

**SUPPLY BILL 2013**

*Second Reading*

Resumed from 8 May.

*Declaration as Urgent*

**MR T.R. BUSWELL (Vasse — Treasurer)** [11.00 am]: In accordance with standing order 168(2), I move —  
That the Supply Bill 2013 be considered an urgent bill.

**MR M. McGOWAN (Rockingham — Leader of the Opposition)** [11.00 am]: Interestingly, this is the second occasion in recent seconds that we have been asked to deal with a motion to declare a bill an urgent bill, but we had a little notice that this bill would be declared urgent. The reason we have some difficulty with these things is that the ordinary reason for a bill to be declared urgent is so that it can pass because the exigencies of government require it. On the bill that was just debated, which debate I did not participate in but other members did, it was clear that there was no urgency around that legislation. It was being declared urgent merely because the Premier admitted that the government does not have a legislative agenda.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** It was the privileges bill.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** We dealt with the State Agreements Legislation Repeal Bill 2013.

As the government does not have a legislative agenda, it comes into this place and declares bills urgent outside the ordinary understanding of an urgent bill. The government should have come out of the election and done things properly. It should have come out of the election and had a legislative agenda ready to go. But when we ask questions about the bills that the Premier said were the most important bills that this house could possibly deal with, such as a bill to deal with the issue of prostitution, which the Premier campaigned on relentlessly for four years, he said that that is not necessarily something that the government is going to do anymore. That issue is no longer important. The 59 of us in this chamber in Parliament have been reduced to sitting in this house without any government business to deal with. Why are we here?

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Because this government brought the Parliament back quickly, unlike other governments.

**Mr M. McGOWAN:** It is because the Premier recalled Parliament without an agenda. That is why we are here. This is a government of inertia without an agenda. This is a Premier of inertia without an agenda. Now he has been reduced to bringing forward pieces of legislation that even he says are unimportant but he is declaring them urgent so that members have something to stand and talk about. What sort of governing is that? What sort of management of the Parliament is that? When the government comes out of the election, it comes up with its agenda and it introduces legislation into Parliament so that it can be debated. Parliament is recalled in accordance with the requirements of that legislation. Ordinarily, I would have thought that that is the way that Parliament is run, but not according to year zero here with this Premier. “Year zero” means everything starts again, including the ordinary operation of Parliament.

Now the Supply Bill has been declared urgent. The reason we have the Supply Bill is that the government delayed the budget. It is the government’s call to delay the budget until August, in the midst of a federal election campaign. We all see through the subterfuge. The government has placed the budget in the midst of a federal election campaign so that it can hide the decisions of the budget. Ordinarily, the budget would be brought down in May, and the government has the numbers to do it, but it has not done that. It is a very strange way to govern the state. We should very shortly be going into the budget debate. That is what this house should be doing; it should be dealing with the budget, not with obscure and strange pieces of legislation the government has introduced because it does not have an agenda. If the government had come out of the election campaign with an agenda, we would be dealing with the budget now. That is what we should be doing, instead of the 59 of us sitting here wondering what we are doing. That is what should be happening.

The Premier seems to have lost the plot in some ways. Today we found that he breaks his word with impunity on committee positions, and he does not answer questions about the dismissal of public servants. The government has introduced strange pieces of legislation that even the Premier admits are unimportant and are not urgent, yet they have been declared urgent. It is a very strange way of governing. So we are all sitting here now, just filling in time because the government does not have an agenda.

**MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park)** [11.05 am]: The Premier made the point a minute ago that he brought Parliament back quickly after the election; he is very proud of the fact that he rushed Parliament back. Unfortunately, he did not think about what members of Parliament were going to do upon our return to the Parliament of Western Australia. The Premier said just a minute ago that the State Agreements Legislation

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Repeal Bill that he has introduced needs to be declared urgent so that we have something to do for the next few weeks, because at the moment we are starting to run out of things to talk about.

It is not as though the Supply Bill was an enormously complicated bill to draft. It has four clauses and is one page long. I went back and had a look at that bill when the Premier first said that the budget would be delivered in August, as the Leader of the Opposition pointed out, in the blast zone of the federal election so that any spikes in it may get some very brief coverage. On 3 April the Premier said that the budget would be brought down in August. Parliament came back on 16 April for a week. Nothing happened. Parliamentary draftsmen no doubt spent weeks on end drafting what is an incredibly complicated piece of legislation! We are now back for three weeks, then we will rise for two weeks, and then we will be back on 11 June until 27 June. There is nothing that should mean that this bill should be declared urgent. The bill could lay on the table for three weeks, as standing order 168(1) stipulates, so that members of Parliament can seek input from their constituents and stakeholders. Ultimately, we have another three sitting weeks in June, and no doubt the government is rushing around trying to find something to do in those three weeks. We could deal with the Supply Bill then in the ordinary course as per standing orders. I was not here when the standing orders were drafted, but I can only assume that they were drafted for a reason—for the conduct of the proper passage of legislation and accountability in Western Australia. If there is to be a declaration of urgency pursuant to standing order 168(2), there must be a reason better than “I’m sorry; we’ve got nothing else to talk about.” That is not a reason to declare legislation urgent, particularly when that legislation will authorise some \$7 billion in public spending.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** Therefore, it’s an important issue and we should get on with it.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I thank the minister for his interjection. I think that if we are to authorise some \$7.2 billion in public spending, we should go through the proper processes of government. The bill should be laid on the table for three weeks as per the standing orders that have been developed over no doubt centuries to get to where we are now. Why should we breach those standing orders? Why should we allow legislation to be rushed through pursuant to standing order 168? The Premier said that it is because we have nothing else to do. That is not a particularly good reason to deal with what are, I would have thought, fairly important pieces of legislation.

The fact that the government came back to Parliament quickly—the Premier likes to gloat about that—is one thing, but having Parliament actually do something is another. I remember the Royal Perth Hospital Protection Bill 2008. Royal Perth Hospital was to be protected under the Liberal government, yet here we are now in 2013 and the legislation has not been passed. It does not look as though it will be reintroduced because it is a new government that has popped onto the scene in the past couple of months. If the government wants bills to be declared urgent, it will have to do much better than simply saying that it is because we have nothing to talk about in Parliament.

Question put and passed.

*Second Reading Resumed — Adjournment of Debate*

**MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle)** [11.10 am]: I move —

That the debate be adjourned.

*Point of Order*

**Mr T.R. BUSWELL:** Madam Acting Speaker, I seek some clarification, if I may, in relation to the application of standing orders to this motion by the member for Fremantle to adjourn the debate. Could you please illuminate us—or me, because, of course, my knowledge of standing orders is somewhat rusty compared with that of the Leader of the House, who is on top of it all—and let us know when, if indeed we pass this motion and adjourn the debate, we can next visit this important topic?

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman):** If the debate is adjourned, we cannot get back onto debating this bill at all today. The question now is that the debate be adjourned.

*Division*

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) casting her vote with the ayes, with the following result —

**Extract from Hansard**  
[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 9 May 2013]  
p356b-373a

Mr Troy Buswell; Mr Mark McGowan; Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Simone McGurk; Acting Speaker; Ms Rita Saffioti;  
Dr Tony Buti

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Ayes (19)

Ms L.L. Baker  
Mr R.H. Cook  
Ms J. Farrer  
Ms J.M. Freeman  
Mr W.J. Johnston

Mr D.J. Kelly  
Mr F.M. Logan  
Mr M. McGowan  
Ms S.F. McGurk  
Mr M.P. Murray

Mr P. Papalia  
Ms M.M. Quirk  
Mrs M.H. Roberts  
Ms R. Saffioti  
Mr C.J. Tallentire

Mr P.C. Tinley  
Mr P.B. Watson  
Mr B.S. Wyatt  
Mr D.A. Templeman (*Teller*)

Noes (35)

Mr P. Abetz  
Mr F.A. Alban  
Mr C.J. Barnett  
Mr I.C. Blayney  
Mr I.M. Britza  
Mr T.R. Buswell  
Mr G.M. Castrilli  
Mr M.J. Cowper  
Ms M.J. Davies

Mr J.H.D. Day  
Ms W.M. Duncan  
Ms E. Evangel  
Mr J.M. Francis  
Mrs G.J. Godfrey  
Mr B.J. Grylls  
Dr K.D. Hames  
Mrs L.M. Harvey  
Mr C.D. Hatton

Mr A.P. Jacob  
Mr R.F. Johnson  
Mr S.K. L'Estrange  
Mr R.S. Love  
Mr W.R. Marmion  
Mr J.E. McGrath  
Mr P.T. Miles  
Ms A.R. Mitchell  
Mr N.W. Morton

Dr M.D. Nahan  
Mr D.C. Nalder  
Mr J. Norberger  
Mr D.T. Redman  
Mr A.J. Simpson  
Mr M.H. Taylor  
Mr T.K. Waldron  
Mr A. Krsticevic (*Teller*)

Pairs

Dr A.D. Buti  
Mr J.R. Quigley

Mr V.A. Catania  
Dr G.G. Jacobs

Question thus negatived.

*Second Reading*

**MR B.S. WYATT (Victoria Park)** [11.17 am]: I think we are debating the Supply Bill now, Madam Acting Speaker. It is worth reflecting on what has just happened—a tortuous process to get to where I think we were all initially heading. When we came in here this morning, we noted on the green daily program that the Supply Bill was to be declared an urgent bill and therefore would be debated today. That is because, as has already been pointed out, there is nothing else from the government to debate in the Parliament, so the government has rushed the Supply Bill into the Parliament. But then, curiously, the Premier said to the member for Fremantle, “Well, come on, adjourn the debate, or we’ll deal with it right now!” So the member for Fremantle did what she was told by the Premier and jumped to her feet and moved to adjourn the debate, and then confusion reigned. The member for Kalamunda —

**Mr M. McGowan:** A steel trap!

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes! The member for Kalamunda then rapidly worked out that something is not right. He is not sitting down the front. I think he should be sitting down the front, from where he can perhaps direct proceedings a bit better than he can from where he is sitting, next to the Minister for Environment. But the member for Kalamunda rapidly worked out that the government does not want to adjourn the debate. The government does not want to adjourn the debate on this bill because that will mean that we will all be home in time for lunch, and that might be a bit awkward for the government because it will not be until next week that we get to deal with the Supply Bill.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Hang on, Premier! I have to reflect on this! Give me the chance to reflect on this! So those heads came together on the government benches and they thought, “If we adjourn the debate, what will happen?” We then had the Treasurer—who is, quite rightly, I think, starting to worry about the progress of the Supply Bill—jump to his feet to seek a point of order from you, Madam Acting Speaker. The Treasurer was wondering about what will happen if we adjourn this debate, as demanded by the Premier, because, as has been pointed out, that will mean that we do not get to debate this bill today and it will go off to next week. When we look at the green, we see that if we do not get to debate the Supply Bill today, we are running out of things to do. So, the Supply Bill—very much so—developed a sense of urgency, and the division ensued. I am assuming that lots of Liberal members of Parliament will be hauled into the Premier’s office for voting against exactly what the Premier demanded in the chamber.

**Mr M. McGowan:** He voted against it himself.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is true. The Premier, in a state of confusion, voted against what he demanded take place just a few minutes before.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** How long has he been here?

**Mr R.H. Cook:** Too long.

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Dr Tony Buti

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**Mr B.S. WYATT:** A long time; a long time.

Eventually we got to where I think we were supposed to be, and that was the declaration of the Supply Bill as urgent. Despite the objections of the Premier, we are finally here to debate the Supply Bill. When we had that initial short debate over whether it should be declared urgent, I pointed out that the Premier raised the issue of an August budget back on 3 April. Therefore, we have had a long time to get to where we are—that is, the drafting of a very simple, but important, piece of legislation. We came back for a week's sitting on 16 April and saw neither hide nor hair of the legislation. Now it has been introduced this week and declared urgent. Let us not forget that we are back again on 11 June for another three weeks, so the ordinary course of the passage of legislation as set out in the standing orders whereby it lays on the table for three weeks should indeed take place. It will not jeopardise the paying of bills; it will not jeopardise the state's finances. It can go through the normal parliamentary process, and we can still debate and have passage of the legislation, the Supply Bill, through the Parliament. However, as the government does not have anything to do in the Parliament, despite the Premier's keen desire to rush the Parliament back, as he said, because he wants us to look busy, we have to work out a few things about what we are going to debate. So here we are now with the Supply Bill.

It is an interesting bill. This is the first time we have had one of these bills since 2001—since the last time a budget was delayed. The Leader of the Opposition has already pointed out that clearly the reason why the budget has been delayed to August is to get it nice and close to the federal election, so any spikes that may appear in this budget perhaps will not get the attention they deserve because, of course, the attention of Australians will be on the federal election campaign that will be taking place at that time. Further, the 2001 delay of the budget was because there was a change of government. The then coalition government lost the election, and the incoming new Labor government delayed that budget. That has not taken place now; the government continues. Therefore, the argument about why the budget should be delayed is clearly all around political purposes alone. I note that the Treasurer in his second reading speech made the following point —

An August budget will allow time for ministers to critically look at the spending of each of our departments. By considering all existing policies, each minister can then prioritise with the aim of delivering programs more effectively and implementing new election commitments.

That certainly did not require the delay of the budget through to August.

We have now a Supply Bill. As I said, it is a simple bill that provides the supply of some \$7.942 billion, made up of \$6.75 billion by way of recurrent spending and \$1.2 billion capital spending for the three months, I think, through to the end of September, when we expect the actual budget to pass through the Parliament. As I said, it is not a complicated bill. It is simply calculated on the basis of 40 per cent of the previous appropriation, and that calculation is made in terms of both recurrent and capital spending for approval by and passage through the Parliament.

What is interesting for me and for the opposition to note is the fact that the stand-alone bill gives a general monetary limit. It does not stipulate how much will be going to the Department of Education, how much will be going to the Department of Health et cetera; it simply has 40 per cent of the entire previous budget, recurrent and capital, allocated in a general pool, for the Treasurer to allocate as he sees fit. I assume what will then take place are discussions between the Department of Treasury and the various departments. That will then allow the Treasurer to simply allocate moneys to those departments pursuant to those agreements. This is something that will no doubt come up during consideration in detail regarding the details of when the Parliament will be informed, how much each department is allocated, how that process takes place, and then, ultimately, at the end of —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Member, for your information, that will be at the time of the budget.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That will be at the time of the budget. So, at the time of the budget, we will get a separate listing of how much each department —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No, because the money that this authorises being spent will effectively be moneys that are covered by the budget and the appropriation bills.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I understand that, but when the budget comes down in August, we will have, as we always have, the appropriation for, say, the Department of Education. There must be a separate line item that will say, "This is how much has already been allocated to that department pursuant to the Supply Bill."

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I wouldn't imagine so.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Why not?

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**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Because, effectively, the budget papers will detail the appropriations for each of the agencies, and this money would be a subset of that total appropriation.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes; okay. Let us say it is \$4 billion for the Department of Health; right?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Yes.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Ultimately, out of this \$6 billion for recurrent purposes, a reasonable-sized amount will go to the Department of Health. There must be a separate accounting so that the opposition, at the very least, can see how much of the current Supply Bill is going to the various departments.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I would have to get some more advice, but I do not think that is the case.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** It would not be hard to provide that information. Am I correct? Is that what is happening now; that is, there is an agreement between the Department of Treasury and the various departments on this Supply Bill? At the moment we have a general pot of money being authorised for the Treasurer to allocate; right?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Appropriation; yes.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** How will the Treasurer make those decisions on how much each department is provided? I assume there will be an agreement process between the Department of Treasury and each department.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** For the interim period, however long that transpires to be—let's say the budget gets through in August–September—I imagine that, outside any other decisions by government, it would be a roll forward of what's in the TIMS system for this year; a business-as-usual-type funding arrangement.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Okay.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** But one way you can obtain that information—I don't think Treasury publishes the monthly financials any more —

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** No, it does not. The Treasurer got rid of it. Does he not remember?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Let's assume the appropriation happens in September; okay?

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The quarterly results would at least give you an insight into that because they would have July and August. Let me have a chat about it. I am happy to have a look at providing monthlies up to that point, if you want.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I think it would be useful, because presumably what is also taking place—hence the reason for the delay in the budget—is that, because the election has happened, within these figures, which are 40 per cent of last year's appropriation, election commitments will be rolling into there as well. Even though it is 40 per cent of last year's appropriation, there are other spending pressures on each department now.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Yes. There may be other decisions of government that impact on that, but I would have to get some advice—it is a fair question—on the extent to which that is reported, because under the Treasurer's advance, as you know, we have to do the subsequent appropriation bill.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** My understanding is that if the expenditure is not money that was covered by last year's appropriation, at some point it would have to be reported as part of the Treasurer's advance, because the requirement under the Financial Management Act is that you report through the Treasurer's advance if you are spending money that was not appropriated.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes, that is right.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I will get some advice on that. My understanding under the Financial Management Act is that there is no requirement for us to provide an additional report that provides the information sought by the member, if it is covered by the appropriations from last year. I will get more advice on that

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** While the Treasurer is in a chatty mood, I calculate, using 40 per cent of the previous year's appropriation, that there is already a couple of months under the FMA, so the Treasurer is getting another, say, two months —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The 40 per cent is for the total.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Yes, of the previous year.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Yes.

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**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Why 40 per cent? Is that something that has historically developed?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The assumption is that the budget will get through in September. Let us say that is a quarter—25 per cent. I suppose it is just a bit of additional coverage in case there are any unforeseen delays, so that we do not have to come back and do another one. I asked the same question. One would rationally say perhaps it is 25 per cent, but the advice I was given is we have to have a bit for “unforeseens”. The member is right, there would have to be a mechanism to report back.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is what I am interested in —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Especially on money that is not covered in last year’s appropriation.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** I do not think there is an automatic mechanism to report back on the expenditure.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** If there is not, that is something that certainly should be done by government. The last time this happened was 2001. The Parliament is giving the Treasurer \$7.9 billion to spend at this moment as he sees fit on things that were spent in the previous appropriation—services et cetera.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** But there will still be some scrutiny around that as the appropriation bill is passed for next year as well. I will get more advice on it and get back to the member. I am not after a blank cheque! I would like one.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Can I just clarify: the Treasurer is saying that when the appropriation bill comes in, we will get to clarify what the money has been spent on. Normally, we get that process through estimates before the expenditure happens and now we are not getting it before the expenditure.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I understand that.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** It is a lot of money.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** That is a big difference.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I am assuming there is a reason. I am assuming, whomever the wise heads were who wrote the FMA, that if there is not a requirement for us to report back on this Supply Bill appropriation, which I do not believe there is, there must have been a reason for that. I will find out.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Presumably the only equivalent that will have will be consideration in detail, but we do not have any information.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You won’t get that now. It is a fair question; I will find out. I do not mind; I am happy to provide that information, but I just need to find out through what mechanism we will do that, if indeed there is not already a mechanism.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** The amount of \$7.9 billion is a bit of cash!

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** No, it is not; it is actually the money needed. It is just a fact. It is an approximation of the money we will need to pay the bills until the budget goes through.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** That is right, but as the member for Cannington pointed out, because it is unusual—this happens very rarely, the last time was 2001 —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I think there is an issue. I think this will actually happen after a lot of elections—the member highlighted the point—especially if there is a change in government. We normally start our budget process in December. That is what we do, so I am assuming. Having a March election does of course—not that we went into campaign mode until the caretaker period started—have an impact on the capacity to do what needs to be done to get a budget ready for May.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** In light of the fact we now have fixed terms, the doubt about election dates has been removed; surely this process will need to be made a bit more thorough.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** We have to look at it. Even when there is not a change in government —

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** The Treasurer is saying that is not relevant now because there was not a change in government and yet we still have the delay.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** The point I am trying to make is that budget cut-off is a month before the budget. It is not without its challenges.

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**Mr W.J. Johnston:** When I spoke to the then Premier, Geoff Gallop, about when the budget was delayed in 2001, he made the point that he could have had a budget in May, but he described that it would have been a Liberal budget because it would have just been the departments continuing with current procedures.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** The rollover of existing programs.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** It is not that the budget cannot come down in May; it is that a new government wants to have its say. That is why we are confused because it is not a new government.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** There are always issues to work through when we have to be in a range of new commitments and there is a set of existing commitments. That is the point I alluded to in the second reading speech. I do not just want to bolt on a new wave of spending out of the election. We have to fulfil election commitments but we have to look at our current spending program. I suspect it will be an issue at every election.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I suspect the Treasurer is probably right, which makes me think there needs to be, whether it is an amendment through the FMA or some form of circular, a better and more rigorous process about what happens after an election before a late budget, whenever that budget is.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I am happy to look at that. When we are where you are one day, it will be the same issue. It is a fair point. The FMA is up for review, as I understand it.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** The member for Cannington just reminded me that in 2005 we brought in a May budget even though we had just won the election.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** The election was the last week in February.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** The budget process was basically that all election commitments would be delivered because we wanted to run a tight budget. Anyway, it is quite interesting that you did not take that —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It often happens. It is just one of those things. I do not see it as being the end of the world but it is an issue.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** No; all this conversation has been very useful, but now that we have fixed terms we know— unless something unusual happens—with a high degree of certainty when the elections will be. We also know that it is highly likely that whoever wins that election will delay the budget to August or whatever time. This process is now starting to become woefully inadequate because we do not have —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Let us get some more advice about the reporting back, but I am —

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** At the moment, as far as I am aware, unless the Treasurer gets to his feet and tells me after this advice that there is a better reporting back mechanism that Treasury can give to the Parliament, this is rapidly becoming an inadequate process.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** I am not disagreeing with you. I am happy to look at it. The FMA will be reviewed.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** When is that being reviewed?

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** Soon. That is my recollection. One of the best articles written during the whole election campaign was on the back page of the *Western Australia Business News* by Mr Kennedy relating to fixed terms. I thought it was a very interesting article.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I will go back and re-read it. No doubt I read it at the time but can no longer remember! Hopefully Peter Kennedy was talking about —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** It was on the table when we had that wonderful debate.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** Was it that one? I do not know if I read it. Either way, no doubt I will be able to get a copy of it. Since that debate I note that I have been getting regular copies of the *Business News* in my mail telling me that I had attended a *Business News* event and therefore was entitled to a month of free copy! It was very nice of them.

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** You didn't have your breakfast; I had it for you!

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** I didn't have my breakfast, no. The beauty of where I am in life, Treasurer, is that I get up very, very early because of a small child who still has not learnt to sleep. I had had my breakfast before our breakfast!

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** A path we have all trodden, or most of us!

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** You have been there, that is right.

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Dr Tony Buti

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I will come back later with some financial questions I want to raise. I will deal with some issues not necessarily related to the state's finances, but the beauty of a general debate is that this is what we can do. In light of the declaration of urgency, the government is relying on the opposition to talk about issues well beyond necessarily the economic brief to keep the discussion on this bill going for quite some time.

Yesterday I had the good fortune to deliver my Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech. I want to fill out a bit more detail as I ran out of time yesterday. I want to talk about the Carrolup art that Curtin University and Colgate University, in the state of New York, have agreed to return to Western Australia. Those who are familiar with the story around Carrolup, the artists and young children will know that this is a significant agreement between the Colgate and Curtin Universities. I will read out a very brief part of the Curtin University media release. It will not take long, but I want to put on record the exact history of why that was a significant agreement. I quote from the Curtin University media statement —

Carrolup Native School and Settlement, now known as Marribank, is situated 30 kilometres out of Katanning Western Australia. In 1915 the Settlement was established by the Australian Government to provide education and training for Aboriginal children in accordance with the aims of the assimilation policies under the Aborigines Act of 1905. The Settlement closed in 1922 and its residents were transferred to the Moore River Settlement. In 1940, the Settlement was reopened as a farm training school.

Over its history, Carrolup became home to many Aboriginal children who had been removed from their families, belonging to what is now referred to as Australia's 'stolen generation'.

In 1945 schoolteacher Mr Noel White joined the school as Principal, and it was during 1945 and 1951 the artistic talents of the children flourished.

I do make the point that it was actually only a very small period of time—a six-year window—in which the Carrolup art was produced. It continues —

Children between five years and fourteen years, without any formal instruction, created intricate and unusual designs and stunning landscapes that astounded the art community. The students would wander through the local bush and make sketches of what they saw later recreating them in the classroom. For many of these children, painting was a way of maintaining their Noongar culture and deep connection with the land, after being removed under the Government's assimilation policies.

Through Mrs Florence Rutter, a British patron and major benefactor to the school, the paintings were exhibited in major cities throughout Australia and New Zealand, as well as London, Liverpool, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow. At the end of the collection's European tour, Mrs Rutter sold the artworks to a major American art collector and dealer, Mr Herbert Mayers.

Speaking to some of the elders who were at Carrolup, the point was made that the art was gifted to Ms Rutter and their view was that it was never intended for her to then onsell that art. There certainly was, very early on, a sense of ownership over that art. It was not meant to be onsold or redistributed. I return to the media statement —

In 1952, Mrs Rutter and Australian writer Mary Durack Miller published a book, 'Child Artists of the Australian Bush', including photographs of the works and artist interviews.

Under the guidance of Mrs Rutter, this remarkable collection received international success; and two of the artist, Parnell Dempster and Revel Cooper became relatively well known artists, though due to the Aborigines Act they were deemed as 'wards of the state' and received no monetary rewards or claims to their work.

In 1951 the Carrolup Native School and Settlement closed down and officially handed over its assets to the Baptist Union, to become the Marribank Farm School.

In 1966 Mr Mayers, a Colgate University alumnus, donated his collection to the university. Mr Mayers passed away in 1991.

For the next four decades, these artworks would become 'lost' to Australia and the world, to be re-discovered in 2004 in storage at Colgate University and fortuitously identified by a Mr Howard Morphy.

At the time Mr Morphy was the Director of the Centre for Cross-Cultural Research at the Australian National University and considered a central figure in the study of Aboriginal art. During a visiting lecture at Colgate, Mr Morphy was invited to their Picker Art Gallery to examine artwork with an Australian connection.

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It is utterly incredible that Mr Morphy was in the right place at the right time to identify this art. This is a quote from Mr Morphy in the media release —

“I took the lid off this box and I saw the top drawing, a beautiful pastel drawing, and I immediately thought: Carrolup. It was a Carrolup drawing,” said Morphy. “I just leapt for joy. And then I saw that this box was actually full of works on paper, piled on top of each other. So I started to take them out and each one was a Carrolup.”

In 2006, the University of Western Australia who had an existing selection of Corralup pieces, partnered with Colgate University in an exhibition called ... (*Children Long Ago*). The Picker and Berndt collections were exhibited ... in Katanning and ... at the University of Western Australia as part of the 2006 Perth International Arts Festival.

I think it was then that Carrolup art became more broadly identified around the Perth and Western Australian community. The release continues —

Since their discovery, the artwork and the Katanning region have been visited and studied by students from Colgate University.

A number of representatives from Colgate University came out to Western Australia and had gone down to Katanning before attending the ceremony at Curtin University yesterday to sign the memorandum of agreement. The main person from Colgate, Douglas Hicks, the dean of the faculty, gave a wonderful presentation. It is clear that over the past 10 years a very good relationship has developed between Colgate University and Curtin University, and now the Noongar elders, in respect of the art. Students have been coming out to Katanning to study the art and also the country. The elder who was there yesterday, Angus Wallam, gave a wonderful speech, as did Ezzard Flowers, about the relationship that had developed. As a result of that memorandum of agreement, 119 pieces of Carrolup art will now come out to Western Australia over the next 12 months. Details are still being negotiated as far as I can tell, but from what was said yesterday, Curtin University will store and show the art, and the art will then be taken around the south west of Western Australia and probably more broadly around Western Australia.

Mr Hicks from Colgate University also brought out, as he called it, a down payment: one beautiful piece of Carrolup art that has already been presented to Curtin University. That is a tremendous outcome for the return of that Carrolup art. It is not just an issue of significance to Noongar people, but also a significant art collection and history of art for Western Australians more broadly.

I want to return to some brief comments I made yesterday about the Browse project. What is next for the Kimberley? I made the point yesterday about the problem of linking Aboriginal economic development with a particular industrial outcome when that industrial outcome, for whatever reason, does not happen. The question in the Kimberley now is very much what is next and what will happen now? An article written by Peter Yu that appeared in *The West Australian* on 16 April outlined that question incredibly well. He made the following point —

The legacy of this fiasco is an Aboriginal community deeply divided and uncertain about their relationship with government and industry.

That is where we are at now. For a long time, the better part of the past decade, the future of the Kimberley and the future of Aboriginal economic development always included the assumption of a significant onshore gas plan, ultimately at James Price Point, but for a long time at a site to be decided upon. As Peter Yu asks, what happens now when there has been a divided, fractious and emotional response from the community to the decision—to be frank—to compulsorily acquire that land at James Price Point? There now needs to be a strong effort by government to bring these various groups back together in some form of dialogue so that discussion can take place around what happens now for the Kimberley. Ultimately the state government’s contribution to the benefits package is, I dare say, the sort of thing that governments should and would be spending in the Kimberley in any event over the initially agreed 20 to 30-year time frame. No doubt that will take place in any event, unless the government is planning to withdraw from the Kimberley, and I do not think that is the case at all. However, there now needs to be a focused dialogue with the Aboriginal people in the Kimberley about what is next, because emotion is still running quite high and there is now great uncertainty.

The other point I made, quoting from Marcia Langton’s *Boyer Lectures 2012: The Quiet Revolution: Indigenous People and the Resources Boom*, was my light but fair critique of the response by Australian Greens federal leader, Senator Milne, to the decision by the joint venture partners not to develop an onshore gas facility at James Price Point. To quote Marcia Langton, what is next? I do not think the comments by Senator Milne are particularly helpful. Peter Yu, although not specifically focusing on Senator Milne’s comments, made this point —

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We should dispel the myth that western style economic development is mutually exclusive from Aboriginal traditional life and values. The old economy based on extractive resource development, horticulture and cattle grazing can coexist and support the emerging Aboriginal cultural economy.

I quoted from Marcia Langton's *Boyer Lectures* yesterday in which she makes that point: that we cannot adopt the idea of having one but not the other. In *Boyer Lectures*—which I commend to anybody who cares to read the lectures—Marcia Langton refers to the fact that since the Mabo decision and the commencement of the federal Native Title Act, Aboriginal participation in Australia's and Western Australia's economy has been quite significant. We spend a lot of time discussing Aboriginal people who are not yet participating, but there has been a quite demographic change in Aboriginal people and the emergence very much of an Aboriginal middle class, which Marcia Langton talks about. I note the member for Kwinana is nodding his head in my general direction. This change highlights the importance of resolving native title claims in a speedy and timely manner. This is not just a matter of resolving land ownership and native title, which are obviously very important to traditional owners, but after that what can happen is that those Aboriginal people can be given a right—admittedly a right to negotiate, not to veto—to negotiate economic outcomes for development that may be occurring on their land. Two weeks ago, I went out to well 6 on the Canning Stock Route as part of the Birriliburu Indigenous protected area declaration. It was a tremendous day. A big mob came out from Wiluna, and it is not an easy trip to get there from Wiluna; there was a convoy of about 30 or 40 four-wheel drive vehicles and a bus to get everybody out there—a huge turnout. An area of 6.6 million hectares of country has been declared an Indigenous protected area, which is very much a gift, if members like, from those Aboriginal people—as native title has already been recognised—to the nation's conservation estate. Passing through country out there at the moment is utterly glorious because Aboriginal rangers have been working, and several designated native title services and the Department of Agriculture and Food have been very much focused on removing camels, horses and other animals that cause so much damage to country, so the country is looking fantastic. I think that the development of IPAs by the federal government has gone largely unnoticed, but it certainly is becoming a very significant gift by Aboriginal people of traditional country to the nation's conservation estate. But it also shows that if any Western Australian or Australian had any concerns or felt any threat about the acknowledgement of native title—certainly when the Native Title Act was making its way through federal Parliament it was the subject of fierce debate and high emotions—that concern should now be gone. Ultimately, the recognition of native title is to everybody's benefit, not just that of traditional owners. People may recall that Eric Ripper, before he retired from Parliament, on 14 November last year—it might have been his final speech to the Parliament; if not, it was very close to—made the point that we should set a target or aspire to, if members like, resolve all native title claims by the thirtieth anniversary of the Mabo decision in 2022. I think not only is that a worthy aspiration, but also it should be taken up in this Parliament. It is an aspiration that will clearly, if we want to achieve it, require a lot more resources and effort from government. But, ultimately, the point I make is that resolving native title is not just to the benefit of traditional owners; it is in everybody's interests to have native title resolved.

The story of native title in Western Australia, despite such an appalling beginning when the Native Title Act was going through the federal Parliament, has now been, I think, one of our state's great success stories. I make that point reflecting on the effort Eric Ripper went to when he was minister with responsibility for native title. When reflecting on his parliamentary career, no doubt Eric will particularly recall his eight years as Treasurer, but I think he speaks with more pride about his time as minister with responsibility for native title than the pride he feels for his strong stewardship of the state economy during his time as Treasurer. I think we have the opportunity to make that decision and focus on 2022—that way we take it beyond a four-year electoral cycle—and, hopefully, then move to resolving all outstanding native title issues in Western Australia. I certainly think that if any state can do that and any state has the right to do that, it is Western Australia.

I would like to make one other point in respect of Aboriginal affairs in my capacity as shadow minister. I do not know the detail of where the negotiations currently are in respect of the Single Noongar Claim and the offer made by the state government, but when the offer was first made, I wrote a piece for *The West Australian* about it and why it is significant, and why I think we can and should, hopefully, resolve the Noongar claims with the state government. I make that point as a person who has no say or role in making that decision, and ultimately that offer from the state government may be rejected. There seems to be a focus, not necessarily from Aboriginal people but from the broader community, on the size of that offer, where the land is that is being swapped and the money being paid. When I speak with some of the older Noongar men and women in the south west of Western Australia, Noongar country, I find that there is a sense of a lack of ownership or a lack of involvement in the government structure of the south west of Western Australia. I say this without having completely finalised my thoughts on the matter, but the government is looking at local government reform and I think there is an opportunity there, if the government really wants to resolve the Noongar claim. If it is going to seriously consider local government reform—I assume it is; we have not heard whether it is on the agenda post-election, but I assume that is still taking place—and if we are to have new boundaries for local government in the Perth

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metropolitan area, maybe the government wants to think about how it will go about ensuring that there is Aboriginal Noongar representation on those councils. There is a real opportunity now, assuming the government is still committed to its local government reform package, to do that. By that I mean that we do not have a set spot for which only Aboriginal people can vote, but consideration may be given to a council position on local government that is for a Noongar person and it still goes through a voting process with every member of the community who wants to vote. I think we will find that it is those sorts of initiatives that bring Aboriginal people into the government structure and the decision-making structure. That will carry much more weight and remove the debate from simply being around the size of the benefits package being offered. I emphasise the fact that that is also important, but it is always these other enabling processes that people are much more interested in for the long-term future of the Noongar nation.

I move on to the issue of housing. I am sorry the Minister for Housing is not in the chamber at the moment. The week before last there was a murder in my electorate just behind my office. It took place at a small Department of Housing apartment block with eight tenancies. Before Madam Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman) tries to sit me down, I will not reflect on anything that may involve people who may or may not have been involved in that tragic murder. Certainly that block of tenancies has caused the local community no end of consternation. I make this point: I am very proud of having public housing in my electorate. Public housing is underwritten by the support of the community to continue public housing and I am always worried when we see people of influence, members of Parliament in particular, railing against the density of public housing. Maintaining that community support for public housing in our state is more about ensuring that people who live around public housing have their concerns dealt with quickly and efficiently.

My view is that the department needs to get much more strategic in how it allocates tenancies to people, particularly when we have a lot of tenancies in one building with people living close together. A great example is Brownlie Towers in my electorate. Anyone who has been to Brownlie Towers knows the size of Brownlie Towers. The Treasurer is nodding his head at me. It is a large complex. We do not do that anymore. We do not create those sort of 1960s-style, high-rise apartments in which we put thousands of people. When I first became the member for Victoria Park, antisocial behaviour and crime was occupying most of my time and my local police's time. The department made the decision that maybe we should not put kids on the seventh floor in an apartment with one room. It is curious now, but maybe we should not do that—my kids would be just as awful—or kids will participate in antisocial behaviour. Let us put in Brownlie Towers older couples and people with no children. We saw significant investment led by former Minister for Housing Tom Stephens and the then Premier and member for Victoria Park, Geoff Gallop, as millions of dollars go into —

**Mr T.R. Buswell:** That was a long time ago—Tom Stephens.

**Mr B.S. WYATT:** It was some time ago. As the member knows, Treasurer, sometimes these decisions take their time to work their way through.

I think about \$12 million was spent on Brownlie Towers to provide increased security and that, as well as, importantly, that housing policy by Homeswest, had a dramatic impact on the quality of life of those tenants. I am not advocating that we get rid of public tenants. There are ways we can ensure that we maintain our public tenancies while ensuring people have a quality of life, including those people who own their houses privately living in and around public tenancies. The murder took place at the apartment block, which backs on to a large empty car park. It is a huge car park that is the car park for a tavern, a licensed premises in my electorate. I noted that the owner of that tavern complained in the local paper about the behaviour of Department of Housing tenants over a long time. But to be frank, the owner of that tavern also needs to take on some responsibility for the provision of alcohol, because in that empty car park there are regularly fights due to people abusing alcohol and causing no end of trouble. A lot of those people are transient people coming in and out and catching up with people in the block of tenancies where the murder took place. Those licensed premises need to take on an element of responsibility themselves. I note, looking at the Liquor Control Act, that there is very much a strong focus on the public interest.

My office is on the restaurant strip on Albany Highway, Victoria Park, where there are a lot of liquor licensees, from restaurant licensees to tavern licensees to bottle shops. Not that long ago, early this year, a liquor store in my electorate was providing alcohol on credit to some homeless people there. There is a homeless service provider in my electorate. This happened earlier this year; it is not something that happened a long time ago. I wrote to the minister, who forwarded my letter to Barry Sargeant, the director general of Racing, Gaming and Liquor, very quickly. I always find Barry Sargeant very quick to respond. His department did an investigation and I read from the letter I received from Barry Sargeant —

... the licensee confirmed that although he does have regular customers who patronise his business several times during the day, they usually only purchase one or two cans of liquor. The licensee stressed

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that he would not serve them if they exhibited any signs of drunkenness and he also explained that it was difficult to establish whether persons have addiction issues.

Regarding the third allegation, the licensee confirmed that he has provided credit to 5 of his regular patrons.

This was in January this year. With the greatest respect to the licensee, if someone comes through several times a day putting on credit one or two cans of grog, chances are there is a problem behind that and perhaps that person should not be getting credit on small quantities of liquor that over the course of the day may add up to half a carton of beer. Barry Sargeant was very quick to point out that, pursuant to that licence, the licensee should not be doing that and I think that person was subsequently cautioned not to do so.

I go back to where I began in respect of housing. The problem I have is that that murder took place in an environment where there had been bad behaviour fuelled by, I think, holders of liquor licences who have not been honouring the terms and conditions of their licences. If we look at regional and remote parts of Western Australia where we do impose restrictions, I think there are some holders of liquor licences in the metropolitan area who also have to look at how they conduct themselves and how they serve liquor. The biggest problem is not actually in bars and restaurants; it is those with bottle shop licences who are willing to participate in the sort of behaviour I just went through.

I make a final point on housing. As I said, I am sorry the minister is not in this place, because I wrote to him two weeks ago about a particular house that is causing significant problems and I cannot get a response from him about this issue. Constituents living on the street where the house is located—I will not identify the address—have had no end of trouble with this tenancy. The tenants no longer live in the house. They have since split and moved so that their children are living there—if not living there, certainly using the tenancy. One of my constituents came to my office and he had clearly spent thousands of dollars on a security camera. When he said he had video footage, I was expecting the sort of grainy footage that is sometimes seen on TV, but the footage was crystal clear. It showed the police canine squad raiding his property. He showed me one of the sons, the day before, smashing a Holden V8 car with a crowbar. He showed me a small child in a nappy pushing a pram around by itself, as children do, wandering around on the road unsupervised.

It was extraordinary. At night we could see cab after cab pulling up at the premises. Obviously, drug dealing is going on at this property. I must say that the cars that tend to be parked there are either new V8s—Holdens or Fords; I do not know; I am not a car man—and WRXs. They are cars that carry significant prices. I am sorry the minister is not here. I certainly expect a response from him very soon because those constituents of mine who know what is going on will eventually take that footage to a TV station that will no doubt use it to great effect. I do not want that to take place given the point I made at the beginning about housing. Public housing is always dependent on the support of the broader community and the fact that we are willing to allocate billions of dollars to public housing. I think we need to do that, but we also need to ensure that adequate responses are in place to maintain that support of public housing. I certainly very strongly support public housing in my electorate. The point I made before is that the holders of liquor licences cannot absent themselves from responsibility for some of the behaviour we see in our electorates.

With that I will conclude by coming back to some points I made at the beginning. This Supply Bill is a spending bill. We are giving the Treasurer \$7.9 billion to spend. We do not know how he will spend it or how much money will be going to which department. All we know is that we are giving the Treasurer \$7.9 billion. As we know now from the useful discussion that took place across the chamber between the members for West Swan and Cannington and me, with a fixed-term election, this is likely to be a regular occurrence, regardless of who wins the election. The election will be in March; therefore, the budget will be delayed until later in the year. As I hope happens through the review of the Financial Management Act, which the Treasurer referred to a while ago, we need a much more rigorous process for how we deal with the state's finances between election day and the budget, which, in future parliamentary terms, may even come down as late as September or October. Who knows? We need a better accountability mechanism than simply allocating a global figure of \$7.9 billion—40 per cent of last year's appropriation—to the Treasurer to spend as he sees fit. As discussions across the chamber between the Treasurer and I showed, the Treasurer is not even sure whether, at some point later, there will be an appropriate accounting of how much of that \$7.9 billion is allocated to each government department and agency. To be frank, that is simply not good enough.

When, not long after he became Premier, the Premier created a Minister for Finance, he acknowledged that the state finances were getting more complicated and more sophisticated and required greater transparency and more effort to be put into their accountability. We now need to—I was not aware the FMA was being reviewed—review this process so that the Parliament has a much more effective mechanism to review how this money is spent. I say to my friends on the other side of the chamber, knowing that they may ignore what I say, that going

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forward to future terms of government, this will be an important mechanism to hold to account governments, be they Labor or Liberal. As I said, this is a spending bill. The government is spending \$7.9 billion but there is nothing in this legislation that tells us where the money is coming from—not one sentence in the bill.

I conclude by reflecting on yesterday's speech by my friend the member for Hillarys, in which he talked about debt. I have been talking about debt for four and a half years but I did not quite get the same media coverage that the member for Hillarys got yesterday in his foray into the world of state debt! The reality is that state debt is \$18 billion and heading towards \$25 billion, even before factoring in the government's election commitments and the reality that delivering on some of those commitments for public transport and the Perth to Darwin highway is dependent upon the federal government gifting the state government \$3 billion. As the member for Hillarys astutely pointed out, debt is becoming an issue. This bill does not deal with the revenue in any way whatsoever. Another reason that we need to have a much more rigorous process to take us from election day through to whenever the budget is brought down later in that year is that ultimately we are authorising the government to spend \$7.9 billion without any estimates process or a review of the state's revenue and where that may be coming from. There is no review of the amount we are authorising today to be borrowed to fund the capital works in particular, which from memory is \$1.2 billion. The debate on this legislation has exposed, I think, something that needs correcting. I do not make this point as a criticism, because it is the first fixed-term election we have had, but obviously a weakness has been exposed in the accountability mechanisms that are in place. The review of the Financial Management Act means we can ensure that a much more rigorous process takes place so that Western Australians can have confidence that we are not just giving the government \$7.9 billion to spend as it sees fit, that there is an appropriate level of accountability for how that money is spent and that there is a thorough review of how the revenue is to be raised.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan)** [12.12 pm]: I rise to talk about the Supply Bill 2013 and follow on from the comments made by the member for Victoria Park. This is the first time since 2001 that a supply bill has been required. During the debate with the Treasurer earlier, the member for Cannington referred to the re-election of the Gallop Labor government in 2005 when, despite the election being held on 26 February, the budget was presented on 26 May 2005. One of the key reasons that the budget was able to be put together so quickly was that the budget was pretty much based on election commitments. Unlike this government's election commitments, ours were fully funded and costed, and so it was quite easy to put together a budget using the previous estimates and adding the election commitments. Another key reason was that the budget was in good shape. After the first four years under the stewardship of the former member for Belmont, the budget was in a very good shape in 2005, with strong operating surpluses and debt under control. Expenditure growth, although difficult to maintain, was also under control. After the 2005 election, the government exercised strong budget discipline with a focus on delivering our fully costed and fully funded election commitments and the budget was in great shape. Frankly, the budget was not difficult to deliver at that time.

I contrast that to the current situation. The Supply Bill is necessary not simply because we had a fixed-term election in March and the government cannot introduce a budget bill. We must look at two key points. Firstly, the government's election commitments were not fully funded or costed. As we know, the government faces an approximately \$3 billion funding hole for its key capital works commitments. Secondly, the budget is not in good shape and we are not sure whether the efficiency dividends are being met. Frankly, we do not have that information before us even though last year during the midyear review the government promised to deliver it to Parliament in May. We do not have information on the efficiency dividends and therefore we have no idea whether they have been met. The government's election commitments are not fully costed or funded, expenditure growth is out of control and debt is at record highs. It is no wonder that the government had to delay the budget until August, as was said during the fog of the election campaign, because I expect this will have to be a very tough budget. The government will either not deliver on its promises or have to make significant cuts to maintain the budget in any sort of shape. As the opposition outlined previously, the Supply Bill 2013 will provide for the equivalent of 40 per cent of the 2012–13 budgeted appropriation. I understand that this will allow the government to run into October–November, if needed. However, as the member for Victoria Park outlined, we have had no breakdown of the forecast expenditure for that time, so the Parliament has been asked to approve \$7.9 billion of expenditure, with no idea where that expenditure will be. I know supply bills do not come into this Parliament every year, but in this situation the Premier has called back Parliament and we are sitting here debating the Supply Bill and we have no idea where the \$7.9 billion will be spent. I think it would be realistic, achievable and a necessary outcome by 30 June that the government gives us a breakdown of that \$7.9 billion, by agency. I think that would be appropriate. I understand from a briefing from Treasury that that information will be sorted by 30 June, because, of course, from 1 July agencies need to know how much money they have to spend up until October–November. So, agencies will have to be informed by 30 June of how much they have to go on with until the budget is brought down. I think it is realistic, appropriate and the only accountable thing to do for the government to inform the Parliament by 30 June the exact breakdown of the expenditure of

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\$7.9 billion. That issue is something that we can possibly pursue through the consideration in detail stage, as \$7.9 billion is a large amount of money and we need to find out exactly where the expenditure will occur.

I will go through a couple of issues in the shadow portfolios of finance and planning, which I hold. I am disappointed that the Minister for Finance is not in this place, because it would be hard for him to reconcile that he is now the highest taxing Minister for Finance in this state's history, given his attitude to tax and his previous role in the Institute of Public Affairs. I look in particular at payroll tax. When I was given the shadow finance portfolio, I went through the information available to look at the growth in tax revenue in particular cases over the past four or five years, in particular payroll tax. It is worth noting that in 2007–08 the payroll tax collection was \$1.936 billion and in 2012–13 it was estimated to be \$3.583 billion, which was an increase of \$1.65 billion over those four years.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** It is because of employment and wages growth. That is the reason

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** There have been no changes to the threshold or the rates but there have been massive increases in payroll tax collections.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Two years of rebates! You have to praise that and the achievement in employment growth.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** There have been massive increases in payroll tax collections.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** From a strong economy and strong employment growth!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I am just reading from the “2012–13 Budget Overview”, the overview of state taxes document prepared by the Department of Treasury. I am just reading out the facts! There has been a massive increase in collections of \$1.6 billion. Interestingly, in 2007–08 payroll tax represented 33 per cent of the total tax take, and in 2012–13 it is expected to be 43 per cent of the total tax take. This has come from the Liberal Party that once pledged to abolish payroll tax!

**Mr P. Papalia:** What was that percentage again?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It has gone from 33 per cent of total tax take in 2007–08 to 43 per cent of the total tax take. Is this the Liberal Party that promised to abolish payroll tax at some stage? It is an interesting approach to payroll tax in this state. I will also talk about the general tax increase to show that this government has enjoyed significant increases in taxation revenue over this time. Again, in 2007–08 the total tax take was \$6.34 billion; in 2012–13, it was more than \$8 billion. That is a significant increase in tax takes.

I want to quickly talk about the payroll tax cuts that were committed to by the government during the election campaign. As I understand it, it works out that the total of the full effect of the tax reduction will be about \$60 million per annum, compared with the additional \$1.6 billion the government has taken in payroll tax. As I said, despite the Liberal government's current Minister for Finance having railed against payroll tax when the Labor Party was in government, this government seems to have increased its take at an enormous rate, and as a greater percentage of the total tax take. It is very hard to reconcile these facts with what has been said by both the Liberal Party and the Minister for Finance over recent years.

I will now touch on the issue of planning in relation to land approvals. Again, in taking on this shadow portfolio, I have tried to compare some of the Liberal Party's rhetoric in respect of land approvals under the former Labor government with the reality of the situation. I found a very interesting report that was recently released by the Department of Planning: “Perth and Peel Development Outlook 2011/12”. There has been a reduction in land approvals under this government, and there are some land supply issues out there. This report, which was released either today or yesterday, and to which I will refer in a second, warns of an imminent and significant land shortage resulting from insufficient land approvals in the community.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Not sufficient land applications for approval.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Land approvals.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** There's a difference.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have read the report and gone through all the stats. Both conditional approvals and final land approvals have actually fallen under this government. It is as simple as that.

I turn now to some of the spin that was put out by the Liberal opposition during the term of the previous Labor government; I remember the whole issue about land shortages and land supply. I checked the government's own Department of Planning report that I referred to earlier, and I want to read from a section that I found particularly interesting. The report states, at pages 52 and 53 —

Based on expert advice from the property industry, Perth was in dwelling equilibrium around 2000. On this basis the cumulative effect of the overbuilding up to June 2006 meant that a dwelling surplus built

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up over time peaking at over 12,000 dwellings during 2005/06 ... then a dwelling shortage of about 4,000 dwellings by June 2011.

This analysis challenges a view that rising housing prices in the mid-2000s was caused by a shortage of housing as a result of a perceived demand–supply imbalance. Instead, Figure 23 shows that there was a substantial oversupply of housing through most of the decade until the end of 2008 when a massive post-GFC population boom helped to absorb the surplus housing stock.

The conclusion from the analysis shown in Figure 23 is that as at June 2011, the Perth metropolitan region had a housing shortage of around 4,000 dwellings and that this shortage was getting worse by around 550 dwellings per quarter ...

It is an absolute crisis. We are failing the people of Western Australia by not having enough homes for our population. Over the past four and a half years a number of promises and commitments were made—that is, through the Office of Land and Housing Supply, which was introduced in the May 2010 budget. To a subsequent question from the then shadow planning minister, Hon Sally Talbot, about how many people were actually allocated to the new Office of Land and Housing Supply, the answer was that there were no permanent staff.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** None!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** None. In May 2010, the government’s cornerstone of addressing land and housing shortage was this new Office of Land and Housing Supply. Then subsequent to —

Several members interjected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It reminds me of *Yes Minister*—no patients in the hospital! Some six months later, a question was asked: how many staff had been allocated to the office? The answer was no permanent staff. While the office does provide good information, I will point out that it is not doing what it was set out to do—that is, to ensure that housing approvals are done in a timely manner to ensure there is an availability of land ready when required.

I will again refer to a report I received today, which is very relevant. It states —

Without a further significant lift in the number of lots brought onto the market in Perth, current sales volumes will not be maintained. Analysis of the number of lots on the market, the number of lots committed to be brought onto the market and current sales rates reveals that there is a notional shortfall of 700 lots in Perth and Peel over the next six months.

It is a significant issue that the government has not been taking seriously. As has been previously said, and we have all experienced it in our offices, there are reports from non-government organisations—whether it is from Anglicare or from seniors lobby groups—that show a lack of dwelling stock in the market. I strongly believe there is not enough dwelling stock to meet the significant demand, both by population growth and just by the nature of the WA economy. We need more stock to ensure that prices are not overinflated, and also to give people the opportunity to have a roof over their heads.

Presently I am dealing with a particular situation—I am also sorry that the Minister for Housing is not here. At the moment his job is very tough, but he needs to be proactive to get through what is a crisis situation for many families in Western Australia. We all have these cases before us. For example, I have a mother with six children who tonight may be homeless because of a decision made by the government. I have asked that the matter be deferred—again, I hope the Minister for Housing is watching—and that this mother and her children can stay in her home until she is found reasonable housing. It is a tough situation, but we need to make sure we can do whatever we can to ensure that children are not forced to live on the streets and in cars as we have all seen and experienced.

I have more to say about some of the statistics that I have seen in recent weeks, but from what I have seen, despite the significant criticisms that were made by the then Liberal Party of the previous Labor government, it is clear that this government has not done what it set out to do. There are significant delays at the Western Australian Planning Commission and the Department of Planning. Again, many of us have been informed by councils or private developers that both the WAPC and the Department of Planning are just not staffed enough to be able to progress approvals and statutory plans in a timely way.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** For example, in the City of Swan there has been a draft development contribution plan that has been with the WAPC for a number of years. It creates enormous uncertainty not only for the developers, but for potential developers, landowners and also homebuyers.

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Although in some instances the government has some good policies, it actually needs to work on this issue. I believe it is the biggest area of government that the government needs to attend to straightaway to ensure more housing for families and the people of Western Australia. It is just ridiculous that members can stand up and talk about a few hundred homes being committed to or funded by the commonwealth government, but it is actually much more than that. It is about trying to get that stock level up over the next six to 12 months and make a range of housing available so there is affordable housing across the suburbs and across WA.

I want to keep talking about planning issues, more particularly planning issues that relate to my electorate. I refer to the review of the Swan Valley Planning Act 1995. I cannot remember, but I think it commenced about a year and a half ago, with no sense of direction or knowledge of where we were going to end up. Most people have been frustrated by what has gone on and the fact that there is so much uncertainty. When we start a review such as the Swan Valley Planning Act review or the review of the use of the Swan Valley, we really need an idea of where we want to be. A sense of frustration and a bit of hopelessness is creeping into parts of the community about where these things will end up. I hope that the review will come to a conclusion soon and that the proper people are consulted. I do not think it was done in the right manner; I think the consultation process was a little weak. Elected members are not really consulted because the review is done behind closed doors. That is difficult when a lot of people come to me about these issues. We build up a wealth of information over time.

As I said, planning is a hard portfolio as priorities need to be balanced all the time. We need to resolve the uncertainty created over the Swan Valley Planning Act review soon.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** You are very welcome to express your views over what should happen in the Swan Valley in here or by other means.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I know.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** In terms of consultation, I'm very interested to hear what you think should happen.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have said it 100 times in this place. If the minister would like proper feedback on the review, I would love to contribute in a proper format. I have said a number of things in this place a number of times about grape growers, road infrastructure and promoting tourism. I am prepared to sit down and make that contribution.

**Mr J.H.D. Day:** Did you make a submission?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, because we were going to release our policy on it, which we did during the election campaign. I was not going to reveal my whole policy before the election campaign.

I refer to another issue, which I know the minister is aware of. I think he is organising a meeting about a chicken farm in Cheltenham Street in the Swan Valley.

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** Someone is.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, someone is. He is not organising it with me but with some of the other stakeholders. As I have said before, after picking up the planning portfolio, one of the key issues that is put to me relates to the sterilisation of land through the issue of buffers. I will not touch the issues surrounding pure environmental buffers because that is the responsibility of the shadow Minister for Environment. The debate surrounding issues relating to buffers for agricultural use is very interesting. Something occurred relating to a mushroom buffer in one of the development areas adjacent to the Swan Valley. The interesting play—I do not know what word I could use—by that mushroom farm owner —

**Ms J.M. Freeman:** Manipulation.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It could be manipulation. I am referring to the conducting of activities that would increase the value of the land—that is, creating more odour on a property to increase the value of the land. I respect property rights but this issue affects multiple residents of the area. Not only does it affect those residents but it also affects the ability for land to be put onto the market. This is particularly the case when these buffer and agricultural use issues occur within a development zone where land is zoned urban deferred and this particular use is smack in the middle. It creates an issue to do with land supply and it then impacts on the purchase price for first home buyers. In debating the value of a piece of land that will become urban deferred and housing for first home buyers, of course the land should be available at an appropriate price, but no-one should be held to ransom over its value because that will affect the purchase price of that land.

Having said that, I come from an orchard background. My family had an orchard in the metropolitan area, so I understand and support having land close to the metropolitan area that is made available for the production of eggs and for use as orchards. However, I also believe that in this era of land shortage, of increasing house costs

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and the reduced ability of first home buyers to get into the market, we must rethink our planning policies. As I have said before, although there is a statement of planning policy for chicken farms, the Department of Planning should be more proactive in identifying land, either within, close to or outside the metropolitan area, which would have applicable or equivalent environmental issues, and encouraging farmers, and chicken farmers in particular, to move to those areas. This issue is faced across my electorate, because of the type of electorate I have; but other members in this house also face the same issue. We cannot continue to have this stand-off that lasts for years and does nothing to address the land supply issue. It creates aggravation among neighbours and provides enormous uncertainty for chicken and poultry farm owners. It is a matter I want to put on the table.

I also think it is an issue of regulatory failure. I refer in particular to a chicken farm in my electorate that has received a lot of media attention and has gone through the State Administrative Tribunal process. This farm was licensed for only 24 000 chickens but was allowed to operate for a number of years with about 150 000 chickens. My experience of this process is that there has been a regulatory failure and regulatory gaps between agencies and councils. I believe the council allowed this farm to operate well beyond its licence for a number of years, and this raises issues about what role the Department of Agriculture and Food plays in relation to this farm and, in particular, the welfare of the chickens. Although in the previous term the opposition raised the matter of labelling eggs free range, it raises the matter again, because it affects consumers. Ordinary families are paying a premium for free-range eggs in the belief their kids are eating healthier eggs, and so the eggs that they buy should be free range. There should be some certainty in that. I do not believe the farm in question is producing the free-range eggs it is purporting to produce. What is the Department of Agriculture and Food doing? What is the Department of Environmental Protection doing about odour control and pollution? What is it doing about buffers? Is it okay that odour can be at any level in a buffer zone? I do not think so. It is difficult to sort through this maze of regulation, regulatory gaps and oversights. There are also health issues.

These gaps in the regulations have an impact on three fronts. They have an impact on neighbours; they have an impact on consumers who purchase what are supposed to be free-range products; and they have the impact of sterilising land for years. There is no incentive to do things properly; there is only the incentive to increase odour because it increases the value of land. People are willing to buy land at a higher price if there is more activity on the land. It is a complex matter, and the Department of Planning must sort through these issues so that pockets of land are not sterilised against future use for home buyers and have a sustainable use for farmers in the future. I think we need to support our agricultural industry and the poultry industry, but in such a way that tension is not created, and is not maintained, in outer suburbs, which will blow up in future years.

I want to finish on the housing crisis. I hope the Minister for Housing has heard that a number of people are struggling to find homes in Western Australia. I have put a particular issue before him, and I urge him and his office to reconsider it, because we do not want people with nowhere to go living on the streets. It should not be like that in WA, especially when people have a number of children. I know the Minister for Planning came into the chamber late in the debate. Although much has been said about the issue of land approvals, there is still a lot to be done. I do not believe the Department of Planning is appropriately equipped or has the staff to facilitate land approvals in a systematic way to help meet the massive housing crisis in WA.

**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale)** [12.40 pm]: I rise to also contribute to the debate on the Supply Bill 2013. As has been mentioned by other speakers, of course this bill deals with the spending of revenue. I would like to focus on a number of pressing issues in my electorate, but I also agree with the comments of the member for West Swan about the housing crisis. I acknowledge it is a very challenging issue for governments, but it has become a more pressing issue as time has gone on with the price of rent in Perth and also the price of land and housing generally. I have a constituent who lives under the bridge near the Canning River in Kelmscott. Thankfully, she has not been living there for the last couple of weeks. As members know, there was a murder along that stretch a few weeks ago. This woman is falling between the cracks. I acknowledge it is a very difficult issue, but I am sure the minister will give much attention to the issue to try to alleviate the crisis. We will never solve the housing crisis, but the crisis we have at the moment can be alleviated, as it is a very severe and significant crisis.

One of the first issues I want to raise is mental health and appropriate mental health services in my area. If people drive along the railway line between Gosnells and Armadale, they will see, unfortunately, a number of monuments to people who have committed suicide. Nine out of 10 times it was a young person. The Minister for Transport is aware of this. There is one public access way between Sherwood station and Armadale station, a distance of no more than two kilometres, where people can walk across the railway line. A constituent who lives near that passageway rang me and complained about the number of youths who had attempted to kill themselves at that intersection. It is an incredibly stressful situation for, of course, the train drivers and the families who are left behind, and it does not seem to be improving; if anything, it is getting worse. Each week as I travel along that stretch of road, another person seems to have taken their life. So it was of great concern that another

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constituent who works as a nurse in the suicide prevention area came to see me. She is a suicide intervention officer employed by the Armadale Health Service. She has been employed by the Armadale Health Service for six years, and for the last three years she has been a suicide intervention officer. She works at the Eudoria Street Centre in Gosnells. As of May this year, the two half-positions at the Eudoria Street Centre and the Mead Centre, which is the mental health facility in Armadale, were abolished. So we now have the situation that mental health and youth suicide in my area is at an incredibly stressful level. So what does the government do? It removes the suicide intervention officers! Granted, these services are now allegedly being provided by a non-government organisation. However, that NGO is required to cover an even larger area, from Bentley through to Armadale.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Just like modern policing!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Yes, just like modern policing. But the problem is that the suicide intervention officers who were employed by the Department of Health were able to counsel young people who are in immediate danger of suicide. It would appear that the NGO does not have the capacity to deal with the serious issues. How the health department and the government can allow a decrease in the provision of suicide intervention services, when in my area there has been an increase the number of youth suicides, is very hard to grapple with.

Before I move onto some issues with the Department for Child Protection and Family Support, I want to talk a bit about the police station issue, which we of course debated in this place on Tuesday. As members would be aware, a rally on this issue was held in Armadale on Saturday morning. It is interesting that the *Examiner*, which is one of the two local newspapers in my electorate of Armadale, has published a report of the rally. The report quotes the Minister for Police as follows —

Police Minister Liza Harvey did not agree with Mr Buti saying a 24/7 police station would not guarantee more police on the beat in Armadale.

“What will make a difference is the allocation of more resources to the area and indeed the south east metropolitan district has recently had an increase of 10 officers, five of which have been allocated to Armadale,” she said.

It is interesting that the police minister now agrees there should be an increase in the allocation of resources. For the past couple of years, the police minister has been saying that the level of policing in Armadale is sufficient.

**Mr P. Papalia:** All is sweet in Armadale!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** That is right; there is no problem; we do not need any extra police. It is interesting that the police minister says that police stations are not important, when five of the additional 10 officers have been allocated to Armadale. If it is not important, why do they need to go to Armadale?

Alongside that article there is an opinion piece or comment from the Commissioner of Police. Part of that opinion piece states —

Recent calls by some members of the community to have the front counter of the police station open 24/7 will not have any impact on crime.

I am extremely disappointed in the police commissioner, in that he is falling for the same language—I think misleading, if not dishonest, language—that the police minister has been using. The residents of Armadale, Kelmscott, Roleystone, Forrestdale, Byford and Mundijong are not asking for just a 24/7 counter service. The member for Darling Range and the federal member for Canning are not asking for just a 24/7 counter service. What we asking for—what we are demanding—is a 24/7 district police station. What we are demanding is a proper police station that is fitting of a major regional centre that is growing. I say to the police commissioner and the minister that they should stop being misleading and should stop misrepresenting what the residents of Armadale and the greater Armadale area want. We do not want just a 24/7 counter service; we want a fully formed police station, as there is at Cannington and Fremantle and will soon be in the western suburbs, even though there are police stations 10 kilometres both north and south of the one proposed.

**Mr P. Papalia:** It’s a hotbed of crime in the western suburbs!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Crime in the western suburbs is of such significance that a 24/7 police station is needed, even though the police minister said it is not important. If it is not important to have a 24/7 police station, why build one in the western suburbs?

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 398.]