelve years? I apologise. I will remove the “Hon” in that case.

**Dr D.J. Honey:** She is very honourable.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Indeed, member for Cottesloe; she is very honourable in and of her actions. The state director, Samuel Calabrese, is now two for none in the successful by-elections that he has contested, and may he go on to secure many more victories.

Members in this place spoke about Darling Range time and again in the past couple of days and in the months leading up to the by-election. I will talk very quickly about the experiences of the opposition, which had a very strong presence on the ground. I was initially concerned, as were most people—I think it was mentioned in the email of the Labor Party's state secretary, Matt Dixon, which managed to find its way into the paper—about the turnout of voters for the by-election. It is important for all members in this place to be cognisant of the turnout in a by-election. I note that it has been an issue in by-elections past. In fact, I did some work on turnouts to try to assess where we might land. I note that in the Cottesloe by-election—I suspect the member for Cottesloe knows this off by heart—there was a 66.56 per cent turnout of our Liberal voters.

Several members interjected.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 28 June 2018]

p4200b-4222a

Mr Dean Nalder; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mrs Jessica Stojkovski; Mr Zak Kirkup; Mrs Lisa O'Malley; Dr David Honey; Mr Ben Wyatt

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**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Indeed, they were all very good people who turned out. That turnout of 66 per cent is not the lowest turnout rate. The Treasurer spoke yesterday about the Victoria Park by-election. The turnout rate for the Victoria Park by-election was 64 per cent, which is two and a half percentage points less than the turnout rate for Cottesloe.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** What did Armadale get—81?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** In Armadale, it was 75.21 per cent.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** It was a grand final replay!

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Of course, member for Armadale—the grand final replay. All of us should be cognisant of the turnout rates. It may be of interest to members in this place that when there is a Liberal versus Labor contest, there is typically a higher turnout. In the Peel by-election in 2007, which was one of the first campaigns I had the good fortune to work on, the turnout rate was 79.5 per cent; in Vasse, it was 73 per cent; in Canning, it was 79.52 per cent; and in Darling Range in 2018, it was 76.89 per cent. We see a higher than average turnout.

I found there to be a lack of engagement. I think that all the members on this side of the chamber who had a very strong presence in Darling Range during the campaign spoke about the concerns when we doorknocked. People simply are not engaging, and that is not just in Darling Range. I would like to draw the attention of the house to something that I have found concerning of late, and that is in relation to something called the Democracy Project. It is something that I have been paying some attention to. It is basically a bipartisan report in the United States commissioned by the Penn Biden Center for Diplomacy and Global Engagement, the George W. Bush Institute and Freedom House. The Democracy Project was engaged to look at national and international surveys about people's relationships with democracy, noting that even in a stabilised western world, there have still been quite significant challenges for democracy in recent years. We have seen that time and again in modern international spheres. I saw the turnout and the lack of engagement prior to the vote, so I was concerned that that lack of engagement in the democratic system was creeping into Australia and Western Australia. The Democracy Project surveyed thousands of people about whether or not they thought it was important to live in a democracy. Interestingly enough, and on a scale of one to 10, with 10 being where people thought it was absolutely important that they lived in a democracy, because they understand the inherent tenets and values of a democracy in which they live and they are willing to participate in elections and by-elections like what we saw last weekend, unsurprisingly 77 per cent of people aged 65 years and above thought it was of absolute importance that they lived in a democracy. But down the other end of the scale, only 34 per cent of 18 to 25-year-olds felt it was important that they lived in a democracy. I am most concerned about the younger cohort that does not seem to be particularly engaged in politics or the democratic system. It would be of little shock to anybody to see that basically a third of people aged 18 to 25 years thought it was important to live in a democracy. As a result, how many of those would participate in an election? I look forward to seeing a Western Australian Electoral Commission breakdown—I do not think they are as detailed—on how many young people ended up voting in the most recent by-election. But I remain concerned that young people are not engaging with our democracy. Although I do not agree with the member for Kingsley's prosecution of that person, she did not make reference to the fact that in this place a lack of respect and dignity towards this house might lead to an erosion of faith in the electorate and the unwillingness of constituents to vote in elections that is perhaps reflected in the district as a whole.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** It is not us. It is a federal issue.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I think there is a pox on both houses at this point, minister.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** No, there is not. It started with Abbott.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** It is a pox on all of us if it affects us. Regardless of where it happens, it affects all of us universally. I think it has happened for some time. A number of members, particularly Labor members, are fond of talking about the 1975 general election. Indeed, the Minister for Electoral Affairs mentioned it only just yesterday. When we talk about the lack of confidence that preceded those events, it was perhaps displayed in those electorates as a lack of voting or a willingness to vote. I want to make the point that all of us should be aware of it in this place. In the lead-up to the Darling Range by-election, all of us were cognisant and very well aware of what happened there. It is not for me to go over it again, but that would have led to people having a further lack of confidence in the democratic process. Perhaps all of us should guard against that as much as we possibly can. Although the turnout vote was lower—indeed it was higher than for some more recent by-elections—all of us should be aware of the lack of engagement. As members of this place, we all have a duty to ensure that people are as engaged as possible. The member for Churchlands has recited time and again how he went around the electorate and people were asking why there was a by-election. I went around with the members for Cottesloe and Vasse and I had people tell me that they thought it was a referendum on the rail link. They did not quite understand —

**Dr D.J. Honey:** Or a federal citizenship issue.

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**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Or it was a federal citizenship issue: “Was the previous member disbarred from being a member of Parliament because of citizenship issues?”

**Mr F.M. Logan:** That shows how much people are interested in politics.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** That is right. The Minister for Corrective Services made the point that perhaps it is a reflection of people’s lack of engagement in politics. I think it was a wake-up call to all of us in this place that —

**Mr S.K. L’Estrange:** Although it was an above-average turnout.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Although it was an above-average turnout, it is about their involvement and awareness of what is occurring.

**Mr F.M. Logan:** And weren’t they happy to turn out!

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Indeed. When we talk about what has happened here, it is important for us to also set aside with the lack of engagement, the issue with the former member for Darling Range. Personally, I did not see any evidence that people thought they were voting against the Labor Party or the government because of Barry Urban, the former member for Darling Range. I saw the final result as a matter of fees and charges—people were hurting out there. The member for Churchlands has raised a number of times the level of mortgage stress in Darling Range. It is very true. It is a very front-of-mind issue for people in that electorate, which I think was reflected in the vote and the outcome. I think there is a bid by members opposite—certainly we saw it with the Premier—to undermine the legitimacy of the Liberal Party’s victory in Darling Range by suggesting that this was somehow the result of the issues surrounding the previous member for Darling Range. I do not think that could be any further from the truth. In fact, the Liberal Party, in its final week of material, did not once mention the former member for Darling Range.

**Mr D.A. Templeman** interjected.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Member for Mandurah, the final message that went into people’s letterboxes from Alyssa Hayden, the Liberal Party candidate, was entirely about local issues and things like fees and charges and the impact that that was having on households. That was the message that all of us were getting time and again. No doubt that result, as the Treasurer has pointed out and recognised, will cause the government to pause and consider what it might mean. Perhaps we would not be in this position now had the government actually listened to the people of Western Australia in the first place and if it had had a better awareness of the impact of closing the Moora Residential College. The government should consider what it might mean to break promises time and again, such as the promise to not introduce new taxes or the promise to have no tax increases. These Labor government decisions are completely opposite to what was promised when the Labor Party went to the election. In the seat of Darling Range, people took their anger out on this government for what they saw to be the biggest issues. If we argue that they were not engaged in what was occurring because they are not paying a lot of attention to politics, then what they are paying attention to is paying their electricity bills. They are paying attention to their water bills and fees and charges, such as the car registration that continues to go up and up under this government. The by-election result does not necessarily mean that they were scrutinising their local member of Parliament. I suspect that they were more concerned with scrutinising their utility bills and that led to the result that we saw in Darling Range just last Saturday. I have pointed out reasonably publicly how great I think this result has been for the state director of the Liberal Party, Sam Calabrese. It is indeed a great reflection on his parliamentary team and the Liberal Party more broadly. Our leadership team should be congratulated for its efforts to ensure that its members were always out on the ground. In my time, I have seen a number of leaders participate in a number of elections and time and again, the member for Riverton, the Leader of the Opposition, has been out doorknocking right through Darling Range, always making sure that he engaged with voters and prospective voters and listened to their concerns so that they knew that there was a party that was finally listening to them. The citizens in Darling Range cast their vote and their voices were heard.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** I hope you reward his hard work by sticking with him. Will you promise to stick with him?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Their voices were heard.

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L’ESTRANGE:** The Minister for Police made a very big attempt earlier in the evening to talk about interjections on speakers. Now she is incessantly interjecting on the member on his feet.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms L.L. Baker):** Thank you, member. I understand your point. I think the member for Dawesville is grown-up enough to tell the minister if he wants to take an interjection or not, and I trust that he will warn me if he does not.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I am not so sure about that.

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**The ACTING SPEAKER:** That is enough from you, Minister for Sport and other things.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** It is almost approaching the minister's bedtime, I suspect.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Touché!

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** The lights are not off yet, minister.

It is important that we recognise the effort of indeed our leader and the team in this place for getting out there and making sure that as standard bearers of the Liberal Party, they were out in the electorate of Darling Range as much as possible. In the four minutes I have left, there is no point in me going through the names of some members opposite who were notoriously absent in the campaign. I thought it was most unusual that some key ministers should have been more front and present in their campaign.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** The Premier was our greatest asset.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** The Premier was indeed our greatest asset. He was on every piece of material that I could see, together with the Labor Party's very competitive candidate in Darling Range. I find it interesting that some ministers and members were not particularly involved in the Labor Party's campaign.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** How would you know?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I can tell. The member is quite right. As we would expect in this day and age, member for Armadale, quite a lot of attention was paid to social media and the like, on which members and ministers opposite often like to promote their efforts, and some members were notoriously absent. The Labor Party's own campaign and media platforms were notoriously —

Several members interjected.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I welcome being disabused of the notion, but the member for Armadale was front and centre in the Labor Party's campaign in Darling Range, almost as much as the Premier. But he was indeed at key booths through pre-poll, out there with the candidate.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Where was the Treasurer?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** The member for Churchlands raised the point that one person was perhaps slightly absent from that campaign, and it might have been the Treasurer. Those who were absent perhaps had their own reasons for why they were not there, but the member for Churchlands is quite right. Credit to the member for Armadale; he was very, very busy out there, I thought, and indeed —

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** While you were out there, I was cutting holes in your shopping bags. Did you know that? All these people were saying, "Look at this member's bag; it's useless."

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** That is right. Ha! As we round out the evening—I suspect that the member for Armadale is about to wrest a rising of the house sooner rather than later—I think it would be prudent for us, only one last time, to reflect on this result in Darling Range and what that might mean for future electoral victories or losses.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr J.N. Carey:** I found an additional hat for you, member for Dawesville.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** The member for Perth has brought in his best hat! I do not know where he got that from.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** It has your name on it.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Indeed. I suspect that if it has my name on it, it had the member for Perth's name on it first. It would be prudent for us to pause and reflect, just as the government will, on the strong message that has been sent by the people of Darling Range about the tenure of government. Needless to say, with only 900 or so days left of this term of government, all members opposite should perhaps consider their futures and pay a little more attention to their superannuation and what level it is at, because they will need it sooner rather than later. There is a wave coming towards members opposite when this result is replicated right across the board. Fifteen Labor Party seats would be washed away if this result in Darling Range was replicated across the board. Of course, they would be very quick to fall. I would call them, in my colloquialism, "Club 601". The moment the polls close at 6.01 pm, the following seats would be quickly gone: the seats of Joondalup, Jandakot, Kingsley and Murray-Wellington. Those seats are all under 1.5 per cent. Club 601 would be wiped off straightaway with only a 1.5 per cent swing.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** You are so arrogant.



**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 28 June 2018]

p4200b-4222a

Mr Dean Nalder; Dr Mike Nahan; Dr Tony Buti; Mr John McGrath; Mr John Carey; Mrs Jessica Stojkovski; Mr Zak Kirkup; Mrs Lisa O'Malley; Dr David Honey; Mr Ben Wyatt

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**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** It is not arrogance to come in and simply suggest to government members that they should heed the message from the district of Darling Range that will undoubtedly be sent to them again in 952 days by the rest of Western Australia. The seat of Pilbara would very quickly go—2.3 per cent. The member for Kalamunda —

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Madam Deputy Speaker, I call your attention to the state of the house. I want more people to hear it!

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** What a pleasant change.

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I think it is important again just to —

Several members interjected.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** We are more worried about you.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** I am sure the Minister for Police is. It seems that she cannot get me off her mind.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** That racy suit—it is beautiful. It's such a dapper wedding suit. Is there a wedding on?

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Thank you, member for Perth.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Did you wear that to your wedding?

**Mr J.N. Carey:** It's a bit *Ab Fab*. "Thank you, darlings! I have just come from the races."

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Thank you, member for Perth.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Excuse me, members. It was quite orderly until the member for Perth came back in.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** That is outrageous. I will put the hat on.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** That is absolutely correct, too. Could you please hold the interjections down to a minimum? Thank you, member for Dawesville, in your smart suit.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker. The member for Kalamunda at 2.5 per cent would be gone. I do not know whether he would be in Club 601 or maybe Club 602. At two minutes past six, he would be wiped off the deck straightaway, the retiring member for Kalamunda. The member for Burns Beach at 2.5 per cent would be similarly gone. The member for Bicton at 2.9 per cent; she should bolster that seat as much as she can because her seat would be similarly gone. If a swing one-third of what occurred in Darling Range was replicated in Bicton, the member for Bicton would no longer hold her seat in this place. The member for Mount Lawley holds his seat by four per cent—we are getting towards the end. That is half the swing that the Australian Labor Party had in the seat of Darling Range. We are not even at the halfway point until we get to Albany at 5.1 per cent. That seat has been held by the Speaker for some time. He has withstood a barrage of campaigns from a well-intended Liberal Party for some time to try to remove him from his seat. Well, it would be news to him that if the Darling Range swing was replicated against him, he in Albany would indeed be gone with some margin to the Liberal Party of 4.5 per cent or thereabouts in our favour. Finally, we would secure the seat that we should always have had, in my mind. My good friend the member for Balcatta would lose his seat. The member for Baldivis—we are getting to the territory of fairly safe Labor seats—was at seven per cent.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** On a high-water mark.

**Mr Z.R.F. KIRKUP:** It is a high-water mark. It was the best result the Labor Party has ever had since 1956—7.2 per cent in Baldivis. It would be lost if the Darling Range result was replicated in the seat of Baldivis at the next general election in 952 days. The seat of Wanneroo—gone. The seat of Southern River—gone. The seat of Forrestfield—all on the edge by point something of a per cent. It would be just a slip one way or the other. The member for Forrestfield would experience what I experienced during my campaign—that is, a bit of a longer count. It took a week to confirm my seat. If we were to replicate that victory, it would take some time to see what would happen in Forrestfield, but the intent would be there. Regardless of the result in Forrestfield, this government would have lost office. This Premier would have lost his mandate to lead if the effort in Darling Range was replicated across the great state of Western Australia.

I have said it time and again. Members opposite take heed. In the previous budgets delivered by this government, time and again the government has been willing to decide which government members will survive and which will not. In my last contribution on the budget, I stated that the seat of Bunbury received a disproportionate level of funding in the last state budget. It was disproportionate. We all know Labor members went there for the Labor Party caucus getaway or retreat—whatever it may have been. We know that a regional cabinet was also held

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in Bunbury. It is little wonder that the Labor Party holds these events in Bunbury and that all this money has gone into Bunbury, because at 10.8 per cent, Bunbury would become the new frontline for the Western Australian Labor Party, if the result in Darling Range were to be replicated across Western Australia at the next general election in 952 days. I fear for members opposite who will have to find themselves a new job in 952 days because they will all be out of a seat. The Liberal Party will be returned to office if the result in Darling Range were to be replicated at the next state general election.

That ends my contribution here this evening. As we go off to the winter break, I encourage members of the government to think very carefully about their future, because if the result in Darling Range is replicated at the next election, their days are already numbered.

**MRS L.M. O'MALLEY (Bicton)** [5.51 pm]: I rise to add my contribution to debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017. The McGowan Labor government is putting our state's finances back on the track of fiscal recovery and economic stability. This government is continuing the arduous job of repairing the damage done by the previous Liberal–National government's economic incompetence. This government is investing in education, healthy communities, the environment and job creation—investment that is welcomed by the community of Bicton and beyond. The government's budget approach is a mature, responsible and credible response that deals head-on with the legacy of nine years of wanton waste and financial mismanagement by the previous Liberal–National government. Ours is a disciplined approach that gets the balance right between reining in government spending and the delivery of our election commitments to deliver services, grow jobs and diversify our state's economy. The McGowan Labor government is turning things around.

In the time I have on my feet here today, I will speak to a few of the areas in which this commitment is benefiting my electorate of Bicton, as well as the entire state, by investing in education, school infrastructure, healthy communities and a healthy environment. This is a budget that is true to Labor values of fairness, equity, and opportunity. It is a budget that does the heavy lifting of budget repair whilst protecting the most vulnerable members of our communities. Excellence in education is the foundation for a thriving and diverse economy—one that reflects our state's ability to maximise the opportunities of the digital revolution, or new economy.

I would like to congratulate the Minister for Education and Training on the ongoing investment in WA education. It is an investment in our children's ability to access the jobs of the future, with science and innovation key to this. The importance of science, technology, engineering and mathematics—STEM—skills as a means of supporting the new economy and creating the jobs of the future is increasingly being recognised. Funding of \$3.3 million over four years will be provided under a state STEM strategy, developed by a cross-sector panel under the leadership of the Western Australian Chief Scientist, to enhance STEM skills across the state through a range of initiatives designed to prepare Western Australia's workforce for future jobs. This government is committed to ensuring that, by the time students in this state complete their secondary education, they are job, further training or higher education-ready.

This government is investing in the future of the state with \$5.1 billion being allocated to public school education. This includes 100 primary school classrooms to be converted into science labs, one of these being in Bicton Primary School. Funding of \$469 million will go towards building and improving schools to become modern, first-class facilities, including the continuation of planning for a \$4.5 million performing arts centre at my local public secondary school, Melville Senior High School. This budget recognises the link between attendance at school and academic and life outcomes, and has set participation, retention and graduation rates accordingly. Melville Senior High School is a wonderful example of a great public school—one that succeeds in preparing its students for the jobs of the future with a comprehensive suite of academic and vocational pathways. Melville Senior High School is a genuine reflection of everything that is truly great about public education in this state. I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the school's dedication to the holistic outcomes of its students. It is a school where excellence in academic, social, creative and sporting achievement is celebrated in equal parts.

The McGowan Labor government recognises that, as the job market becomes more competitive and technology continues to advance, completing education is one of the most important things for experiencing success in all areas throughout life. Staying in school will affect one's ability to achieve positive employment, social and health outcomes. The McGowan Labor government is committed to ensuring that our schools can continue to support our growing number of students in modern, first-class facilities, so that all students, regardless of where they live, get a high quality education.

Further job readiness initiatives include ongoing investment in the training sector with the continuation of the upgrading and re-purposing of ageing TAFE training campuses statewide. As a parent of a senior secondary student, I am personally very excited by this government's commitment to job readiness, with growth in vocational education and training in schools. The trialling of a new model of allocating TAFE places to increase access for

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students, as part of a broader plan being implemented to improve support for public schools and future job prospects, will be gratefully received by parents of secondary school-age students throughout the electorate of Bicton. Likewise, parents of younger students at Palmyra, Melville, Richmond and Bicton Primary Schools will welcome this government's commitment to prioritising best-possible teaching practice for delivering high-quality education in our public schools. With the ongoing implementation of the Western Australian curriculum, the grades used to report student achievement need to be comparable across the state and between schools, which is why we are continuing to develop moderation processes for pre-primary to year 10, and implementing processes for examinable and non-examinable courses in years 11 and 12.

This government knows that it is resources of the human kind that makes all the difference to student outcomes, and that is why we are putting education assistants back into classrooms across the state. Teacher quality is a key determinant of student outcome, which is why this government is investing \$7.7 million over four years to improve teacher quality. We are delivering on more than just student's education needs, with resilience, emotional regulation and behaviour of children and young people being further supported in public schools with the training of mental health coordinators in key school-based preventive mental health programs.

Healthy communities are undeniably a reflection of good health policy, but they are also a result of good social, education and environmental policy. This budget delivers in the areas of quality health care, education and community services. It is a budget that commits to this effectively and efficiently. This budget delivers in providing quality health care, with a patient-first approach, whilst improving efficiency and providing greater value for money. The focus on efficiency is critical to repairing the state's finances and to ensuring a sustainable and high quality health system into the future.

I am also very pleased by the commitment of the McGowan Labor government to building a family birthing centre at Fiona Stanley Hospital. There are many advantages in giving birth at a birthing centre, where the experience is more likely to be far less medical and far more home-like. The family birthing centre model of care involves establishing a midwifery group practice to ensure midwife-led continuity of care through the antenatal, labour, birth and postnatal stages of care. The Fiona Stanley birthing centre will provide important birth choices for the growing families of Bicton, and on behalf of these members of my community, I sincerely thank the Minister for Health.

It is essential for creating and maintaining healthy communities that we invest in policy that facilitates greater physical activity which, in turn, adds to the vibrancy of our cities, suburbs and towns. For the many members of the Bicton community who love to cycle for health and recreation, the commitment to invest in the construction of the missing section of the Fremantle railway principal shared pathway has been welcomed with great excitement. Preventive health care is crucial to reining in health spending. With around 5 000 people aged 65-plus living in the electorate of Bicton, it is great to see that the preventive, health promotion and aged and continuing care services that help older Western Australians to live healthy and safe lives will continue to be funded.

In the area of mental health, specialised mental health programs such as prevention and promotion, community support services, community treatment services and the many other preventive mental health initiatives contained in this budget provide life-saving and life-affirming action. This government is committed to turning the tide on suicide. The statewide suicide prevention strategy, "Suicide Prevention 2020: Together We Can Save Lives", has received funding of \$25.9 million over four years, from 2015–16 to 2018–19. The Mental Health Commission has purchased services from government and non-government organisations that are in line with an evidenced-based approach and address the activities outlined in "Suicide Prevention 2020". I would like to take a moment to acknowledge some of the services in that strategy. They include, but are not limited to, the response to suicide and self-harm in schools program, which provides immediate support for children at risk, and capacity building of staff; the active life enhancing intervention program, which provides intensive support for people experiencing suicidal or self-harm ideation, or who have attempted suicide and/or engaged in self-harm; the children and young people responsive suicide support program, which provides long-term support for children and young people bereaved by suicide; the Aboriginal family wellbeing project, a two-year pilot project to address the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal people to help prevent self-harm and suicide; and the 10 suicide prevention coordinators embedded in the health regions across Western Australia.

As a key initiative of "Suicide Prevention 2020", and in order to create greater public awareness and united action across the community, the new "Think Mental Health" campaign was developed as part of a comprehensive approach to mental health promotion and mental illness prevention. This campaign contributes to the promotion of mental health and wellbeing, destigmatising mental health issues and assisting the Western Australian community to navigate the range of mental health activities and services available. Having lost a family member to suicide, I personally represent the many West Australians affected by the tragedy of suicide when I say thank you to this Labor government for taking serious action in this area.

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In conclusion I would like to acknowledge this government's commitment to minimising waste and maximising recycling, thereby reducing the negative impact on our natural environment. Our oceans and rivers need our help, and with two-thirds of my electorate bordered by the mighty Swan River, my local communities are highly engaged and personally invested in protecting the health and vitality of the river and the surrounding foreshore, and the entire natural environment of this state.

I join the people of the electorate of Bicton in acknowledging the McGowan Labor government's action in fighting the war on waste. This includes the historic banning of single-use lightweight plastic bags on 1 July and follows up with the introduction of the container deposit scheme in 2020. Much more needs to be done to ensure that we protect our natural environment now and into the future, but this is a fantastic start.

I congratulate the Treasurer and cabinet on their commitment to continue the important work of getting the balance right between budget repair and community investment.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe)** [6.03 pm]: I rise to join the debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017. Before I get into the substance of my comments, I thank the member for Kingsley for her support for community child care. This is not a matter for a long discussion in this presentation, but community kindergartens in this state have been under considerable threat for some time and continue to be under threat, typically the threat of being absorbed into larger schools. My children went to Seaview Community Kindergarten, and I have special empathy for, and recognise the importance of, community kindergartens, and that is a matter that I will talk to in the future. I urge members opposite to take note of the fact that community kindergartens are important for all the same reasons that community childcare centres are important.

In talking about these budget bills, I want to go through a few issues in my area—not to repeat what I have said before—and also talk about some broader issues in relation to the budget. The first issue is traffic congestion in my electorate. Throughout all the budget processes and in all the discussions on the budget, traffic congestion to the port of Fremantle and on Tydeman Road, and through my electorate, has not been dealt with. Some minor projects are going ahead with some slip lanes. Slip lanes will not resolve the traffic issues at Fremantle port. The main issue is the substantial amount of traffic through the southern suburbs leading to Fremantle port. Tydeman Road is of major concern. Tydeman Road provides access to South Mole, which, as many members would know, is the container terminal for Perth. It is also a major thoroughfare for normal pedestrian traffic. I note the government's effort in increasing the transport of containers by rail. However, at best, that is making a very small contribution to the overall problem of transport and traffic density into the port.

A lot of momentum was made by the then opposition during the last state election about the Roe 8 project. The opposition was very effective in mobilising a range of support against that project. However, mobilising support against a particular project does not solve the problem. The problem is that we do not have adequate transport capability into the port of Fremantle. Although I understand that the government's priority is to develop a port further south—which, as some members may know, I have advocated for outside my role in this place—that will take considerable time to get going. The port of Fremantle handles all our container traffic. That issue needs to be resolved. However, there is no money effectively in this budget or the forward estimates to deal with that issue.

**Mrs L.M. O'Malley:** There are slip lanes.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Slip lanes and the like will not make a difference, member. That is my point. They are minor. The problem is the bulk traffic on the roads, and nothing is being done to deal with that congestion. I am no expert on this topic and I do rely on the former Minister for Transport for some information on this —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** Not the former member for Vasse?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I have great affection and respect for the former minister.

The projections are that that traffic load will approximately double over the next 10 years. That is a huge impact. All members would know that wait times in traffic increase exponentially with traffic density. That is a really big issue. Clearly this budget is all but done and dusted, but that needs to be addressed in future budgets.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Can I say something about that question you just raised about the traffic? Do you know that the former minister tabled in the chamber traffic modelling about Roe 8, and do you know what the effect on Stirling Highway was? It was 100 000 extra trucks going north on Stirling Highway through your electorate.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I am grateful for that information, and can I say that only reinforces my resolve that something has to be done about that.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** I am saying it will get worse on Stirling Highway if you build Roe 8.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Minister, can I say I am not here to support Roe 8. I am here to encourage the government of the day, and you, minister, as a very, very senior member of that government, to adopt solutions that will deal with that substantial problem. In effect, in this budget there is not quite nothing, but there is nothing substantive, to deal with that problem.

I would like to talk in particular about traffic density through my electorate. Commercial traffic—this is outside of container traffic—through my electorate is also forecast to double in the next 10 years. That comprises half of the traffic on the main roads through my electorate, in particular Stirling Highway. There are 18 schools in my electorate. Most of those schools are located along Stirling Highway. Access and egress to Stirling Highway is a major safety problem. There are a number of level crossings on Stirling Highway. People are taking risks because of the problem of getting through the area and because of the problem of parents getting their children to schools. I saw this in spades when I was campaigning for my seat. People take risks. It is typically stressed-out parents who are trying to get their kids to school and then trying to get to their job, because in the majority of families, both partners work. That is an issue that has to be dealt with. As I said, it is not dealt with in this budget, but it is something that has to be dealt with in the future.

Like the member for Fremantle, I congratulate the government on the plan to complete the principal shared path from Grant Street to Fremantle. I will seek a briefing on the detail of that. I am particularly concerned about how that project will interact with crossing both the old and the new bridges. Members may have ridden bikes across there. The crossing on the old bridge is dangerous. I am extremely fearful that if someone came off their bike there, they could go into the river or onto the highway. The crossing was designed for pedestrians and not for people sitting high on bikes, which particularly happens with modern racing bikes, on which people sit very high in the seats. I will wait to look at the detail on that. There needs to be some additional focus on completing the PSP. As I said, I congratulate and thank the government for what it is doing; that will mean a lot for people in my electorate. However, there needs to be some additional focus on connections from the river and the ocean to the PSP. My electorate is a very popular area for people to visit. Serious accidents have occurred. In fact, a fatality and a recent near-fatality occurred when people were trying to connect to the PSP at Grant Street from the ocean. The local council feels that it is not getting the support it requires for that. I will be advocating for that directly with the relevant ministers and I hope to see that in future budgets.

I want to talk about the issue of government debt. I am cognisant of the clarity that the opposition leader provided on some of the history of this. I will not repeat any of that. Look, the government inherited a difficult set of circumstances. I talked about this a bit yesterday. It was tough. The government has had to cope with an unusual situation. The largest population growth in the history of the state—500 000 people—essentially happened during the two terms of the last government. That growth is equivalent to the population of Tasmania. There was an enormous program of work required to meet that growth, and that was done against what was a buoyant economy. Clearly, there was a position coming out at the end of that. I note that although there is a lot of railing on the other side against the debt that was incurred, I do not see members on the other side nominating any significant number of projects that should not have been done. In fact, I see quite the opposite; I see members on the other side who are very happy to be associated with the opening of those various projects, which were, in some significant part, contributors to the debt that the state has incurred.

The set of circumstances that the state government inherited has not been substantially improved by its continued large commitments to its projects, especially Metronet. The forward estimates predict a return to surplus in 2020–21. That surplus is largely on the basis of increases in GST revenue. The budget figures themselves show GST revenue of \$2 billion in 2017–18 going to \$5.1 billion in 2021–22. I recognise that the Treasurer has made an earnest attempt to reduce some areas of expenditure in government and to tackle some of the issues in relation to personnel levels in various government departments, but the truth is that the return of the budget to surplus will in large part be due to the GST increase. In those commitments that the state government has made, I worry that Metronet expenditure is clouding other decisions. The member for North West Central went through the numbers and I have not heard anyone from the other side decry them yet. Maybe they will. The member for North West Central added up the costs of Metronet to be around \$10 billion. We know, from whatever information we can get, that there is going to be a very substantial ongoing commitment year-on-year as a subsidy for Metronet. I note that that is not reflected in the forward estimates. I will talk a little about the inability to get information that would allow any proper analysis of that.

I do not wish to join the debate that has been had here on the Redress WA scheme or refer to the comments that were made. I think it is a good scheme. It is a very important area. The government should be congratulated for joining the scheme. It was obviously strongly supported by the opposition. What I do have a great concern about is the linking of that scheme, which is a good scheme, to the privatisation of Landgate. We heard all sorts of discussions today. I am genuinely grateful for the very lucid explanation that the Treasurer gave, because it is the first time I have had a clear picture of that. But I really do have great concerns with this. I have the greatest concern

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about putting the repository of our titles in the control of private hands. I am very concerned about how a private entity will make the money that has been suggested from the sale of this. I am very concerned that we will see the major problems that have been seen in the other states. We will see more detail and we will get more explanation of this, I hope, going forward. I can tell members opposite that the many lawyers I speak to, and particularly the many property lawyers I speak to, are extremely concerned about any privatisation of Landgate and the Landgate system. We need to see that detail. As I said, I am grateful that the Treasurer gave a more detailed explanation this afternoon, but that is something I have great concern about. Given the importance of the Redress scheme, I do not think that its progression should be linked to the partial privatisation of Landgate.

I am a new hand at this, but I can read tables. I am not sure that I have great faith in the figures in the budget going into the forward estimates. The forward estimates for the next two years are somewhat believable, but going to 2020–21, when the government claims we will be going into surplus, and 2021–22, I find those numbers quite hard to believe. I refer to chapter 2 of budget paper 2, “Net Appropriation Determinations”. What I see consistently across nearly all departments—not all but many—is a substantial drop-off in the appropriations in 2019–20 or 2021–22. We can see this across many departments, whether it is Premier and Cabinet; Jobs and Economic Development, which has substantial drops; Health, which has an enormous drop across that period, going from an appropriation of \$447 million down to \$165 million; or Community Safety. There is a dramatic drop-off across a range of departments. To be frank, I do not believe it. I appreciate the point made by the government that it was concerned it could not accurately estimate those figures going forward. I see that incomes have been estimated to increase going forward. We have all done budgeting. Anyone who has run a department has done budgeting. When accurate estimates cannot be made going forward because the information is not available, typically one flatlines the estimates on a historic average. That has not been done in this budget. The budget, more than two years out in the forward estimates, is not believable. I certainly do not believe it. I think we will see that change dramatically and that forward expenditure will increase dramatically in the future.

I want to talk a little about Metronet. It is clearly the government’s signature policy. The government sees Metronet as something that will provide jobs, provide a solution for density in the suburbs, and provide other benefits to the community. I am especially concerned with transparency around this project because there is almost none. Other than lines on a bit of paper that show where the rail lines are going to go, it is enormously hard to get any details. Whenever we seek responses, we are told it is commercial-in-confidence information that cannot be discussed. I really struggle with that, especially regarding the anticipated patronage figures. I cannot for the life of me understand how patronage figures are commercial in confidence. They are very, very important because that goes to whether this is a reasonable decision to make.

On 25 April 2017, I quote the Premier when he was discussing Perth Children’s Hospital. He stated —

“We have been completely honest, open and transparent and released the information that the former government wouldn’t release,” Mr McGowan said.

“I think we’ve been gold standard when it comes to transparency and accountability in relation to this project.”

I admire the Premier’s words—that he will be gold standard in transparency—but that needs to occur for Metronet. It is massive capital expenditure. As I pointed out before, it could end up being somewhere near a \$1 billion per annum increase in subsidy as an ongoing recurrent expenditure for this government. That will have a massive impact on the government’s ability to provide other services. It is very concerning that we do not have that level of detail.

I also have concerns about the housing model and the suggested concentration of social housing around the proposed train stations. We obviously need to see the detail, but that has been mentioned by a number of people. I think like all members in this house, I support the need for social housing. There are people in our community who cannot procure their own housing and they need proper housing. I refer in particular to single-parent families with young children. It can be enormously difficult for the adult in a single-parent family to gain employment because they are caring for young children. They quite often rely on social security and can only afford social housing provided by the government. As I said, I do not think there would be a member in this house who does not think social housing is important. However, in my electorate and in others, when we see a high concentration of social housing in one location, there are higher levels of antisocial behaviour. That is true in the southern part of Mosman Park. I mentioned in my inaugural speech that I would be trying to understand how the City of Fremantle had improved its issues of antisocial behaviour.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I had a meeting with the Mayor of Fremantle and he was very clear about social housing. He has had problems in his electorate. One area is an intractable problem; a block of flats where there is a high percentage of social housing, and he despairs. It is a constant problem for the people who live in that block of flats,

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a constant problem for the police who are called out to those flats at all times, and a constant problem for people who live near that block of flats. The mayor was very clear; he said that we need a salt-and-pepper approach to social housing—that is, to make sure we disperse social housing so we do not have high concentrations in one area. I encourage the government to improve the supply of social housing but I am concerned if we are going to concentrate it around railway stations. Plenty of public transport is available across the city in locations other than railway stations and I think there is a real risk that if we concentrate too much social housing on these new developments, we will create problems that do not exist at the moment. Obviously, there is the capacity to have higher quality housing in these areas and some percentage of social housing, and otherwise develop social housing in other areas.

Another aspect to the Metronet project that needs to be in the back of our minds is the risk of disruption from modern, electric driverless vehicles. I think that is going to occur much faster than we all think, and it will fundamentally change the dynamic. As I have said, Metronet is a major commitment and it is going to be a major commitment going forward over a number of years, not just in one budget cycle. Really, the backbone of our rail network has been point-to-point transport, especially commuter transport for people who work in the CBD. Increasingly, the CBD is not the workplace for many people. In the electorate of Darling Range, that was very apparent. Only 1.7 per cent of people in Darling Range use public transport. The overwhelming reason is that most of them do not work in the CBD; most of them work around Darling Range. They are tradespeople or they are FIFO workers who go up north. People in regional centres, including Joondalup, are increasingly working in the centres and not commuting to the city. I think there is a real risk here that we will overcapitalise on the network and end up with something that has enormous ongoing maintenance costs, an enormous ongoing subsidy, and it will be a drain on government going forward. I think there needs to be a real note of caution in just how much of our discretionary capital money we devote to this because it is an increasing risk.

I noted the member for Perth's comments on urban sprawl and I understand that he regards himself as quite an expert on it. Some comments were made about him being concerned about other members in this house. I was very concerned by the attitude displayed by the member for Perth that somehow or other, we had to be compelled to match his vision; somehow or other, we were going to change the laws to make sure that we had the high-density housing that he thought was best for the city. I learnt one thing when I was doorknocking; that is, there are different types of infill and much of the infill that is going on at the moment in my electorate is disastrous. It is invariably going to younger families with children, turning what are quite beautiful living suburbs into concrete jungles. In fact, an enormous deforestation of suburbs has occurred. If we are going to have increased density, we need to make sure—I reflect the member's words—that it is density well done. It has to be density well done. From my observations, the City of Cockburn is not a good example of density well done. I have grave fears for how that area is going to go. There are shopping centres with large car parks around them and very little green space, with very little connection between the areas. There is also very little connection between the high density housing and the green spaces that children and families can use for recreation. If we are going to have higher infill housing, it needs to be done in a way that is sensitive to people and the way they live.

**Mr J.N. Carey** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Mr Acting Speaker —

**Mr J.N. Carey** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Perth, that is enough; thank you!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Forcing councils and suburbs to the member for Perth's vision is deeply unpopular, not because of people's philosophical objections, but because people have seen what has happened in other suburbs and it makes those areas unliveable.

**Mr J.N. Carey** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Mr Acting Speaker, I am not accepting interjections from the member for Perth.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Perth! The member has said he is not going to take your interjections, so please stop. Thank you.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** As I say, the comments of the self-titled expert on increasing urban density filled me with fear. I will look very closely at the legislation that he is promoting.

In the last few minutes, I would like to touch on the increase in fees and charges, and this has been done to some extent already. Those fees and charges really do hurt people. Those fees and charges are the only significant increasing costs that people are seeing. Outside of council rates, people are seeing a dramatic increase in fees and charges, but other costs are not going up. It concerns me that those increases are not driven by any real requirement outside the focus on Metronet and other new projects. I said yesterday and I say again now that the government

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has a choice of whether to do those projects now or to slow down those projects and reduce the harm, pain and angst that families are experiencing. I find the argument that the previous government increased charges is an extraordinarily difficult argument for the other side to sustain. It is a patently ridiculous argument to say that the previous government increased charges but this government is increasing them slightly less and therefore that is acceptable. The simple fact is that those households are already under duress for a range of reasons and this government is simply increasing that duress. There is real pain occurring in the community and this government has the opportunity to reduce that level of pain.

There are other aspects to the budget. The misuse of the royalties for regions program has already been covered. The larger part of royalties for regions funds will simply go towards paying for social obligations. It is not the program that was originally established.

I want to finish on Moora Residential College. The government has the chance to change its mind on this. I urge the government and members opposite to change their mind on this. There is no requirement for \$9 million. It is very clear that for \$500 000, Moora Residential College could be kept open and those students who are there now could be at the school next year and new students could go to the school. It is a heartless decision to force those students to go to larger centres or to the metropolitan area. Anyone in this place who has experienced living away from home in a residential college will know that. They will know that living in a community like Moora is infinitely superior to living in a larger centre or in Perth. I ask that the government seriously consider the proposal to keep that college open, and there is a chance for it to do that.

Metronet casts a huge shadow over the budget. It is hurting families, because it is driving those other charges. The big departmental reductions in spend do not look realistic and I think we will see that in the next budget. The government needs to rethink utility price increases. This is hurting families and is causing real stress. The government does have a choice.

**MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park — Treasurer)** [6.33 pm] — in reply: I thank all members for their support for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017 and for their kind and strong words of support for the McGowan Labor government.

Question put and passed.

Bill (Appropriation (Recurrent 2016–17) Supplementary Bill 2017) read a second time.

Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, and transmitted to the Council.