



# Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
2023

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Thursday, 14 September 2023



# Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) took the chair at 9.00 am, acknowledged country and read prayers.

## BREAST ASSESSMENT CLINIC — PEEL HEALTH CAMPUS

### *Petition*

MRS R.M.J. CLARKE (Murray–Wellington) [9.01 am]: I have a petition that has been certified by the clerks, has 414 signatures and is couched in the following terms —

To the Honourable the Speaker and Members of the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We, the undersigned, say: —

With respect to a breast assessment, you would usually have a breast examination followed by one, more or all of the following tests: Mammogram, ultrasound scan, core biopsy and fine needle aspiration, with the possibility of other tests deemed by the Assessment team.

Having a Breast Assessment Clinic in the Peel region would allow potential breast cancer patients to receive the full assessment in the one clinic and in their local area with the support of their families. Therefore, reducing the emotional, physical, mental and financial impact of their cancer diagnosis.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to recommend and support the allocation of Government funding for the provision of a Breast Assessment Clinic at Peel Health Campus.

[See petition 45.]

## PAPERS TABLED

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

## DISABILITY LEGAL WA

### *Statement by Attorney General*

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [9.02 am]: I had the pleasure last week of launching Legal Aid Western Australia's new dedicated service, Disability Legal WA. Legal Aid WA created Disability Legal WA after seeing a steady increase in demand for services for people with disabilities. In 2022–23, more than 29 per cent of Legal Aid WA's clients disclosed that they had a disability. The new service streamlines and expands the support that Legal Aid WA provides, with a dedicated case management team to make it easier for complex clients to access and navigate legal services. We know that people living with a disability regularly present with a range of interconnected legal issues and face a variety of barriers, both legal and non-legal, when accessing justice. People living with a disability often experience poorer outcomes in their interactions with various sectors of the justice system. For example, people with cognitive and mental disabilities are over-represented in Western Australian prisons.

The ongoing Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has highlighted evolving community expectations around the level of support provided to people with disability. Disability Legal WA will provide services specifically tailored to the diverse needs of people living with disability and case manage clients with complex needs who are also living with a disability. A dedicated case management team supported by lawyers and social workers will provide wraparound support with the client at the centre. This is important as it will ensure clients with a disability can be empowered to make informed decisions, participate in the justice system and get equitable access to justice. Disability Legal WA social support workers will assist clients with non-legal issues that can often interfere with their ability to access justice and related services. They will also have a case management role and facilitate collaboration between the professionals who are working with each client. They will be a central point of contact for the client. This model places the client, rather than the legal issue, at the centre of the process. The Disability Legal WA team will engage with stakeholders in the disability sector to ensure that clients have access to the services they need.

I will give members an example. At the launch, we heard the inspirational story of a young woman named Jody. Jody was regularly in trouble with the law and it was not until Legal Aid helped her to get assessed for an intellectual disability that she was able to get the help she needed and break the cycle of offending. Jody has worked hard to turn her life around and getting a diagnosis was the first important step in this journey.

Disability Legal WA will prioritise staff training and stakeholder engagement and create a disability-focused service delivery model that is interdisciplinary, collaborative and sits across all Legal Aid WA work areas.

## GNANGARA WATERWISE COUNCILS GRANTS PROGRAM

*Statement by Minister for Water*

**MS S.F. McGURK (Fremantle — Minister for Water)** [9.06 am]: I rise to inform the house that on Tuesday, 25 July 2023, I formally announced the launch of the Gnangara Waterwise Councils Grants program. Under the Gnangara groundwater allocation plan, local governments in the area will need to transition to a 10 per cent reduction in groundwater use from 2028 to protect our important groundwater resources. The Gnangara Waterwise Councils Grants program is a joint initiative between the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation and the Water Corporation that assists local governments with large groundwater entitlements that are most impacted by the urban heat island effect.

The state government has committed a total of \$4 million over four years to support these local governments with their transition to reduced groundwater use. I am pleased to advise that the Cities of Joondalup, Perth, Wanneroo, Vincent, Swan and Stirling and the Town of Bassendean have submitted their projects to help reduce their groundwater use and have been approved to receive funding. The City of Bayswater and the Town of Cambridge are currently finalising their project applications. These state government grants will support the redevelopment of local parks to create climate-resilient open spaces with projects to increase tree cover, upgrade irrigation systems and develop new weather stations and smart irrigation control systems.

As part of this announcement, I had the opportunity to visit the Cities of Joondalup and Vincent that have been jointly awarded \$800 000. One of the City of Joondalup projects will be the redevelopment of Barridale Park using waterwise design principles and hydro-zoning. The City of Vincent will be investigating opportunities to re-use wastewater from Beatty Park Leisure Centre to irrigate its local parks. I look forward to future updates on the Gnangara Waterwise Councils Grants program and projects that support Perth's beautiful green spaces and protect our precious groundwater sources.

## WESTERN AUSTRALIAN COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE DENMARK

*Statement by Minister for Education*

**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Education)** [9.09 am]: I must say that the announcement by the Minister for Water about Beatty Park is absolutely brilliant.

The Western Australian Department of Education maintains five agricultural colleges in Cunderdin, Denmark, Harvey, Morawa and Narrogin. I recently had the opportunity to visit the Western Australian College of Agriculture in Denmark for a tour of the school and working farm with the member for Warren–Blackwood, Jane Kelsbie, MLA. I rise to inform the house of work that WA College of Agriculture campuses are doing to provide quality education to Western Australian students in our regions.

The WA College of Agriculture Denmark campus is a 560-hectare working farm with a dairy, stables, grain production, beef production, sheep grazing, vineyards, mechanical workshops and much more. The farm allows the school to integrate Western Australian Certificate of Education courses, both general and ATAR, with comprehensive workplace vocational education and training to accommodate both the academic and vocational aspirations of students interested in a career in our state's agricultural industries. As a registered training organisation, the school delivers certificate courses in agriculture, automotive, engineering, forestry, horse care, conservation and ecosystem management, and more. As I toured the facility, I could not help but be impressed by the life and activity of the working farm and the ease and confidence with which students were engaged in their classes and vocational duties. Under the instruction and supervision of their teachers and vocational trainers, students were welding in the workshops, servicing and repairing vehicles, moving or managing livestock, and operating the varied machinery of the farm. The college maintains close connections with the local community and the local agricultural industry and graduates are reportedly in high demand across all agricultural sectors due to the comprehensive workplace training they receive at the school.

I thank the principal of the college, Rebecca Kirkwood, for the opportunity to visit the WA College of Agriculture Denmark, and I commend principal Kirkwood for the strong school community and school culture that was evident during my visit, and the member for Warren–Blackwood for her outstanding advocacy of the schools in her community. I also acknowledge the valuable contribution of all agricultural colleges in providing opportunities for young Western Australians to prepare themselves for a career in our state's agricultural industries.

## TJUNTJUNTJARA COMMUNITY — DIGITAL CONNECTIVITY

*Statement by Minister for Regional Development*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Regional Development)** [9.11 am]: I inform the house of the Cook Labor government's investment in improving internet and phone connectivity in the remote Aboriginal community of Tjuntjuntjara in the goldfields–Esperance region. Tjuntjuntjara is a large Aboriginal community located 650 kilometres north east of Kalgoorlie in the southern part of the Great Victoria Desert. Our government has contributed \$503 789 towards the installation of a wi-fi mesh network to upgrade broadband wi-fi and telephone services to the community provided by Australian Private Networks' activ8me. Tjuntjuntjara community members

now have access to more reliable communications and a network that will support and encourage people to stay connected, access information, undertake remote study programs and improve their safety and wellbeing. This investment will also support progress under Closing the Gap outcome 17, which seeks to ensure that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have equal levels of digital inclusion. The initiative leverages private sector investment to bridge the digital divide across WA's vast regions, improving business capacity and competitiveness, social amenity and safety.

Earlier this year we invited telecommunications companies to seek co-investment funding via the state government's \$49 million regional digital connectivity program when applying for the third round of the commonwealth's \$160 million regional connectivity program. It builds on previous rounds that are delivering telecommunications projects, such as wi-fi to the Kalumburu, Mowanjum and Jigalong communities, broadband solutions across the south west and better mobile services in the central wheatbelt and Kimberley. This is a great example of commonwealth-state collaboration to overcome the tyranny of distance by working with telecommunications providers to deliver fast, reliable and affordable digital and mobile services to regional businesses and residents. These services are fundamental to modern life no matter where people live and enable businesses and communities to connect to a range of opportunities, efficiencies and digital applications. I am proud to be part of a government that continues to invest in regional communities to make them more sustainable and livable.

### **DISABILITY COMMUNITY ROUND TABLE — GERALDTON**

*Statement by Minister for Disability Services*

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Disability Services)** [9.14 am]: I am very pleased to have the opportunity today to advise members about a recent disability community round table that I attended in Geraldton. The disability round table was facilitated by the fantastic member for Geraldton, Lara Dalton, who reached out to me wanting to discuss opportunities for better outcomes for people with disability in the midwest. Ms Dalton brought together local people with disability and their families and carers, as well as disability service providers and advocates and gave them a forum to have their voices heard. Importantly, the round table also provided the opportunity for people with disability and their families and carers to meet others from around the region to share ideas and to foster connections. As minister, it is an important part of my role to hear directly from people with disability and their families as well as from the sector on matters relating to the state government's provision of disability services as well as the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It is vital that as Minister for Disability Services; Regional Development I am able to hear the voices of people with disability in the regions.

The disability round table is further evidence of the Cook government's commitment to the midwest region, following on from its significant investment in health, housing and education. The government knows that people with disability living in regional areas face unique challenges in health care and accessibility, so it is important that government works together with communities to address those important issues. Attendees of the round table discussed the issues, challenges and opportunities for the disability support sector and people living with disability in the midwest. The forum was also an opportunity for local people to share advice on how best to access disability support in regional areas. The round table was a testament to the strong advocacy that the member and her office continue to provide for people in the midwest.

I once again thank the member for Geraldton for organising the event and providing a direct voice for the people of Geraldton with the state government, particularly for those living with disability and their families, carers and the people who support them.

### **NATIONAL CHILD PROTECTION WEEK**

*Statement by Minister for Child Protection*

**MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Child Protection)** [9.16 am]: Last week, 3 September to 9 September, was National Child Protection Week and its enduring theme of "Every child in every community needs a fair go" was complemented with the important message "Where we start matters". National Child Protection Week is coordinated by the National Association for Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect and highlights the role the whole community has in keeping children safe and supported and reminds us that protecting children is everyone's business. Since becoming the Minister for Child Protection, I have had the privilege of visiting child protection workers and family support services across our state and hearing from hundreds of staff about their work and the difference they make in our communities.

I began the week meeting child protection workers in Perth at an inaugural event organised by the Community and Public Sector Union-Civil Service Association of WA and ended the week in Bunbury. In between, I visited Geraldton, Carnarvon and Armadale. I took the opportunity to thank child protection workers and support services for their hard work and dedication to making children's lives better and our communities stronger. I met key stakeholders providing critical supports in the child sexual abuse therapeutic services and Indigenous healing services sector at the launch of the national minimum standards and announced Phoenix Support and Advocacy Services as the successful recipient of a grant to provide a sector support secretariat function.

I visited local volunteers making a big difference at Fostering Hope Australia, a charity established to provide free items to children and young people in care. In doing so, it has also created a welcoming community for foster families across WA. I also visited the Armadale Aboriginal representative organisation pilot and the south west health navigator pilot. Both of these innovative programs are led by local Aboriginal community-controlled organisations and are having positive results for children in out-of-home care.

I am proud to be part of a government that prioritises and invests in initiatives to support better outcomes for children at risk of, or who are currently in, out-of-home care. I was also pleased to announce grants to 11 ACCOs to build their capacity to become Aboriginal representative organisations, the appointment of Geraldton's Streetwork Aboriginal Corporation to deliver Labor's flagship Home Stretch WA program in the midwest-Gascoyne region, and the launch of the child safe organisations knowledge hub to support organisations to develop child safe cultures and practices. I thank my parliamentary colleagues who joined me during the week and community members who generously supported the book and toy drive.

Finally, I acknowledge the significant contribution that child protection workers, foster and kinship carers and support services make in keeping children safe throughout the year. When we support children's wellbeing and safety, we are investing in their future and the future of our community.

### WEST COAST DEMERSAL SCALEFISH RESOURCE

#### *Grievance*

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [9.19 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Fisheries and I thank the minister for taking my grievance. Today I will speak about the lengthening of the demersal fishing ban in the west coast bioregion, the allocation of the remaining 375 tonnes of demersal fish that can be caught annually, and the impact of these decisions on recreational fishers and small businesses operating within WA's recreational fishing industry.

I begin by reaffirming the support of the Liberal Party and the Nationals WA for efforts aimed at recovering our demersal scalefish stocks along with other domestic fish sources along our shores. As Liberals, a core tenet of our value statement is to preserve our current environment for future generations to enjoy. There are over 750 000 recreational fishers in Western Australia, and I have no doubt that their children and their children's children will want to fish, just as the generations who have come before them did. The problem with this government's approach is that it goes above and beyond what is required at the expense of local economies and jobs—in this case, our local chartering businesses, tackle shops, regional communities and recreational fishers. Second to this, several industry peak bodies and small businesses are alarmed at how the WA government has managed this process and how the allocation of demersal fish tonnage has been decided. Unfortunately, it is the perfect example of the hubris that we have seen all too often with this government barrelling ahead with policy rollouts without heeding the warnings of industry professionals and those impacted most.

I refer to charter businesses. The minister's decision to offer only 21 charter operators within the west coast bioregion a split of the 6 000 available demersal fishing tags has practically destroyed the livelihoods of the other 78 operators across the region. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development's allocation method, which is based on each business's catch figures over the last five years, completely rules out the smaller operators whose businesses are based on a more intimate model. DPIRD claims its aim was to ensure that a viable charter fishing industry could be maintained. Meanwhile, small operators have been squeezed out of the market in favour of larger, more established operators, many of which are in the metropolitan region. Another consequence of this decision has been that charter businesses that have taken it upon themselves to diversify the types of fish they catch so that they can play their part in conservation have also been punished. If they have worked to lower their demersal fish catch, they could now be missing out completely. This demonstrates a gross misunderstanding of how these smaller operators actually conduct their business. Many of these operators focus on providing great experiences for their customers rather than catching large amounts of fish. Small operators are being affected, such as Kristin McCarthy, who has been forced to pack up shop and relocate to the Kimberley because these changes forced her out of the midwest. Kristin took time off in 2020 to start a family before resuming her charter operation. During that time, she purchased a new boat to provide a better experience for her customers. Given that Kristin was not operating her business while she was raising her family, of course, her five-year average was lower. As a result, she received an allocation of zero tags, effectively dooming her business. Considering that many of Kristin's clients book her services to partake in the demersal fishing experience, no allocation means no business. That means no bookings, no income and no opportunities to continue employing local staff.

The six-month demersal fishing ban is having a significant impact on tackle shops right across the west coast bioregion. I have received reports from tackle shops that are experiencing a decline in customers of 40 or 50 per cent, and, at times, over 85 per cent. My electorate of Vasse is home to several tackle shops that have been impacted by these changes. Nigel Hoffman is the owner of Geographe Camping and Tackle World. He has been a Busselton local for 23 years and has owned a small business for 19 years. He employs six staff, some of whom have young families of their own. Nigel is one of the lucky ones who has managed to keep his business afloat. Others within the industry

are not as fortunate. Many of these tackle shops are barely making enough to cover the rent and wages, making operating in this environment impossible. Staff are reporting that boat ramps are empty, rec fishers are not bothering with the squid and whiting, and confidence within the industry is at an all-time low.

The changes made by this government have led to a great deal of fear and anxiety about the viability of this industry, and many business owners who can get out are seriously contemplating making that decision. The flow-on effect does not just impact staff, business owners or recreational fishers themselves. Several regional communities up and down the west coast bioregion rely on the fishing tourism industry to keep their towns alive. Recreational fishers contribute dearly to the economies of regional coastal communities. They need to refuel their boats and vehicles, they stop for a feed at the local pub or fish and chip shop, and they book accommodation at caravan parks or local hotels. Important fishing competitions have also been impacted by these changes. If those competitions are cancelled, it can seriously damage the local economies of participating coastal towns. The Kalbarri Sports Fishing Classic was cancelled this year due to the bans. Usually, that competition would bring over 50 boats and 200 competitors to town, with a boost to the local economy of an estimated \$100 000. It is a huge kick in the guts for a community like Kalbarri to lose such an important stream of income, especially while it is trying to recover from the impacts of cyclone Seroja.

The point I have most difficulty with is the fact that industry is telling me there is a better way to do this. No-one is arguing against the need to conserve our demersal fish stock, which continues to increase, but people with years of experience in the industry are telling me that there must be a better way. The government and bureaucracy must work closer together with industry to ensure that a solution is delivered that avoids destroying small businesses and communities across the west coast bioregion.

I again thank the minister for taking my grievance.

**MR D.T. PUNCH (Bunbury — Minister for Fisheries)** [9.26 am]: I thank the member for Vasse for her grievance. It is a seriously important issue. I am a little disturbed that this is one of the few occasions that members opposite have raised this issue with me. I cannot actually recall a parliamentary question on it. I do recall that last year the Leader of the Opposition, I think, raised a grievance, but as a point of debate, it has not figured prominently for such an important issue. I note that Hon Colin de Grussa still has not requested a briefing from the government on the science or rationale for the decisions that have been made, which I think is a serious indictment on the approach of members opposite to how we deal with what is a very difficult issue.

This has a long history. I will quote Colin Barnett. In 2009, during question time, he said —

There is no doubt that if things are left as they are, the ability of future generations to go out in a boat and catch demersal fish will not be there.

...

I have read some of the reports. Do we sit back and say, “Too hard. We’ll do nothing. We’ll let those species become, if not extinct, in such limited numbers and so rare that fishing will no longer be a major recreational and sporting activity in this state”? ... Some of the species are long-life; they do not reproduce until they are of a substantial age—10, 15 or 20 years old. It is not hard to imagine therefore that as fish are caught and young stock are taken away, we will lose breeding stock.

That was the member for Vasse’s leader in 2009. In 2008, Jon Ford stopped commercial fishing between Lancelin and Mandurah and negotiated with Recfishwest a four-month closure period. When members opposite came into office, they did not do anything; they left it for a year and then they reduced the closure period to two months. That has caused the problem that we have today. Everybody has agreed, as the member has just agreed, that there is a fundamental sustainability problem with these fish, and the sustainability problem is that we have lost the older breeding demographic and we are very susceptible to any impacts that might come from climate or breeding impulse changes that will have an impact on these fish into the future.

When Recfishwest, the Western Australian Fishing Industry Council and Marine Tourism Western Australia came to me and said that we had to reduce the recovery benchmarks by 50 per cent down to 375 tonnes, that was a serious decision by them, and it was based on their evaluation of the science. I accepted that recommendation and, in so doing, I accepted the integrated fisheries management arrangements that were put in place by the member’s minister, Hon Norman Moore, which set the division between recreational fishers, commercial fishers and the charter boat sector. That does not mean to say that I will not be reviewing those arrangements at some point in the future, but now is not the time, while we are working particularly with the commercial sector to reduce its allocation.

It is a very difficult situation; I understand that. It is a difficult situation because if the fish catch is 375 tonnes, who do we distribute the fish to? We have accepted the previous Liberal–National government’s initial decisions around how that fish is distributed. If we take from the commercial sector to try to increase the amount of time recreational fishers have on the water, we start to undermine the commercial sector. If we do the same with the recreational sector to support the commercial sector, we have the impacts the member talked about. The question the member has to answer is: are we going to take from recreational fishers to support the commercial sector; are

we going to take from the commercial sector to support the recreational fishing sector or are we going to abandon the recovery plan and let people increase the amount of take overall? I have not heard a position from the member about that, knowing that this is a difficult situation for everybody.

I do take note of marine tourism charter operators. It has been a very difficult situation for them. There are 97 or so licence holders, of which about half were involved in the commercial fishery. Not all of those 97 licence holders were involved in demersal fisheries. We have made arrangements that has meant that around 85 per cent of the available tags have gone to those who are most reliant on the demersal fishing sector, recognising that this is a difficult decision. Absolutely, it is a difficult decision and that is why we made the commitment to at least try to broaden the arrangements about cooking on board. We have tried to work with the market itself to encourage people to switch their fish, because we cannot keep the pressure on the demersal sector. The marine charter sector was taking around 70 tonnes, which is 30 tonnes above the initial benchmark of 40. We had to reduce that benchmark, based on the Liberal–National government’s integrated fisheries management frameworks, to 20 tonnes. There is a big drop. It was climbing; that was the issue. With pressure on fewer fish, it was climbing.

I know that the tackle shops have had a difficult time. I visited a tackle shop and they told me that the fact that we have made beach fishing available has been a bonus for them. They have seen a significant take-up of tackle for the beach fishing sector. I will quote Liza Harvey. Liza spoke to me just after she resigned from Parliament, and she talked about the pressures on the tackle industry. She said —

“I don’t think it’s all completely linked to the fishery closure —

This is in *The West Australian* —

I think it’s (also) a change in people’s buying patterns ...

“A consideration being the surge in cost of living and the impact of the interest rate hikes. ... all of the present data that indicates people are winding back on their discretionary spending in eating out and recreational pursuit.”

And while households —

**Ms L. Mettam:** No, no. Lots of —

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** This is Liza Harvey. Sorry, member.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** Member.

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** I am quoting your former leader, who is a stalwart in the tackle industry, from *The West Australian* —

And while households reaching deeper into their pockets to stay afloat, so are business owners to keep a roof over their heads.

She went on. She recognised that there was a changing demographic within the fishing sector and a changing cost structure.

**Ms L. Mettam:** I think you’re misrepresenting her views.

**Mr D.T. PUNCH:** I have read her views from *The West Australian* and this is not a debate, member. I am replying to the member’s grievance. This is a very difficult situation. The member has not come up with an alternative that supports sustainability and supports an appropriate allocation between the three major sectors. This is a very difficult one and if there is no sustainability in the fishery, there is no business for anybody. It is a tough decision and I am not going to respond to a populist view.

## WASTE MANAGEMENT — REDUCE, RE-USE, REPAIR AND RECYCLE

### *Grievance*

**MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands)** [9.23 am]: Thank you for taking my grievance. Managing our burgeoning piles of waste is a matter of great concern in my community and it requires action by all of us. It includes finding ways to reduce, re-use, repair and recycle. It involves finding innovative ways to deal with intractable and emerging waste streams. It needs longer term thinking and number crunching to ensure that we take into account the emissions and the life cycle costs of what we buy as individuals, businesses and governments. What we buy ultimately has to be disposed of.

It requires education. Dealing with waste is of great concern to our children and grandchildren who voice outrage at the poor environmental stewardship of people of my generation. Children and young people do not only complain, they are enthusiastic change makers. They play their part in creating a sustainable future. Churchlands Primary School, in my community, has a proud history of developing environmentally aware students through its renowned sustainability program. It includes an outdoor learning area focused on recycling and sustainability, with vegetable gardens, worm farms, composting, bush tucker and a frog habitat. We have other young people, like Jake Bamford of Dapper Cranium Studios who invented a card game, *Bin Off*, that makes learning about sorting rubbish fun for all ages. The minister may recall launching *Bin Off* with me in early 2022 at the Herdsman Discovery Centre. We cut a ribbon made of plastic bags that were tied together.



Every household in my electorate faces the daily challenge of rubbish sorting and disposal. I get a furrowed brow at times, trying to figure out what is recyclable, and I get annoyed that so much of what could be recycled goes into general waste and into landfill. We do not have the food organics and garden organics, or FOGO, option in the Town of Cambridge, but I understand that it may be on the way for the City of Stirling. Those councils are both within the Churchlands electorate. A high proportion of household waste is food and organics and it is going to landfill rather than into making soil-enriching compost. It makes we weep to see this precious resource literally wasted.

Let us hope that some of the candidates for the forthcoming council elections embrace FOGO so we in the Churchlands electorate can share in the good life with residents of neighbouring council areas, who are already experiencing the joy of FOGO. What irritates me and many other householders is the loss of options for soft plastics recycling. Yes, our WA Plan for Plastics is reducing the use of some soft plastics, like single-use plastic bags, but there is too much soft plastic in packaging. Mountains of it goes into landfill.

Local company Circular Seed Pty Ltd is focused on doing something useful with soft plastics. It uses a technique called distributed pyrolysis, through which soft plastics are heated and reduced to component polymers, oil or char. Those products can be re-used. Circular Seed also processes medical waste at site, avoiding the transportation of waste over thousands of kilometres to centralised processing facilities. I look forward to the day when soft plastics will no longer go to landfill, when we can be confident that they are responsibly broken down into re-usable components.

Another local company, Adarsh Pty Ltd, is setting up a factory to process thousands of tonnes of waste paper into egg cartons and maceratable medical products. WA egg producers produce an estimated 50.8 million dozen eggs a year, with the associated egg carton market worth about \$15 million. The only Australian egg carton producer is Melbourne based. If we can produce paper pulp products here in Perth, we will not only use local waste paper, but also reduce the cost of emissions in transporting products across Australia and, in the case of maceratable medical products, around the world.

Emerging waste streams are arising from solar panels and lithium batteries that present new waste management challenges and circular economy opportunities. We now have a problem with dealing with the end-of-life of photovoltaic solar cells. We have problems with waste decommissioning and recycling. There are some barriers to the decommissioning and recycling of those panels in this state that we need to learn to overcome. A masters student at Curtin University is currently working on a project researching these issues.

This evening I will attend the launch of a new venture, Magellan Power 4R. This innovative venture is committed to a sustainable and circular lithium economy that will involve new ways of dealing with whole-of-life management of lithium batteries in order to minimise their environmental impact. We have so many challenges in dealing with waste and so many opportunities in the circular economy. I would appreciate the minister's insights into how these challenges and opportunities can be met.

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Environment)** [9.40 am]: I thank the member for Churchlands—what an amazing member she is. It seems I am constantly in her electorate attending a function that is related to the environment or to waste and sustainability. She has a passion that is reflected in her community and a hope that it is heading towards food organics and garden organics waste collection, as the member pointed out. Let us hope some councillors at the Town of Cambridge are keen for FOGO and can progress FOGO in that council area.

The government's waste strategy strives for Western Australia to become a sustainable low-waste circular economy, as the member said. A circular economy is all about sharing, re-using and recycling existing materials for as long as possible, extending the life cycle of products. It supports investment and employment. A circular economy is crucial for our state. Our geography means that we need to be less reliant on distant processes and markets to manage our waste. More than any other state, that makes sense for Western Australia. There are export bans on waste, glass, paper, plastic and tyres. That shows that we need to develop local solutions; we simply cannot export our waste to another place. As a state, we are aiming to increase material recovery to 75 per cent by 2030 and organics, together with construction and demolition waste, make up almost three quarters of all the waste volume generated in Western Australia. This presents an opportunity to better link our waste and recycling actions with climate change commitments.

Our construction and demolition sectors are leading the charge, with their recovery rates having doubled in six years. The so-called C&D waste story has been really good—we are already meeting our 2030 target—but it is a different story for commercial, industry and household waste. This is a continuing challenge. We need every Western Australian to take personal responsibility. We know that small changes at an individual level can combine to make a huge difference. As the member said, our government is committed to rolling out food organics and garden organics collection, or FOGO, across Perth and Peel by 2025. Many local governments have already embraced the three-bin service, though not yet the Town of Cambridge or the City of Stirling. Hopefully, both of them will soon. We have committed \$20 million to support councils in the rollout.

As of right now, 18 Western Australian councils have rolled out the FOGO service. There is some interest from some of Perth's biggest councils, which could effectively see the current figure of 200 000 households involved

with the FOGO approach reach half a million within a very short time. Eleven more councils are committed to implementing FOGO by 2025 and this includes some of the very large councils in Perth and the northern suburbs. A further five councils are likely to sign up, including, again, some very large councils, bringing a total of 34 Western Australian councils indicating they will or are likely to adopt FOGO. FOGO recovery has increased from 11 000 tonnes in 2017 to more than 65 000 tonnes currently. That is a 500 per cent increase since this government came to power in 2017. Western Australians increasingly see that sorting their waste makes a real difference. They are embracing the FOGO service. They love those caddies in the kitchen, sorting out the scraps and putting them in the green bin.

We also have Containers for Change, another initiative and election commitment delivered by this state Labor government. Since Containers for Change was introduced, 2.39 billion—almost 2.4 billion—containers have been recovered. Imagine that! More than \$8.8 million has gone to 6 200 registered charities and community organisations. They include a lot of parents and citizens associations and sporting clubs in my electorate, and probably in the member's too. WA continues to work closely with commonwealth and state governments regarding the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, managing packaging through improved product stewardship. This is important stuff. We want to stop plastics being produced in the first place. When we go to supermarkets, we see that some packaging of products is over the top. There is too much plastic and the wrong materials being used for packaging. Avoiding plastic use at the start is still the best way to tackle its harming effects on our environment.

Earlier this week, I announced a multibillion-dollar boost for WA's waste and recycling infrastructure. The second round of the Western Australian recycling modernisation fund will provide successful recipients with a share of \$30.75 million to build, expand or upgrade waste processing infrastructure. This will support the phase-out of exporting certain types of waste from Western Australia like plastics, tyres, mixed paper and cardboard, dealing with the issue here, creating jobs and re-usable products. This is a significant investment to transform WA's waste and recycling industry.

Members may recall that I mentioned in this place not so long ago our e-waste initiative, another election commitment delivered to handle the burgeoning amount of e-waste we see in our homes. This will see \$6.5 million available to support the Western Australian electrical and electronic waste collection recycling network. It will interest the member that nearly \$2.4 million will go to two photovoltaic recycling facilities to reduce the disposal of solar panels to landfill. We know that solar panels are good, we know that there are a lot of them and we know that there is a waste issue looming at the end of life for those panels. At a certain point, it will be 20 years since they started to be introduced at a large scale.

Member, I could go on. There is so much more to talk to and time is running out. I want to say that the Cook Labor government is doing everything it can to achieve a vision for a sustainable, low waste and circular economy. Again, I would like to thank the member for Churchlands for being a sustainability hero in her electorate and in this place.

## SCHOOL BUS SERVICES

### *Grievance*

**MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [9.47 am]: I would like to thank the Minister for Transport for taking my grievance today on the school bus services inquiry recommendations and regulations. During estimates this year I asked the minister about funding over the forward estimates and also when the recommendations from the 2022 *Bus Fair* report were going to be released with updated and new regulations for 2024. As the minister knows, 170 pages of hard work was put in by the Public Accounts Committee. In response to a question relating to an increase in the forward estimates for regional school bus services, the minister said —

I understand there has been an increase in costs and services. The implementation of some of the recommendations of the report has not been fully funded yet. There was some small expansion of the team, responding to the recommendations, and also management of the services.

The minister said at the time that difficult decisions were to be made, particularly around such regulations as school of choice versus supporting the closest appropriate school. The role of district high schools was also stated by the minister as being probably one of the biggest and more contentious education issues across the state. During estimates, the Minister for Transport said she had had initiated discussions with the Minister for Education, but added that she had not really progressed to any decisions. Since estimates in May this year, there has been very little in the way of regulations and policies relating to the released report. It is now September and we will soon be coming into the fourth school term. There is no sign of the updated regulations. Parents are already contacting my office regarding updates to the regulations that may have an impact on their children's schooling and their own day-to-day lives in getting their children to school.

The *Bus Fair* report highlights some of the difficult issues parents face getting their children to school. Some have had to quit jobs so that they can get their children to bus stops kilometres from their homes. In some instances, parents were notified on the last day of term, before a new term, that their children would now need to attend a different school. The Minister for Transport would have received a letter from the Shire of West Arthur regarding the particular issues it faces. The letter was copied to me. It was written on 2 June, 2023.

In the correspondence, the following was noted, according to my notes —

1. Six months have passed since the Ministers undertook to carry out research on the recommendations (specifically for this area, Recommendations 2 and 3)
2. Darkan is a special case as it shares borders with seven other LGA's
3. There is no high school in West Arthur
4. Senior High Schools exist in Collie and Narrogin, and there are District High Schools in Wagin, Kojonup and Boyup Brook
5. The bus for the high school runs between Darkan and Collie, and because of this Collie SHS is the preferred option for many parents after Year 6 at the Darkan PS.

Of course, people who live 500 metres on any side of Darkan can be distributed to four different district high schools. The letter continues —

6. Current bus doesn't have enough seats.
7. SBS under the current regulations will not enable a larger bus as the extra students are still considered complimentary.
8. West Arthur Shire is seeking Minister's assistance in directing SBS to approve applications from families located in the shire on the basis that their children are eligible, rather than complimentary passengers on the Darkan to Collie school bus routes.

As the minister can see, a level of urgency is required so that these types of issues can be addressed. For parents in isolated regional areas, the orange school bus is the difference between employment and unemployment. This service is critical.

School Bus Services has always worked with my office to try to solve difficult situations for parents, and I appreciate the contact we have with them. The need for the new regulations to be made public is important for parents who are working out their school logistics. In regional areas, families frequently move around to new employment. When their children reach school years, they will move to jobs and accommodation that include a bus pick-up. For some of these families the suggested November submission for next year's transport assistance application is a very busy time. Parents will be working through the logistics for bus applications now so that they have the paperwork done before they are swamped with harvest requirements and other issues. Ongoing discussions regarding the regulations are apparently going to be held between the Minister for Transport and the Minister for Education, and then they must go to cabinet to be signed off. I raised this with the Minister for Education yesterday in private members' business. I would like to know when the regulations will be available for public release. As the minister knows, recommendation 5 refers to the nearest appropriate school. We are still waiting for a response to that, further to the initial response —

The State Government notes that granting eligibility to students in these situations may also impact the 90-minute travel rule ...

That is a convenient excuse but I do not believe it is relevant in this case. The response continues —

The State Government also notes that it may not always be possible to extend a bus service, so the payment of a conveyance allowance may be required to enable a student to meet the service enroute.

That is about the nearest appropriate school in the response to recommendation 5. The other one is recommendation 2, which I know is challenging. It relates to district high schools and it is very important. As I said yesterday in my contribution, the School of Isolated and Distance Education is now becoming the largest school in the state. District high schools with smaller numbers are also becoming an issue. During the week, another bus run closed down in Jerramungup, leaving another two families stranded a long way from their schools. This is a real issue. I have a lot of families who are very concerned. The silence is deafening and I look forward to the minister's response. We put a lot of hard work into that inquiry.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [9.35 am]: I thank the member for his grievance. It is a challenging issue across government. It is so challenging that it is something the member's government did not touch for eight years. The Public Accounts Committee reviewed school bus services and made a range of recommendations. In accepting all those recommendations, we said it would take time to work through a number of them, including the most controversial, challenging and difficult to implement—that is, allowing students to bypass a closer district high school in favour of attending a senior high school. We will also allow other factors to be considered in determining which school bus service a student is eligible for.

Since the government response was released, the Public Transport Authority has been working very closely with the Department of Education. In my response to the member during the estimates hearing, I probably did not highlight the amount of work that was being undertaken by both agencies together to determine the policies going forward. Of course, and as the member highlighted at the end of his grievance, the issue of the number of attendees at district

high schools is something that the education department is rightly concerned about. The number of students who attend district high schools can start to dwindle to such a point it can impact the viability of those schools. That is why the education department is very concerned about how our School Bus Services will determine our policies on schools. That is why it has always been a tricky issue to address and why governments have been reluctant to look at it. We are looking at it. In the next few months, we will be publishing the response to the student transport assistance policy and the new guidelines. I will work further with the Minister for Education on those. In the next few months, we will be publishing the new guidelines, which will determine this framework into the future.

On the issues in the Shire of West Arthur, I know my agency has been in contact with affected families who currently have children on school buses. I understand that people want certainty for next year. I understand that and I will be working to make sure the new guidelines are released as soon as possible. On the example in the Shire of West Arthur the member provided, I can advise that 16 students will have their status changed from complimentary to eligible. That will help those 16 students. That represents 90 of the students affected in the area. There are two or three others who have already applied to the School Bus Services website. On the example the member provided, action has been undertaken and the PTA is working with the families. As I said, we will continue to work through it. Both agencies are working very closely together. We will release the new guidelines shortly. In the meantime, I will make sure that the Minister for Education is comfortable with the new guidelines, as I know the department has very much been working with the PTA.

It is a tricky issue across government. We want to support families living in the regions. We know that getting kids to school is a logistical challenge for everybody, particularly people living in regional Western Australia where travel times and access are paramount to how they operate on a daily basis. I very much understand the challenge and we look forward to continuing to work to meet those challenges. With the example the member gave, the good news so far is that the agency has been working with the affected families and helping to provide a solution.

### **MERREDIN WATER TOWER**

#### *Grievance*

**MS A.E. KENT (Kalgoorlie)** [9.59 am]: My grievance is to the Minister for Transport, and I thank the minister for taking this grievance. I rise to grieve about the condition of the Merredin water tower, an issue that the minister is well aware of. I would like to begin by acknowledging Hon Darren West, a member for the Agricultural Region, who has been advocating on this issue for many years.

For members who do not travel along Great Eastern Highway often, the Merredin water tower is an iconic landmark on Great Eastern Highway. It is also known as the Kalgoorlie Bitter tower because of the advertisements on its face, which advertise the beer that was produced in the Merredin brewery from 1928. At 50 feet tall, it is the tallest structure in Merredin. For most of my constituents, it pretty much marks halfway to Perth or halfway home. It is also a symbol of the development of the goldfields. The water tower was built in 1893 as part of the Eastern Goldfields Railway project to provide water for the steam trains. The tower's water was pumped from the dam at Merredin Peak into a 40 000-gallon square tank. Because of the purity of the water from the rock catchment, the water tower continued to be used long after the town was connected to the goldfields pipeline. It was still in use until steam trains were withdrawn from service in the mid-1960s. Since then, it has become an iconic tourist attraction for people passing through Merredin.

The Merredin water tower is now 130 years old. With age comes ageing and a need to safeguard the integrity of the structure. In 2021, WA Labor committed \$50 000 to repainting the iconic signage. As I mentioned earlier, Hon Darren West was instrumental in securing this commitment for the local community. The refurbishment of the Merredin railway water tower is a key community priority, and the Shire of Merredin has been working with the Public Transport Authority to progress these works. Pioneer Park, which is just underneath the water tower, recently underwent a \$1.8-million upgrade, which included new car parking, recreation spaces and landscaping. As part of this project, a mega-flow drainage system was also installed, further opening up the space.

WA Labor has a long history of getting things done in regional Western Australia. The refurbishment of the water tower would complement these works and provide an important entrance statement to the town. I am sure many people travelling to and from Kalgoorlie will take the opportunity to stop there.

I ask the minister to provide an update and advice about what the state government will do to ensure that this significant landmark is retained and improved.

**The DEPUTY SPEAKER:** The minister for—I do not know whether it is transport or tourism. It sounds like both.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [10.02 am]: It could be. That is a nice segue.

I thank the member for Kalgoorlie for the grievance that is, of course, also on behalf of Hon Darren West, who has been working on this issue for a number of years. I would like to acknowledge the work of upper house member Hon Darren West and the member for Kalgoorlie.

Many residents of Kalgoorlie, particularly the member for Kalgoorlie, know and love the water tower. They see it as they drive along Great Eastern Highway. It is an iconic landmark in the wheatbelt. By way of background, the

tank has been maintained by the Shire of Merredin since the 1970s, through a community purpose licence agreement from the Public Transport Authority. As the member mentioned, it is a significant heritage site and is listed on the municipal inventory. In recent years, it became obvious that the tower had seen better days and significant repairs were needed. As a result of these concerns, an independent structural inspection was commissioned, and it deemed the tank structurally unsafe, which therefore presented safety and heritage risks for the Shire of Merredin and the PTA.

Recognising the importance of the tank to the community, our government announced in December 2019 that the PTA would fund the necessary repair work to the tank. Hon Darren West has continually expressed to me and in the other chamber the overwhelming community sentiment for the water tank to be retained and to be an iconic tourism structure. Hon Darren West sought feedback from the local community and campaigned significantly on this.

The Shire of Merredin prepared a scope of work for the tank refurbishment, in consultation with the Public Transport Authority, and a tender process was undertaken. Since the government first announced that it would provide funding to refurbish the tower, the tender process—like many tender processes around the state—came back with a cost well above the initial estimate. We initially committed \$50 000 to the project, but the tenders came in well over that. This was in part due to heritage concerns and safety risks identified in the contract scoping. The other complexity, of course, is that it is a unique little project in regional Western Australia. We know that the price has gone up, but it is a community concern. There is a desire to retain it in the future, not only for heritage and historic values but also for tourism values.

I am pleased to announce that the government will agree to fund the full refurbishment costs of the tower. The new estimate is significant—in the hundreds of thousands of dollars. We will work with the Shire of Merredin to see whether it can contribute to the project, and we expect it to contribute, but we will be funding the majority of the costs. We will work with the shire to determine how we will preserve the tower in the future.

It is clear that community sentiment supports retaining the Merredin water tank. It helps to identify the region and will support tourism in the future. We are very pleased to be able to support the local community. PTA resources will help fund the retention of the water tank and implement the commitment given by Hon Darren West.

### **LAND TAX ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT (BUILD-TO-RENT) BILL 2023**

#### *Third Reading*

**DR J. KRISHNAN (Riverton — Parliamentary Secretary)** [10.06 am]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

Let me start by clarifying some information I provided yesterday when responding to the Leader of the Opposition's query about whether the 50 per cent land tax exemption would be sufficient to support investment in the build-to-rent sector. As I outlined to the Leader of the Opposition, with a 50 per cent exemption applying to the value of the land, the annual land tax savings for land worth \$10 million will be around \$107 000. Over a 20-year exemption, this will result in a total land tax saving of over \$2 million, not \$20 million as I inadvertently mentioned yesterday.

I would like to thank all members for their contributions on the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. I would like to thank my advisers: Michelle Owens and Gino Trichilo from RevenueWA, and Jake Prendergast from Treasury.

The Cook government is committed to boosting the supply of affordable housing across Western Australia, particularly in new apartment and infill developments that provide housing choice. We are using every lever available to boost housing across Western Australia.

Passing this bill will provide a number of benefits, particularly, more stability for renters who will be better protected from changes in the property market, and opening up opportunities for new, innovative housing initiatives in our community.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

### **PERTH PARKING MANAGEMENT BILL 2023 PERTH PARKING MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2023**

#### *Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from 13 September.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie)** [10.08 am]: I rise to continue my remarks on this very important and innovative legislation, the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023 and the Perth Parking Management Amendment Bill 2023. The Perth Parking Management Act has been in effect since 1999, but it is being amended to provide the ability and powers to spend the revenue gathered by the Perth parking levy on a wider area that is contiguous with the City of Perth. This, of course, leads us to a very favourable situation in which that money can be expended

on projects that help people walk, wheel, ride and thrive. They can get to their place of work, recreation or their meeting point for social gatherings. They can travel around on a very safe network that has the best infrastructure to enable people to pursue their journeys in the manner that they would expect.

I am obviously a passionate believer in walking, wheeling, riding and thriving; however, there is an aspect that I do not think I have sufficiently highlighted. I have talked about the fitness benefits, the benefits of decongesting the roads and the social benefits. Another benefit that I do not think I have really elaborated on is the sense of connectedness that one has when one is not stuck in a metal box and is actually getting somewhere under one's own steam. This hit me this morning as I was riding along the banks of the Canning River, after the stormy weather we had over the last 24 hours. It was wonderful to see that nature had survived that storm and to see the pelicans and cormorants preening themselves and recovering and relaxing after the stormy weather. There was an important sense of the natural world recovering after the storm had passed. That is something that one can only see and appreciate when one has the opportunity to get somewhere under one's own steam. If one is in their car, one is not able to appreciate and enjoy that change in the natural cycle of things and have a sense of where the world really is at, and the calming effect that that has. One gets a sense of perspective from making that contact with nature, and we are very lucky here in Western Australia, in our commutes around town, that there is that potential to have that sort of engagement with nature. I feel incredibly lucky to be able to enjoy that and I want to share the idea with members that that is an extra benefit that comes from walking, wheeling, riding and thriving. That experience is very much under the banner of "thriving" that one can enjoy this.

In our state, we have a very competent public service that runs a lot of the supporting information—the decision-making is with the government—and the ideas, planning and gathering of priorities. Our public service does a wonderful job, especially the Department of Transport. I want to highlight the work of some of the people who I have the privilege to see on a fairly frequent basis, thanks to the Minister for Transport; Deputy Premier for giving me the task of chairing the bike riding reference group. That group meets on a quarterly basis, and we have wideranging discussions about all things walking, wheeling, riding and thriving, especially in the development of infrastructure. There is always the possibility of spending lots of money on infrastructure, but there is only ever a limited supply of funds for good works, so we have to be very strategic in how we develop things such as the principal shared path network and how we fill in those gaps.

Speaking of gaps, I continue to be absolutely amazed by the quality of the work on the Tonkin Gap project and the rollout of the infrastructure there. Many members will see the road network, but a principal shared path network is already going through there. People are able to go under the Great Eastern Highway and through the magnificent tunnel, which is very safe to use. The bike path on the bridge over the river is brilliantly designed, and all the lead-up paths to it are really well integrated. It will eventually extend through—perhaps it is already the case and the minister might be able to correct me—and allow people to ride all the way from anywhere on the Roe Highway, connecting up with the Tonkin Highway, to Muchea. It is an incredible extension to the network.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** It could be Mandurah to Muchea!

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** Mandurah to Muchea—what a ride that would be!

The network will be very useful. People will use it in segments for their daily commutes and they will feel very safe when doing that. That is absolutely brilliant.

I want to especially highlight the work of Justin McKirdy, the executive director, urban mobility, and Michelle Prior, director, active transport and safety at the Department of Transport. They really are the leaders when it comes to all things walking, wheeling, riding and thriving. They have an incredibly enthusiastic team of staff who are passionate about their work and the benefits they are bringing to the state. It is very hard to actually put a number on the benefits that they are bringing to the state, but they are manifold, because it is all about improving people's wellbeing and giving people an alternative to sitting in their car.

The bike riding reference group captures diverse interests, including, more broadly, the whole concept of active travel. The Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions are represented on the group as is the Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage and the Department of Education, so we can deal with the dreadful problem of so few youngsters making their own way to their school. Even though they generally live only a couple of kilometres from their school, so few youngsters are actually getting to school under their own steam, and various programs are in place to deal with that. We really want to see some improvement there. We have seen evidence that when we invest in programs such as the Your Move program—again, a Department of Transport initiative, from the government—and see them functioning, there is a dramatic turnaround in the number of students who start to make their own way to school, which has a decongesting effect on the local roads around the school. The roads become safer. The kids are healthier, better adjusted and happier when they come to sit in their classrooms in the morning, and it instils in them a great life skill, a sense of independence and an ability to tackle the world on their own terms. Those are the great things that will come from having that active travel initiative explored further, expanded upon and instilled in our culture. That is where we really want to get to: the Western Australian culture is one that active travel is first and foremost in people's minds when they think about how they will get from A to B.

Other groups in the bike riding reference group are the RAC, which always has a lot of initiatives, the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, WestCycle, WA Police Force, Tourism WA and the Department of Health. The Department of Health sees the enormous benefits that can come from good, preventive health programs. They are absolutely essential. Also on the group are the Road Safety Commission and the Western Australian Local Government Association.

This legislation is an initiative that will ensure that the infrastructure that leads into the Perth central area is of a quality that makes walking, wheeling, riding and thriving a very attractive option for people—one that they can enjoy and feel quite safe doing as they undertake their journeys. This is a great piece of legislation to support and it is something that I welcome. I commend the bill to the house.

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition)** [10.19 am]: I rise on behalf of the opposition to make a contribution to the discussion on the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023 and the Perth Parking Management Amendment Bill 2023. I indicate to the Minister for Transport that although some of the aspects of the bills are entirely sensible and supportable, on the whole, we will oppose the bills for some of the reasons that I will outline throughout the discussion.

What we are seeing with the Perth Parking Management Bill is an attempt to change the parameters within which the funds that are collected under the 1999 legislation can be expended. There is a growing amount of levy money in the special purpose account and the government has not been able to keep pace with expenditure on projects that meet the intent of the 1999 legislation. As part of the justification for that, we have this legislation that has been brought forward today. Quite recently, there was some discussion in the media, and later on I will go through some of the expenditure of the funds. There was also an Auditor General's report into the fund. I will go through those matters a little later on.

We will have a new act that will give the government the power to spend money not on transport-related matters or congestion-busting issues, but on whatever project the government of the day sees fit to do within the management area, and beyond in some circumstances, because, apparently, the bank account is swelling due to the levies that are being collected. The government has failed to ensure that the money has been spent in a timely manner on appropriate projects within the management area. While Western Australians are in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis, this special purpose account is piling up with money from the payments of motorists who park in the management area. Motorists do not pay the licence fees; organisations and businesses pay the Department of Transport the licence fees, but eventually those fees are recouped through costs to the average Western Australian who parks in the city area. The cumulative effect of that is tens of millions of dollars a year of unspent levy funds at a time when Western Australian households are doing it very tough indeed. Instead of taking the opportunity to examine the need for the levy to continue at that level, the government has thought that it will instead —

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Are you going to scrap it?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I would have a pause on it rather than using it on projects that are not —

**Ms R. Saffioti:** That means that you're scrapping it. Are you scrapping it?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Minister, money has been piling up in that account —

**Ms R. Saffioti:** What do you mean "pause"?

*Point of Order*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The minister will have her opportunity to respond to all of us. I can barely hear the Leader of the Opposition for her constant interjections.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** There is no point of order. Please continue, Leader of the Opposition. Thank you, minister.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I would like the opportunity to outline the case without being shouted at from the other side.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Are you not taking interjections, Leader of the Opposition?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** No, I am not.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You are not? Okay; thank you.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** That's a big election commitment, though—far out!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, minister.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** No. What I am saying to the minister is that she should have examined the appropriateness of the fee structure —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** — and the cost to Western Australian motorists —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, minister.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** — because of her inability —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

*Point of Order*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The Leader of the Opposition is entitled to continue his presentation without constantly being harassed by the minister.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** And might I say that points of order are to be taken in silence, minister. You know this because you are an extremely experienced member of this Parliament.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER** (Ms A.E. Kent): Thank you. Yes, points of order should be taken in silence. Thank you, minister. Please resume, Leader of the Opposition. There is no point of order.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** As I say, we are in the midst of a cost-of-living crisis and we have a government that says that it is looking after the interests of Western Australians, yet it cannot find appropriate projects under the current legislation to spend its money on. It could have decided to perhaps re-examine the levy. Perhaps there could be a pause or a reduction in the fee structure for a time until the government can catch up with the planning necessary to find transport projects to spend the money on. I am staggered that the Minister for Transport cannot find projects to fund within the management area that are of the nature that was originally intended.

I was about to discuss the fact that the current fund is full of money that has been collected under the current regime. Money has been collected for a purpose and that purpose has been pretty clear. Now that purpose will be redirected—not just the purpose for which the money will be collected in the future, but also the purpose for which the money that has accumulated in the account will be spent. I will go through some of the figures when I discuss the Auditor General’s report into these matters that was handed down earlier this year. A matter of days after that, the government announced that it would change the legislation—surprise, surprise!—because the minister had been found to be spending money outside the requirements.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** That’s wrong. That’s incorrect.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** That is certainly what the Auditor General found, and I will quote from the report. The minister can call it incorrect if she likes, but I will read from the Auditor General’s report —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** — and leave it to Parliament to make up its mind about whether it believes the Auditor General or the interjections of the minister, who is continuing to interject despite the instruction of the chair.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, minister.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** If the minister would allow me to continue.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Acting Speaker, if I could be allowed to continue.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, minister. Leader of the Opposition, please continue.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Thank you.

We know that this is a complete rewrite of the Perth Parking Management Act 1999. As far as I am aware, the act has not had any updates to speak of, except to extend the CAT bus area in 2020. A briefing was provided to the opposition by the minister’s office and a number of points that were made at the briefing indicated that all these changes will be of benefit and are to be supported, but, of course, we know that that is a matter of interpretation. I do not necessarily accept that all the changes are, of themselves, necessary, given that there is money sitting in the fund and the government has been unable to find projects that match the intent for which the money was collected. There are a couple of ways that the government could address that. First, it could change the parameters of the spending and then spend the money on whatever glitter projects it wants to do within the area that are completely unrelated to transport or congestion issues or even improving pollution levels in the city. They could be completely unrelated to any of the reasons that the money has been collected for. The government could spend it on things



like swimming pools and other matters down the track if that is what it wanted to do. The minister's office sees all that as being an improvement. I would say that that is actually a dereliction of the government's duty to spend the money in the manner and for the purposes for which it was collected.

The changes that were outlined included allowing for the funding of non-transport infrastructure, therefore breaking the nexus between the intent of the collection of the levy as it has always been in the past and where the money will be expended. It will be able to be expended on a much wider range of projects; it will be pretty well down to whatever the minister decides and will not even necessarily have to be in line with the policy. Going back to 1998, when the original Perth Parking Management Bill was introduced, we can see the principal objectives. I quote from the second reading speech of then minister, former member for Warren–Blackwood Paul Omodei, who said that the principal objectives of the Perth Parking Management Bill 1998 and Perth parking policy were —

... to promote a balanced transport system to gain access to central Perth; to limit the growth of traffic congestion and deterioration of air quality in the central area ...

That is pretty clear and straightforward. It should be clear to everybody which projects the money should be expended upon. We are now seeing a government that intends to use that money in the special purpose account, which is collected, I imagine, for a special purpose, for any project that the Minister for Transport; Planning; Treasurer wants to spend it on.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Wrong portfolio!

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** That is why, in the main, given the cost-of-living crisis that Western Australians face at the moment, we have taken the principled position of opposing this bill. It is not because all the changes are inherently wrong. Some aspects of the bill are very supportable and should be supported, but the overall intent of the bill is wrong, because the overall intent of the bill is to spend some \$190-odd million that the Auditor General referred to in her report in a manner for which it was not collected, which is for swimming pools and other projects that are completely unrelated to the principal objectives of the original bill. The original objectives were —

... to promote a balanced transport system to gain access to central Perth; to limit the growth of traffic congestion and deterioration of air quality in the central area ...

That is what the money is being collected for, but the minister wants to spend it on whatever she thinks is a good idea at the time, and that is not acceptable to the opposition.

We also know that the changes in this bill will allow for works and services outside the boundary of the management area, provided that there is some nexus between the completion or connection of the project within the city area. Given the wideranging powers of the minister, I expect that that will be widely interpreted and we could well see funding for projects that are located mainly in other areas but might terminate in the city. A path that might be 30 or 40 kilometres long that terminates in the city could be considered acceptable under this arrangement. There is, perhaps, some merit to some of those proposals. The government has a clear direction of what the money should be spent on but the minister chose to fund a swimming pool with it.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** That is wrong as well.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Therefore, there is doubt about the trust we can have in the minister's judgement of what is a contiguous area.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** You're wrong again.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I am wrong and the Auditor General is wrong. Everyone is wrong except you. Okay. The minister can explain what she thinks is wrong with the Auditor General's conclusions when she has the opportunity.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** You got a briefing and you still don't understand it.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The minister can dispute the Auditor General's findings. That is entirely up to the minister, but the minister cannot stop me from quoting from the Auditor General. I will quote from the Auditor General's report and leave it up to the house to determine whether that is correct.

One of the provisions in this bill that is entirely supportable is the provision for the differentiation of fees that will apply across the areas within the management area, depending on the level of services such as transport services and other services available in that area. It is a fairly diverse area and it ranges from areas that are highly serviced with public transport to other areas that are predominantly serviced by pedestrian access and the like, which is not as expensive to provide as other infrastructure. I think there is some merit in that proposal and I can see that being a supportable outcome. There is also provision for the minister to look at different applications for different types of licences, even at the development approval stage of projects. In a changing environment and a changing world, I think we should accept that there will be changes in the future and that different types of licences and situations might need to be considered. There is some merit in allowing some of those matters to be considered in the future. The minister might be able to outline what some of those examples could be in her mind as we go through some of these discussions. We know, too, that the penalties in the bill will increase. That is a graduated penalty system.

Like a number of acts that we have seen in this place that have not been reviewed for a number of years, the penalty regimes become out of date due to inflation and changing circumstances. I think that is also supportable in and of itself.

The briefing notes that were supplied to the opposition when we were given the briefing have some interesting points in them, which I will make known to the house. I will ask the minister to provide more detail on where some of those matters are at in her response. The next steps are that the regulations will be required to be rewritten rather than amended. One assumes that there is a whole new set of regulations around the new bill. The previous regulations will not apply and will be rewritten rather than amended. The act itself will not commence until the new regulations are in place. More detailed consultation will occur with the relevant stakeholders on the drafting instructions for the regulations, which will be undertaken later in 2023.

It will be interesting to hear the minister give an update about what stage that consultation is at, such as whether it is complete and with whom that consultation took place. Who are the relevant stakeholders, in her view? Where is the development of those regulations at? I assume that, over time, the drafting instructions have been issued, but I do not know. I ask the minister to let me know what stage of development the new parking policy is at and what consultation will be undertaken with the local governments and other relevant stakeholders and just how the public will ever have any input into any of this. Will there be a process of public consultation throughout the development of the parking policy? At the end of the day, it is the public who will use the transport systems that will be put in place. They will use the various projects that the minister will fund—the swimming pools and others—into the future. It will be good if the public can also be involved in the discussion to develop a new parking policy.

The minister has disputed some of the matters that I have spoken about. The current act restricts the types of projects that the minister can spend money on. She disputed that she spent money on a swimming pool. For the benefit of the house, I will refer to a summary of that matter in a newspaper article and I will read a little bit from the Auditor General's report itself. The article of 16 February 2023 by Josh Zimmerman is titled "Perth parking levy report: Auditor says Transport Minister Rita Saffioti wanted funding for WACA pool". The article was written about seven months ago. It states —

Transport Minister Rita Saffioti provided "conditional approval" for \$580,000 to be spent on an "aquatic centre" as part of the WACA development.

It also states that Rita Saffioti signed off on plans —

... to spend more than half a million dollars from the Perth Parking Levy on a WACA pool—despite the project falling squarely outside the scope of the tax on CBD businesses and motorists.

It goes on to quote the Auditor General and to precis the findings —

The audit findings come two days after Ms Saffioti announced on Tuesday that she planned to change the rules governing the levy, which currently dictate the money can only be spent on transport-related projects within the area that the tax applies.

It goes on to state —

When unveiling the changes—which will allow levy money to be spent on "any initiative or project that delivers positive social and economic outcomes and that activate the Perth central area"—Ms Saffioti confirmed they would allow funding to be assigned to a CBD swimming pool.

The Auditor General's report found a lack of planning had allowed the levy balance to balloon by \$150 million over the last five years ...

Who has been in charge of that situation for the last five years? The same minister loudly interjecting throughout my speech. She allowed the funding to accumulate —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent):** Well, you are goading her.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Pardon?

**Ms R. Saffioti:** You are referring to me by name.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I am referring to the article. If I am not allowed to quote from the article, then I will take that instruction from the chair. However, I am actually reading from an article.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I asked whether you were prepared to take interjections and you said no. I am just cautioning you about continuing to goad the minister. If you are not willing to take interjections, then please stop goading the minister.

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** Are you willing to take interjections?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Well, no.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Okay. Please continue.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Now I have lost where I was at. I will go back a bit. The article continues —

The Auditor General’s report found a lack of planning had allowed the levy balance to balloon by \$150 million over the last five years, reaching a current total of around \$190 million.

That is a lovely pot of money. That is not what the Auditor General said. I have said that. It is my little bit. The article continues —

“Funds should not be raised unnecessarily from the people and businesses that contribute,” Ms Spencer wrote.

That goes back to the argument about the cost of living. The Auditor General quite clearly said —

“Funds should not be raised unnecessarily from the people and businesses that contribute,” ...

The article continues —

She also found the Department of Transport had failed to consult with the City of Perth—as required by the Act—before seeking ministerial approval for eight of the 13 projects approved for funding through the levy over the past five years.

That is an article from the newspaper. Of course, it is based on the Auditor General’s fourteenth report, which looked at these matters. It is quite good background on the Perth parking levy, its history, purpose and the Auditor General’s investigation into it. The Auditor General has been looking into special purpose accounts more generally. I am sure that the minister, as the current Treasurer, will be very interested in keeping abreast of all the reports that the Auditor General has done on special purpose accounts. At the time this fourteenth report was released, on 16 February 2023, we knew that the state’s special purpose accounts had over \$14 billion allocated. We know from the previous Treasurer’s last budget—which I think has only just progressed through the other place—even more money has gone into those special purpose accounts. There is a huge amount of money sitting in those special purpose accounts.

They are special purpose accounts because the money has been collected or allocated for a special purpose. However, we have now seen that the special purpose is no longer special; it is any purpose that the minister wants to spend the money on. I will quote from the overview from the Auditor General’s report. It states —

Levy funds are held in a special purpose account (SPA) administered by the Department of Transport (Department). It is important to properly plan to spend these public funds so projects and services achieve maximum value in line with the SPA’s stated purpose. Funds should not be raised unnecessarily from the people and businesses that contribute.

The Auditor General talks about the reasons why some of the funding has been piling up. She states —

However, the absence of a specific plan, agreed across government, to spend the collected levy has contributed to the account balance increasing by about \$30 million a year over the last five years to over \$190 million. A lack of consistent consultation with the City of Perth, as required by legislation, and public reporting, further contributes to community speculation about why some projects are funded and others are not.

That report is not saying that that money is well managed and being spent on the purposes for which it was collected. The \$190 million that she referred to was collected for some purposes that were outlined by former minister Paul Omodei back in 1998, when the 1999 bill was first debated. It was all about transport, congestion and the air quality in the central business district. It was not about swimming pools at the WACA. She went on to state —

There remains uncertainty among stakeholders about what future projects, such as the Perth City Deal, might be funded from the increasing account balance.

I think that report should be alarming. It found that the money was authorised by the minister for purposes that were outside of the intent for which it had been collected.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister, you will get your opportunity.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** That is what the Auditor General found in this report. It is a report from an officer of the Parliament. It has been tabled in the house. Everybody would have had the opportunity to read it back in February when it was put down. It is not my supposition; it is what the Auditor General said.

I will explain to the house the background in the executive summary, because probably not everybody is au fait with the Perth parking levy. Some people come from areas where it is not as well known. The report states —

The fee, known as the Perth Parking Levy ... is a tax set by the State Government to support the provision of an efficient and balanced transport network to, from and in the city centre to manage congestion.

That is from the Perth parking policy 2014. It goes on to state —

The Act requires all spending from the account to be approved by the Minister for Transport ... after consultation with the City of Perth ...

Sometimes. Out of the projects, eight out of 13 did not have that consultation. It continues —

The Perth Parking Policy 2014 ... a joint initiative between the State Government and the City, guides the exercise of powers under the Act.

...

The revenue cannot be used for any purpose other than those outlined in the Act and policy. In addition to the Central Area Transit (CAT) bus system, the policy requires money from the account to be spent on initiatives within the city centre that:

- improve public transport access
- enhance the pedestrian environment
- support bicycle access
- support a balanced transport system.

That is pretty straightforward. That is what the money was collected for. It has been piling up over the last five years because the minister has not actually found projects that fit the initial conditions to spend the money on. Previous to introducing this legislation, she sought to widen the ambit by spending money on the WACA swimming pool, which is clearly outside of the guidelines as mentioned by the Auditor General. She now has this legislation ready at hand to support that kind of expenditure into the future. That will apply not just to money raised from future collected licences, but it will also spend the money that was collected for those specific purposes. We will not see that money being spent for the purposes under which it was collected. I think that is not a good way for the government to act. It is not acting in good faith with Western Australians when it does something like that.

If it could have looked at the cost of living a while ago whilst collecting \$30 million a year that it could not spend, the money could have been used to put relief in the pockets of motorists in Western Australia. Although the people who have the parking bays are paying the actual funds, that is of course being charged back to the motorists. Part of that fee structure is to make sure that they can cover the cost that they have to pay into the levy fund. That is actually a cost-of-living hit on everybody going into the city because of work or because they want to visit and use its amenities. They are being hit very hard in the pocket by this government. The government has admitted that it actually cannot spend that money for the purpose for which it was intended. It wants to widen the purpose so that it can spend the money on any project that the minister sees fit, both within and outside the management area, so those are very wide purposes indeed.

I will finish with another quote from the conclusion of the Auditor General's report. It states —

The Department's administration of the Perth Parking Levy is only partly effective. The absence of a plan that specifies how the account funds will be used has contributed to a significant increase in the levy account balance from \$54 million to \$192 million over the past five years. The account balance will continue to increase by about \$30 million a year without new spending commitments or a reduction in the levy.

Why has the minister not considered a reduction of the levy? Why has the minister not brought to the house a reduction in the fees that people pay? Why has the minister instead chosen to find new and innovative ways for her to spend that money, including the \$190 million that was collected under the old regime? She is seeking to spend that money on projects that will no doubt lead to lovely ribbon-cutting opportunities for the minister down the track, but will not actually assist motorists who are being hit by rising costs of living, rising fuel prices, interest rate increases and a whole heap of other cost-of-living matters. The minister presides over an account that unnecessarily accumulates \$30 million a year, as has quite clearly been outlined in the Auditor General's report. Relief could easily be provided for those licence fees.

Just for the interest of the house, the minister's office provided me with a breakdown of the licence fees. Each of the short-stay public parking bays serving shoppers and visitors, including on-street public bays, have an annual fee of \$1 091. That \$1 091 is repaid by people putting money into the ticket machines. It is not paid by anyone else; it is paid by motorists. Long-stay public parking bays serving commuters are \$1 187 per bay, and parking bays for the use of employees, non-residential building tenants and their visitors, \$1 240. Those fees are charged to the provider of the bays, but they are actually being paid for by the motorists who use the bays throughout the year. The government is unnecessarily collecting \$30 million a year, and money is being spent on purposes for which it was not collected. Because of that, the opposition cannot support the legislation.

There are supportable aspects of the legislation. I want to make it quite clear that there are some aspects of the legislation that we support, but overall it is a flawed attempt to justify decisions that the minister has made without the required consultation and outside what was allowed under the original conditions of that money being collected. This will open the floodgates to yet another funding pool for the minister, who no doubt has the 2025 election in mind. She will have a few lovely little projects that will, in her mind, entice voters to consider supporting her government in 2025. However, I point people looking at those projects in the direction of the cost-of-living crisis that people are facing across our state. This government has ignored its opportunity to reduce the hit on motorists who have to go into the CBD for work, shopping or any other activity. The government has missed that opportunity

to help Western Australians who are suffering through the cost-of-living crisis. I am sure the minister and others in this house are not suffering as a result of the crisis, but I can assure her that many people in the state of Western Australia are struggling at the moment. They would have appreciated that \$30 million of excess money that the government collects being distributed back to the motorists of Western Australia.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Do you have a plan to scrap it? Is that what you've done today?

**Mr R.S. Love:** I've finished.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent):** The member for Nedlands.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister, the member for Nedlands is on her feet.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

*Point of Order*

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** I cannot hear the member for Nedlands.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms A.E. Kent):** She has not started yet!

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister, thank you. You will have your opportunity. Member for Nedlands, please continue.

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Madam Acting Speaker, the minister is treating you with absolute contempt.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I think I will decide that, thank you, member for Cottesloe. Minister, please let the member for Nedlands speak. She is on her feet and I am interested to hear what she has to say. Thank you.

*Debate Resumed*

**DR K. STRATTON (Nedlands)** [10.55 am]: I would actually like to talk about one of the very impactful ways in which the Perth parking levy is being used in my electorate by more than 100 000 people on a monthly basis; I refer to the purple CAT bus. The minister and I saw the purple CAT off on its inaugural journey in 2021, along with the member for Perth, John Carey. I rise to speak in support of the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023 and the Perth Parking Management Amendment Bill 2023, legislation that is designed to modernise an act that has not been updated since it was introduced 25 years ago. I thank the minister for her leadership in updating and modernising an act that has, as I said, not been modernised since it was introduced a quarter of a century ago.

The new provisions introduced by the legislation come in response to extensive stakeholder feedback and have been adapted in response to that feedback. The stakeholders included the City of Perth, which is obviously a major stakeholder, and the Property Council of Western Australia. We will see as a result of this legislation changes that will allow for greater flexibility in how the Perth parking levy is administered, providing diverse opportunities for the levy to be used to enliven the City of Perth and make it an attractive place for people to work, rest, shop and play. It will also provide opportunities to make the City of Perth an accessible place for people to engage in those activities. The changes will also support businesses in the CBD in two ways: firstly, by cutting red tape and secondly, by reducing the ambiguities and uncertainties that can create risks for development in the CBD.

I will start by talking about the original purpose of the act and the levy when they were introduced in 1999. It was to help reduce congestion in the city by discouraging people from driving into the city centre. We know that traffic congestion and the resulting competition for unaffordable parking—as was particularly the case at that time—can discourage people from visiting the city. One of the strategies for discouraging driving in the city is the creation of public transport infrastructure. Importantly, this has meant building and developing a public transport system for the CBD that is highly accessible, affordable and reliable, and takes people to key points in the city. This policy has seen a reduction in trips to the city by car; only 45 per cent of trips to the CBD are now being made by car, compared with a previous high of 66 per cent of all visits. At the same time, the percentage of people using public transport to travel into the CBD has increased from 30 per cent to 45 per cent.

One of the fantastic ways in which people can use public transport within the City of Perth is, of course, the purple CAT bus, which is supported by the Perth parking levy. The City of Perth, however, is more than just the CBD; it also encompasses the University of Western Australia campus, the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre and suburbs in my electorate, including Crawley and parts of Nedlands. The purple CAT bus also serves some key locations within those boundaries and in my electorate. The route of the purple CAT runs through the city to the Elizabeth Quay busport, past Parliament House, through the QEII campus where it joins some 72 other buses every hour, and on to the University of Western Australia. In fact, if you were to hop on the purple CAT and stay on it for its entire route, you would get a wonderful tour of my electorate and some of its key highlights!

**Ms J.L. Hanns** interjected.

**Dr K. STRATTON:** Exactly. The member for Collie–Preston is very welcome. University of Western Australia students are some of the key users of the purple CAT bus. One of the reasons for that is that the purple CAT covers the entirety of the UWA campus. Most other buses that go to the UWA campus go to just the front of the campus, the main entrance on Stirling Highway. Staff and students at the business school, for example, or people taking children to the on-campus childcare centre, which is about two-thirds the way back into the campus, can find themselves with a long walk. For those with accessibility requirements, including people wrangling young children and taking them to the childcare centre, this presents a very real challenge to using the UWA campus to its full potential. The fact that the purple CAT does the entire circumference of the Crawley campus of UWA makes the campus much more accessible and is one of the reasons UWA students make such great use of the purple CAT.

The purple CAT runs along Hampden Road and crosses the path of my office front door every five minutes—one on each side of the street. I use the purple CAT routinely to go to meetings at UWA or Perth Children’s Hospital, especially when the weather is bad, and to get here to Parliament House or into the city. My SmartRider is now woefully faded and out of date because, of course, the purple CAT is a free service, which is one of the things that makes it so accessible to use and, of course, is one of the reasons for its popularity. Its popularity is not just known by those of us who watch the CAT bus go by and see how full it is; it is shown in the numbers. Patronage on the purple CAT has been monitored using automated people counters since the service was introduced, which is the same method used for other Perth CAT services.

When the purple CAT first started just over two years ago there were an average of 2 000 boardings a weekday. Just last month, that climbed to 5 000 boardings a weekday. That is a lot of people! There were nearly one million boardings—959 480—on the purple CAT in the 2022–23 financial year. That shows how well integrated the purple CAT has become in just two years to the City of Perth and the people in my electorate, including those who live in Nedlands and Crawley and access the hospital and the UWA campus. There were 124 628 boardings on the purple CAT just in August, building on over 103 000 boardings in July. It is hard to say that the Perth parking levy is not being used to good effect. Nearly one million people last year would have something different to say.

As a passenger and as somebody who sits in their office and sees the purple CAT bus go by every five minutes, my observation is that a great variety of people use the CAT bus for a great variety of reasons. The member for Collie–Preston indicated that her daughter uses the CAT bus every day to get to the UWA campus. Despite living a seven-minute walk from UWA, my son goes to Curtin University and he uses it to get to the Elizabeth Quay busport to then catch the train to uni. As I said, I like many others use it for work, to get to Parliament House and to other meetings at other sites in the City of Perth. My daughter and I have used it on weekends to get in and out of the city where we like to go for lunch and to do a bit of shopping, and I always use it to get to and from the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre and avoid the parking lottery there.

Another major site at which people use the purple CAT is the QEII Medical Centre. What makes the CAT bus so useful is that it is free and it comes along every 10 minutes, so it is ideal for patients and visitors who, let us face it, are juggling many other concerns and deadlines navigating the hospital system, their appointments and the site. It is an important public service that links people with health care and education. Some local older residents use it to get around the neighbourhood, particularly to the shops at Broadway Fair Shopping Centre. I note that as the purple CAT traverses Broadway Fair and Hampden Road, part of its route is already outside the boundaries of the City of Perth because it runs along roads within the City of Nedlands.

This bus service allows people to access health care and education, to attend to their activities of daily living, such as shopping, to access recreation along the riverfront and, of course, to travel in and out of the city in their role as workers, residents, shoppers and diners. Having borne witness and heard the feedback about this diverse range of users and seeing the ever-climbing numbers of people who use the purple CAT, I know that people use it in a variety of roles and I have been talking to Subiaco locals about the potential of a CAT bus for Subiaco. The City of Subiaco is adjacent to the City of Perth and many residents in Subiaco similarly use the City of Perth and CBD for work and recreation. My team and I have doorknocked or phoned thousands of local residents in Subiaco and Shenton Park. Local residents are the most important stakeholders when considering changes or additions to public transport systems as they will ultimately be the users and beneficiaries of any such service. Over 90 per cent of the people we spoke to gave their enthusiastic support for a CAT bus, indicating that they would use it to connect Subiaco with the City of Perth.

There are key reasons people would like to see a CAT bus for Subiaco. Similar to the benefits of the purple CAT for local residents, the first is the ease of getting around the community for senior citizens. Those familiar with the layout of Subiaco and its services, hospitality and retail would know that it is a series of long strips, including Rokeby Road, Nicholson Road and Subi Square adjacent to the train station. Many senior citizens have told us that they would like a CAT bus to enable them to better access those local shopping and retail opportunities and to get themselves around their community.

Secondly, the City of Subiaco has two major public high schools—Perth Modern School and Bob Hawke College. As we heard earlier this week from the Minister for Education, along with the minister, the Premier and I attended the opening of the second stage of Bob Hawke College, an inner city high school. The opening of the second stage

will see it get to its capacity of 2 000 students. Perth Modern School is a similar size. That is a lot of young people to get in and out of a precinct at the beginning and end of the day. Many of those students rely on public transport. They are currently limited to paid bus and train services. That is an important consideration because many of those students, particularly those from Perth Modern, cross the very busy Thomas Street to access the free yellow CAT bus that leaves from the other side of Thomas Street to their school.

A CAT bus for Subiaco would provide greater safety for those students, and the board of Perth Modern School has given its full support for that initiative. It is worth pointing out that the local intake area for Bob Hawke College includes suburbs within the City of Perth, such as West Perth and some areas of West Leederville, so any Subiaco CAT bus would directly benefit the residents of the City of Perth, their families and young people, and would keep young people safe on our roads.

However, the primary reason the Subiaco residents we have spoken to would like to see a local CAT bus is to improve their connectivity to the CBD. Subiaco is already on the doorstep of the CBD and Subi residents have told us that they could use the CAT to get to their place of work in the city and to access hospitality venues, particularly after hours. We heard particularly from young people that being able to access the city and Northbridge by a CAT bus for hospitality after dark was seen as a safe, reliable and affordable option. We encourage them to access the city for this reason as well. When the new ECU city campus opens, I think it is safe to assume that residents in the City of Subiaco will use a CAT bus to access the campus. Like the purple CAT bus, we see people utilising the service in all their different roles—workers, residents, shoppers, diners, theatregoers, patients and university students. I have heard about the cost of living and I acknowledge the importance of an affordable bus service for Subiaco. There is significant social housing in the City of Subiaco, including high-density housing, and many senior citizens, therefore affordability is an important issue.

People want to use a Subiaco CAT bus. There is a lot of enthusiasm for public transport for pragmatic purposes, but also for its environmental impact. Of course, the Subiaco CAT bus will need a colour—perhaps either the maroon or gold of the Lions—the Subiaco Football Club.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Maroon.

**Dr K. STRATTON:** Maroon, yes. Quite a few Subiaco residents have offered maroon as their preferred colour—the maroon CAT—without being asked. I have had someone suggest that it is perhaps time for a rainbow CAT bus.

**Mr D.A.E. Scaife:** Rainbow bridge.

**Dr K. STRATTON:** Just like the rainbow bridge—that is right. That is a really nice synergy, member for Cockburn, thank you very much. It was pointed out to me that it is always Labor governments that progress the rights of LGBTQIA+ communities, and public transport, so why not bring those two progressive activities together and have a rainbow CAT bus for Subiaco. I look forward to the *Post* picking that idea up.

I emphasise again that the state government has consulted and engaged with community stakeholders, including both the Property Council and the City of Perth. We imagine they are, of course, committed to seeing the best outcome for their own stakeholders and ensuring that the city continues to be and become a vibrant, safe and attractive place to work, live, spend money and to play. Providing other ways for people to access the city for those purposes is one way that the levy could be utilised.

[Member's time extended.]

**Dr K. STRATTON:** The changes that would allow this include the ability for levy funds to be invested on a wider range of projects and initiatives that directly affect and benefit CBD businesses and residents. This may include a rainbow or maroon CAT bus that brings neighbours in from the City of Subiaco, which will experience significant population growth in the next few years with the Subi East and the 1909 developments. We assume that many of those residents will choose to live there because of its proximity to the city and, more than likely, their workplaces. That brings a whole new neighbourhood into the CBD to work, shop and play.

The amendments suggested in the bills before us will connect those areas, with the ability to declare ancillary areas to ensure that projects that expand beyond the Perth parking management area can be funded from the levy. It is important to note that ancillary areas can only be in local governments that are contiguous to the Perth parking management area, such as the City of Subiaco, and only for projects that are primarily located within and to the benefit of CBD businesses and residents. Ancillary areas will be declared for projects like completing cyclepaths, intersection upgrades and other projects that land just outside the Perth parking management area. This has been drafted to be as restrictive as possible. Like any other successful initiatives, it will of course require and involve stakeholder consultation and consideration of the costs and benefits and how those are shared across neighbouring local government areas.

By allowing a wider range of projects to be funded, we can provide more amenities in the inner city, provide greater access to the CBD for CBD residents, but also for neighbouring residents. It will further reduce car usage by inner-city residents. This will benefit our environment and the city itself by making it a space that is both easy, safe and more affordable to access. For those reasons I commend this bill to the house.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe)** [11.15 am]: As indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, we do not support this bill and I will outline why. There are many laudable aspects of this bill. I think there are many parts of this bill which are sensible changes that the government is seeking to make. I will indicate those and then I will indicate why I think there is a fatal flaw in this bill and why the bill should not be supported. In the minister's second reading speech, she outlined the reason that this levy was established. It was introduced in 1999 to help manage parking and related growth of traffic congestion in the city centre and surrounding network. I think, sensibly, we do not want half the city filled with car parking bays and the other half shops. We want this valuable real estate in the city to be used for commercial purposes, for shops and the like, as much as possible, so we have an attractive city centre. The minister alluded to that in her comments. She pointed out that the funds raised by the levy are directly reinvested in improving transport in the Perth central area with initiatives such as the central area transit bus service and a free transit service in the CBD. Of course, members would know that money has been used for a significant improvement in pedestrian access and for cycle access into the city. There is a large number of people who access the city by bicycle. With the advent of e-cycles and e-scooters, that network is getting more use. That means less pressure, with fewer vehicles going into the city.

I will touch on a couple of areas. The majority of the member of Nedlands' speech talked about money used by Labor for the original purpose. That was to improve transport into the city and the related areas and the CAT buses. Again, I think that —

**Ms R. Saffioti:** We had to move the map. You know that, don't you?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Acting Speaker, please.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Lilburne):** Member for Cottesloe, could you resume your seat for a few moments. Thank you. A note to members, from my position. I prefer to keep this particular seat a no standing zone at the moment, regarding parking signs, so interjections are not being taken. I will enforce that. I would rather keep this a no standing zone. As far as I can see, the member for Cottesloe is still within his 20-minute parking limit and I am quite prepared to ensure that the 20-minute parking limit is maintained. Member for Cottesloe, if you would like to continue, thank you. I presume you are not taking interjections.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** No. Thank you very much, Acting Speaker. I thank you for your humour and the clarity of your direction.

As I said, I support the majority of the aspects in this bill. I will go through that in detail to indicate, very clearly, those areas that I think are sensible and those that are not. This bill seeks to expand the direction. When it refers to the application of moneys in the bill, it sensibly says that not everything is necessarily in the immediate CBD but that feeder activities can enhance traffic flow or at least reduce the requirement for people to use their cars in the CBD and the moneys could be used for that. For example, the moneys could potentially be used for parking outside the immediate CBD. It would allow people then to use CAT buses or e-scooters. A lot of those devices are freely available. Whenever I drive away from Parliament at night, I see about half a dozen purple e-scooters at the end of Kings Park Road, which people can use to tour Kings Park, for example. They can catch the bus into the city, hop on a hired e-scooter and go into the city or tour Kings Park. Those things are sensible and I am 100 per cent in favour of them. I think they are very sensible uses. As I said, I thought the great majority of the member for Nedlands' speech was a valuable contribution about the original purpose that these moneys were intended for. At the end, she tried to give us justification for the expansion into things other than those related to transport, but as I said, I thought the great majority of her speech was a valuable contribution in the sense that I supported the great majority of what she had to talk about.

I will follow the structure of the minister's second reading speech, because it is a reasonable structure. The minister talks about supporting businesses and landowners. There is the idea of supporting differential rates. I will go through the new initiatives to support businesses. I think the differential rates make sense. There are obviously prime parking areas and areas that are less congested, where parking is not such a problem. The ability to have differential rates make sense. The minister clearly outlines a logic and reason in her second reading speech. On fee waivers, the minister discussed the issue of the COVID pandemic and a range of issues at that time, including ways that government tried to activate the city centre. I vividly remember, at a selfish level, that during COVID I could drive from Parliament House to Government House in about three minutes. There was an enormous dearth of traffic in the city. Businesses suffered enormously. The government indicates it would have preferred the opportunity to waive that levy to encourage people to come back into the city. Again, that make sense, minister. I think that is a sensible part of the bill.

On certainty for developers, I understand that section of the bill has to do with the fact that when developers are making a development, deciding on the number of parking bays needed and the like, they do not want the goalposts to change. Developments typically take many years to get going. We do not want to change the goalposts once the development is approved and going through that process. Developers need some certainty. That is a sensible component of the bill. For special events and temporary parking, again that is a sensible provision. I have no issue with that. On the penalties, modifying the penalties is something that should be done from time to time. Obviously, increasing transparency so everyone has greater clarity in the annual report and the like, again is a sensible thing.



One of the things we constantly ask this government is that it is transparent in what it does. We hope to see more transparency from this government because there are many times that we do not. The improved administration of the licensing scheme and helping to streamline business practices and reduce red tape for property owners, developers and other stakeholders will be a sensible change to the levy. However, I have an issue with the expansion of the focus of the levy, as outlined by the Leader of the Opposition. That is the only reason I oppose the bill, otherwise it would have had my wholehearted support. I want to go through that and explain my position in a little bit of detail.

I can see the logic of the original levy. The purpose was to constrain the growth of non-residential parking. As I have already pointed out, consuming large parts of the CBD simply with parking does not make sense. It is very valuable land and there are better uses for the real estate. It is important to discourage congestion in the CBD. We know that if we have less congestion, it is a better environment for people to shop in and for commuters and workers alike. It makes it a nicer place. If it is just a place where cars are rushing to and fro all the time, that is an undesirable outcome. It also improves the air quality in the CBD, which is also important. We know that vehicles deteriorate air quality not just through emissions but even if they are electric vehicles, through carbon, brake material and the like. Having a concentration of traffic in the city is a bigger issue. Part of the reason for the levy was to discourage people by making it a bit more expensive and a bit harder for people to come in to the area. It was to discourage people from using vehicles in the city unless they had to.

There was a pay-off for people who brought their vehicles to the city in the sense that, sensibly I think, the collective moneys were to remove the need for people to come into the city by car. Whether they were commuters, workers or people coming into the city to shop, those moneys were used for other purposes so that people would not have to use their cars. It was not just saying, “If you use your car, you’re going to be hit over the head and you’re a bad person so we’re going to make it more expensive for you to use your vehicle if you bring it to the city.” It was to reduce the requirement for people to use their vehicles to come into the city. The government put on CAT buses and improved cyclepaths and the like. The government said it was going to improve the general amenities in the city to lessen the requirement for vehicles with the use of that money. In effect, that money went to benefit the people who were paying the levy and reduce the requirement for doing so. It was a balance. It was a carrot and stick approach between hitting people with a levy to discourage them using their vehicles and also saying, “We’re not just going to do that. We’re going to make it easier for you not to have to use your vehicle to come into the city.”

What we have heard, as outlined by the Leader of the Opposition, is that the levy has been accumulating during the term of this government. There has been a massive accumulation in that levy during the term of this government. Why has that happened? Is it the minister? Is the department simply out of ideas? Has everyone in the department gone, “You know what, minister? We are bereft of ideas of ways to significantly reduce the need for people to bring their vehicles into the city. We no longer have any thoughts in our minds about how we could do that”? Is that it? I cannot believe it. As I have pointed out in this place before, the minister has a strong academic pedigree. She is a pretty good thinker and I am sure she could come up with ideas. If they are out of ideas, is it that the levy is too high? Is the levy collecting too much if there is nothing else that can be done to improve transport within the city and the precincts? As I said, I have no objection to the suggestion in the bill of expanding the boundary and looking at ways we can improve services that feed into the city to lessen the requirement for vehicles. That makes a lot of sense to me. Was there another reason for the levy not being spent? Has the fund been accumulated because, in the minister’s mind, it is a fund that will be used for other purposes? I hope that is not the case. When this was introduced, I thought the reasoning behind it was very sound. I thought the trade-off between the two sides—discouraging people and enhancing transport options in the city so people did not have to drive their vehicles—was a very sensible outcome.

We have heard the government mention various projects it thinks should be done to enhance the CBD. I am not sure that I agree with all of them, but most sound like pretty laudable ideas. The Edith Cowan University campus is coming to the north of the city, and that will bring a lot more people back into the city. One of the big problems with the City of Perth is a lack of foot traffic and a lack of people in the area. More people will help to improve the amenity of the city. There are other projects—the WACA project and various other projects—but I will not go into the background of those; the Leader of the Opposition has done that. These all sound like laudable things to do, but I cannot understand why they should be paid for by people who have no choice but to bring their cars into the city.

Let us be very clear: when I come into the city, I do not bring my car in because it is cheap. Parking is expensive. Sometimes, I have to come in for a short purpose and then have to go do something else. I end up paying about \$20 when I am in the city for a very short period. Part of that is the parking fee, but a significant component of the fee is the levy.

Why do people use their cars? They do it because they have complex lives. If I go back to when I was a boy, once they reached parenting age, most women—at that stage it was most—were at home looking after the kids and the household. Predominantly men came into the city. Now, overwhelmingly, both partners in a family work. People are busy. Members might say it is a retrograde thing, but most people now choose to drive their children to school because they are concerned about safety, and then they come to work. I know that schools have seen an explosion

in after-school activities. When I was a child, we went home when school ended. These days, children have a range of activities, such as school activities, sports, theatre and music, that they have to go to. People are not using their cars on a whim or because they do not care; they have complex lives. One of the intrinsic reasons public transport is struggling to see any significant patronage growth and people use their cars is —

[Member's time extended.]

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** One partner does not simply come into Perth and go home while the other partner is at home doing all the important things that are required to run a family and a household. People who drive their cars do it because they do not have a simple choice in their lives.

The major reason they do it is the cost-of-living crisis, and that is real. Many members see the data coming out. If we look at the data for the overall Australian economy in real terms, people's spending power is, in fact, going backwards. Across Australia, our economy is growing, but our economy is only growing because of net migration into the country. On average, everyone is worse off. We might focus on a few fat cats, but members would know many people in their electorates who are really struggling. Why should people who happen to have to drive into the city, whether it is for shopping or because they work in the city, pay for those projects?

Let us be clear about those projects. The projects will overwhelmingly support the larger population of the state. Most of the state lives in metropolitan Perth. People come into the city for major events, such as going to the football, the museum or the theatre. These facilities, the sporting ovals and the WACA benefit the greater population of the state. Yes, the minister has outlined some laudable projects that need to be done to further improve the attractiveness and amenity of the CBD, but they should be paid for by the broader community. The projects should be coming through the government's normal —

**Ms R. Saffioti:** So regional people should be funding these projects?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** They do anyway, do they not?

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Is that what the member is arguing?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Look, I grew up in the bush, as the minister knows. I can say that —

**Ms R. Saffioti** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** No, let me answer the question. I am happy to answer it. Even as a small child in the bush, I used to come up to the city, and I enjoyed the city's amenities. As a little boy, I used to go to the museum. I lived out in the deep dark bush in very humble circumstances. I think people accept that, but they also expect a reasonable amount to be spent in the regions. Regional people see that as a balance.

CBDs will always get a disproportionate share compared with other areas. Why? It is because the CBD is the centre for not just metropolitan Perth, but also the whole state. We still have a family farm in Cranbrook, and I know a good number of people who love coming up to the footy stadium and are really happy to do it. I think they see that.

I do not think people who use their cars do it on a whim. Most people use their vehicles because they lead complex lives. Life is vastly more complex now than when I was a child. I look at members around this place. When they leave here today, a number of members will be rushing off to pick up their kids and take them to sporting activities and the like.

That is what I see as the fatal flaw; I would support it if it were not for the broadening of the use to just a general fund. I am not concerned about the top end of town. If BHP and Rio Tinto are paying, and their chief executives are coming into Perth in their flash BMWs, parking downstairs and not having to walk in the rain from the bus or whatever, they can afford it. I am concerned. The minister would know that the great majority of people in the city are not fat cats on big salaries. They are ordinary small businesspeople who are really doing it tough, with all the cost increases they have had. The general spread of our community comes into the city because that is where they have to do their shopping and the like.

I do not think this should become a slush fund—I use the pejorative term—or a fund that is available to the minister. I can understand the attractiveness of it to the minister, who might think it is great that she has a big pool of money and another fund she can go to for all those projects. That is a very attractive thing. I have seen lots of photos of the minister out there with the fluoro vest and the hard hat, and it always makes for good publicity. I can understand the attractiveness of it, and I can even understand why the Lord Mayor of Perth thinks he can influence this a bit and maybe get other projects that he is interested in. For that matter, any future Lord Mayor might do that. I think it is intrinsically unfair that people who have no choice but to use their vehicles to come into the city should fund these broader projects.

I am not saying it as a form of words. I know that the minister has a very good mind, and I am certain that the department is full of people with very good ideas of ways to use this money to further reduce the requirement for people to bring their vehicles into the city and to make it more flexible. That is what this money should be used for. It should not be used for general development purposes in the city; that should be coming out of recurrent expenditure.

**MR G. BAKER (South Perth)** [11.39 am]: I wish to speak on the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023 and the Perth Parking Management Amendment Bill 2023. To properly understand the bills—I think we have just had a good example of this—we need to understand the bad transport decisions that governments have made in the past. There has been an over-reliance on cars and the abandonment of residential housing in the CBD. We need to get away from that model and move to something else. It is a western model of urban cities that was led by American cities, the convenience of the car and the development of freeways in the 1950s. This model emphasised the separation of the CBD from residences and a vision of the CBD that served only a commercial purpose and was not a place for people to live in. The CBD was fed by good roads, with the basic assumption that almost everyone would have a car and space to keep one at their house. These things are not all true, but for a city of a few hundred thousand people, as Perth was in the 1950s and 1960s, this was a practical and attractive ideal for a city. However, in our city of two million people, which stretches for 120 kilometres from Two Rocks to Mandurah, this ideal is being sorely challenged and is well past its use-by date.

First, in such huge numbers over such long distances, the car loses its efficiency. Longer commutes, larger traffic jams and a slow choke of all users of the road are produced if there is only a car-based city. Perth is experiencing worsening road congestion. The 2019 Australian infrastructure audit estimated that congestion in Perth will cost \$3.1 billion per annum in 2031. This problem is going to get only worse unless we find solutions.

This model also leads to a CBD that is completely absent of life and basically shuts down after 5.00 pm. We have only to ask a tourist or visitor to Perth who is bewildered by the lack of life on St Georges Terrace come six o'clock. This vision of a car-dominated city culminated in the closure of the Fremantle rail line back in 1979, when the Court government thought it could get rid of public transport because cars would solve everything. That is probably the worst transport decision that has been made in metropolitan Perth and Western Australia, and is possibly rivalled only by the closure of the tier 3 rail line in the wheatbelt.

Of course, those American cities have now reached the same juncture we have. The biggest example of this is Los Angeles, where the CBD is an abandoned island after hours and cars choke the freeway so badly that an airline once offered flights from one end of the city to the other. Yet even in Los Angeles, they are learning and changing the trajectory of their urban planning. Los Angeles copied Perth in retrofitting its rail system down the centre of its freeways. I remember driving along a freeway in Los Angeles and having a train overtake me. It was a very familiar feeling, because they had borrowed the design from us. The only difference was that I looked over my left shoulder instead of my right shoulder.

It was with this vision that the Perth Parking Management Act was introduced in 1999 to provide funding for an alternative transport vision for the City of Perth and to avoid the strangling effect of a car-centred transport strategy. It has had some great successes, as we have been talking about. The CAT buses are a daily reminder of how we are putting that into effect.

What is the city that we want? We want a city that is vibrant, alive with people, culturally and commercially alive, and linked to the rest of the metropolitan area. Very few cities, once they get above a certain size, continue to invite more cars into the CBD. Most move very heavily in the other direction. I can look at London, with its near exclusion of private transport, New York and even Sydney and Melbourne. Places like Sydney and Melbourne have been actively reviving their inner city culture and activating dead spaces in large part by bringing people back into the city centre via public transport and residency. Currently, Sydney is trying to retrofit a workable public transport system into the crowded city, but it has started too late, and that has led to a cost of tens of billions of dollars for its tram system.

We have started bringing people back into the Perth CBD with more residential construction. We are planning a new primary school and we have more local facilities planned, but we still have a way to go. At the same time, we can look at walking and cycling as part of the solution. They are increasingly important modes of transport that provide a healthy, affordable and convenient alternative to private vehicles in congested urban environments. Active public transport can reduce congestion by replacing a proportion of short private vehicle trips, generally those under five kilometres. Perth has one of the lowest rates of walking and cycling commuter trips in Australia. Each day, there are an estimated 4.2 million private car trips in Perth, with 2.8 million of those trips being under five kilometres, so we have a lot of room to work with here. There is also a lack of dedicated active transport connections that link key strategic centres in Perth. We are building those at the moment, but we still require more upgrades and more links to be made. In 2021, the Australian infrastructure plan identified walking and cycling as safe and desirable modes of transport of increasing importance in fast-growing cities.

When we look at the data on the growth of cycling and e-rideables, we see a lot of really encouraging information. Cycling levels around Australia have increased by up to 69 per cent compared with the pre-COVID period. The use of long-wheelbase devices such as cargo bikes has increased significantly in South Perth—by 26 per cent. The South Perth foreshore alone recorded an increase of 28 per cent in cycling numbers from pre-COVID numbers to post-COVID numbers. The use of e-scooters has also increased dramatically at a lot of sites, with an increase of 74 per cent on the South Perth foreshore. They are huge increases in traffic. This is really welcome, but it leads to new safety issues, with an increased need for a clear separation between pedestrians and cycling and e-rideable traffic.

How do we link this massive increase in cycling, walking and e-riding on the south shore of the city to the city across the Swan River? We can look at the principal shared path from Glendalough station to Hutton Street that was completed in 2020. Once it was completed, it saw a 50 per cent increase in cycling traffic along that section and a 25 per cent increase in cycling traffic along the whole PSP, which is huge. How can we get all that traffic in South Perth into the City of Perth? The first thing for us to fix is the Causeway. We already have plant and are constructing the Causeway cycle and pedestrian path, but the current path is incredibly narrow and has a lot of safety issues. It was not built for the traffic it currently carries. Currently, more than 1 400 cyclists and 1 900 pedestrians use the two-metre-wide strip each day. There are several bottlenecks along that path that make it quite a tricky little commute.

In response to that, Main Roads Western Australia is building two bridges just downstream of the current Causeway bridge to provide improved access across the Swan for pedestrians and cyclists. The cable-stayed bridges will provide a six-metre-wide path and will create a safer connection for people walking and riding from the Perth CBD to Victoria Park and beyond. Site establishment and ground improvement works have commenced at McCallum Park, Heirisson Island and Point Fraser. Every time I go down there, it is great to see progress being made. It has a \$100 million budget and we hope it will be completed late next year.

Under the Perth Parking Management Act, the Perth parking levy can be used to complete projects only within the Perth parking management area, which includes Heirisson Island but not the Victoria Park shore. We have this crazy situation in which we can fund the bridge from Point Fraser to Heirisson Island, but we cannot fund the bridge from Heirisson Island to the Victoria Park shore, which is just nuts. We have these artificial lines based on an act of Parliament from decades ago that says that we can do this, but we cannot do that—we can build half the bridge, but we cannot build the other half. One fix is the fix we had with the purple CAT bus, whereby we moved the boundary out a little bit. Maybe if we were doing one or two projects, that would be a sensible thing to do, but if it is a fundamental flaw in the act, let us just fix the act, rather than making an ad hoc change with every single thing we do. Clearly, that is a ridiculous situation, and this bill will fix it. It will give the ability to declare ancillary areas to ensure that projects that expand beyond the Perth parking management area can be funded by the levy.

It is important to note that the ancillary areas can only be in a local government area contiguous to the Perth parking management area and only for projects that are primarily located within and to the benefit of CBD businesses and residents. The ancillary areas will be declared for projects like completing cyclepaths, intersection upgrades and other projects that land just outside the Perth parking management area. This has been drafted to be as restrictive as possible, but it gives us a solution and a way forward. After the Causeway pedestrian and cyclist bridges are complete, I can see the potential for a lot of other projects that link the City of Perth to its neighbouring suburbs and revive the commercial and cultural life of our city and make Perth an even better place to live. I refer to projects like cyclepaths, ferries and rail transport.

This bill is a very sensible reform of the Perth parking levy and will lead to benefits for everyone who lives near and in the City of Perth. Years of car-centred transport decisions have led to the City of Perth becoming an island that is cut off from the suburbs around it. With this reform, we will be able to build the bridges, both metaphorical ones and the actual bridges, to revive its cultural and commercial life. I commend the bill to the house.

**MS H.M. BEAZLEY (Victoria Park — Parliamentary Secretary)** [11.51 am]: I am happy to rise today to speak to the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023 and the Perth Parking Management Amendment Bill 2023. The original Perth Parking Management Act was introduced around 25 years ago and has not been updated since. These bills will modernise the act and create more flexibility in how it is administered. The changes will support business by cutting red tape and reducing ambiguities and risks for development in the CBD. We have consulted and engaged with key stakeholders, including the Property Council of Australia and City of Perth, and taken on board their feedback and views of the proposed changes.

The important changes we are putting forward include the ability for levy funds to be invested in a wider range of projects and initiatives that directly benefit CBD businesses and residents; new powers for the minister to waive fees in exceptional circumstances, which is not possible under the current legislation and was not possible during COVID; the ability to waive fees when required to facilitate development within the Perth central business district; allow the minister to pre-authorise new parking at the development approval stage, provide greater certainty for proponents; allow for the funding of traffic management for events, but not the events themselves, which was a decision informed by the strong feedback we received from the City of Perth; the ability to introduce differential rates, which was strongly requested by stakeholders and is huge in terms of how the adoption of differential rates will help stimulate much-desired development in underdeveloped parts of the city; a new requirement for spending from the levy to be published in the Department of Transport's annual report, as recommended by the Auditor General, which is a great win for transparency; and the ability to declare ancillary areas to ensure that projects that expand beyond the Perth parking management area can be funded from the levy, which is particularly important to me. For example, under the current arrangements, we can fund the construction of the new Perth to Victoria Park causeway pedestrian and cycling bridges between the city's foreshore and Heirisson Island, but we cannot fund the construction between Heirisson Island and the Victoria Park foreshore. That definitely reeks of a lack of common sense.

I would like to talk about the fantastic development that lands in my community of Victoria Park. This \$100 million project will see the construction of two iconic cable-stayed bridges comprising a six-metre wide shared path linking my electorate of Victoria Park with Heirisson Island and the Perth CBD at Point Fraser. It will separate path users from traffic, making it safer for those who wish to walk or ride to and from the city. It will create practical and beautiful bike riding and pedestrian facilities between the CBD and Vic Park. The people of my community of Victoria Park are avid cyclists and walkers, and many work in the city or visit it regularly due to its proximity. These bridges will be well used by locals and visitors alike. The new Causeway pedestrian and cycling bridges also happen to fulfil the original intent of the act, even if they do not fulfil all the funding requirements; that is, the original act and levy were introduced in 1999 to help mitigate congestion by discouraging people from driving to the city. The act and parking levy have been successful in achieving this intended aim. When the policy was introduced, roughly 66 per cent of trips into the CBD were made by car and this has now reduced to around 45 per cent. In the same period, the percentage of people using public transport to travel to the CBD has risen from 30 per cent to 45 per cent. With these new bridges, we are going to get even more pedestrians and cyclists into the city and back to Vic Park. It makes sense that such a project could be funded through the Perth parking levy, but only half of it can currently, which, like I said, seems at odds with common sense. This legislation will fulfil a common sense agenda.

As I mentioned, the new Causeway pedestrian and cycling bridges will also improve safety for path users. More than 1 400 cyclists and 1 900 pedestrians use the current two-metre wide Causeway path each day. I have seen many near misses between these two cohorts and lots of squeezes at different bottlenecks. I know that seniors in particular are very wary of when they use the current path, due to safety issues. The seniors from Connect Victoria Park, just up the road from the new bridge's landing spot, are regular users who are looking forward to these new bridges. For those who have not yet seen the design for the new Causeway pedestrian and cycle bridges, I encourage them to check it out. It looks amazing. The design respects the traditional owners of the land, the Whadjuk Noongar people. It reflects and embeds Whadjuk Noongar culture and heritage by recognising the significance of Heirisson Island and the Swan River. This was a direct result of extensive consultation with key stakeholders, including the Matagarup Elders Group. The shape represents the sinuous movement of the Wagyl. The Wagyl is the major spirit for Noongar people and is central to their beliefs and customs. The Wagyl, or Rainbow Serpent, is recognised by Noongar people as the giver of life maintaining all fresh water sources. It was the Wagyl that made Noongar people the custodians of the land. Noongar people believe that the Wagyl dominates the earth and sky and makes the thunder, lightning and rain. That is relevant given the last couple of days of weather. During the Dreaming, it created the fresh waterways. The Wagyl rose up from Garakatta—Mt Eliza at the foot of Kings Park—and formed the Swan and Canning Rivers and other waterways. Members can see how wonderful it is to have the Wagyl reflected in the design of the bridges that will go over one of the rivers that it created and the flagship river of Perth, the Derbarl Yerrigan, or Swan River. When the great Wagyl created the boodja, he ensured that there was wurrin, or spirits, to look after the land and all that it encompassed. I trust it will continue to do so and hope it does with these bridges.

When I was at Heirisson Island with the Noongar elders for a smoking ceremony before works on this project began, a local elder picked up one of the oyster shells that are scattered through the area. He told me that it was a scale of the Wagyl. He rises from the water and shakes off his scales and that is what those shells are. I have never looked at those shells in the same way again.

As well as the Wagyl, integral to the design are also references to prominent Whadjuk Noongar people, including Yagan, who, as many of us know was a Noongar warrior and leader who resisted the British colonisation of Western Australia in the early 1800s. He is deeply respected and is represented by a boomerang-inspired pier. I am a big fan of Fanny Balbuk. I spoke about Fanny Balbuk in my inaugural speech in this place. She was a resistance fighter who fiercely defended her values, traditional rights and country. Fanny walks the matriarchal songline that exists between Kaarta Gar-up, or Kings Park, through Boorloo, Perth, and on to Matagarup, Heirisson Island, where she was born. Matagarup, Heirisson Island, was the birthing place for Whadjuk Noongar women. It is incredibly appropriate and deeply meaningful that her life is reflected in the design of these bridges. She is represented by two digging stick-inspired piers. I cannot wait to see it all. The location, which is approximately 90 metres downstream of the existing Causeway bridge, was chosen as it minimises the impact on existing flora and fauna. The cable-stayed design will ensure that there will be less impact on the river, with only three permanent piers required to support the bridges. I hope the Wagyl is happy with that. The area also includes gathering areas. I am very much looking forward to walking my kids across the pedestrian bridge and taking them to these areas and to new areas they can now more easily explore thanks to these bridges.

I am very pleased that the Perth parking management bills will facilitate, among other things, fantastic developments like the causeway pedestrian and cycling bridges that have footprints in Victoria Park and Perth, as well as Perth's other contiguous areas. Of course, there is the important delivery of differential rates that will support development in underdeveloped areas of Perth city itself. I commend the bills to the house.

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [11.59 am] — in reply: I thank members for their contributions to the second reading debate on the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023 and the Perth Parking Management Amendment Bill 2023. I would now like to respond to many of the claims made. I thank the member for Victoria Park for her contribution. The new causeway bridge will indeed be an incredible project, which I so look

forward to seeing completed. Of course, works are now underway both at the site and in the manufacturing facilities at Henderson. They are well underway and can be seen by anyone driving past. A lot of work is happening there. Plus, the manufacturing of the bridge is being done here in WA. The design is incredible and I cannot wait to see it completed.

The member for South Perth also raised the issue of congestion along the cyclepaths through South Perth. Anyone who has been on the South Perth foreshore or done the circuit around the river will be very much blown away by the number of people who use cycleways through South Perth. South Perth residents will receive the benefits of the new causeway cycling bridge.

The member for Nedlands raised the purple CAT bus, which has been extremely successful. As the member for South Perth highlighted, and I want to reiterate this, we had to, in a sense, manipulate the boundaries of the Perth parking levy management area to facilitate the introduction of the purple CAT. For example, the boundary had to be changed in a particular way to allow the bus to leave the Perth parking levy management area and arrive at the University of Western Australia. It was clear from that and other examples that we needed to modernise that legislation. The idea that half a service can be funded, which will very much reduce congestion in the city, and not the other half, again raises the issue of change. I thank members of the government for their comments.

I want to go through many of the comments made by members on the other side and basically outline how they have misled this house by not giving all the facts. Today, the Leader of the Opposition outlined that he would pause the Perth parking levy. My understanding is that the Leader of the Opposition would scrap the levy. He is opposing it. Is the Leader of the Opposition committing to scrapping the levy?

**Mr R.S. Love:** I am suggesting that you should have considered such a measure and I am suggesting that on the basis of the fact that you have not done, so we will not support the legislation.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The Leader of the Opposition is suggesting that he is committing to pausing or scrapping the levy; is that correct?

**Mr R.S. Love:** We think you should have considered a pause in the levy and some relief for the taxpayers of Western Australia —

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, the election is coming up, Leader of the Opposition.

**Mr R.S. Love:** — who are being hit with \$30 million a year that you cannot spend.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So the Leader of the Opposition's commitment is to scrap the levy?

**Mr R.S. Love:** I am suggesting using \$190 million you have collected and that you should be considering the cost effect of this on the households of Western Australia, and you have not done so.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, this is our policy today. What is the Leader of the Opposition's policy? Is it to scrap the levy?

**Mr R.S. Love:** My policy would have been that I would have considered the effect on the Western Australian taxpayers.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** You are the Leader of the Opposition, there is an election in 18 months. Are you committing to scrap the levy, given all the things you said today?

**Mr R.S. Love:** I certainly would have seen a reduction in the cost to Western Australian taxpayers.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So you are committing to reducing it?

**Mr R.S. Love:** I believe that there are options available. I will go through some of those things with you in consideration in detail.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So you are committing to reducing it? It is 18 months from an election. The Leader of the Opposition does not support this, so obviously his election commitment, his first election commitment as the Leader of the Nationals WA, is to scrap the Perth parking levy. That is incredible.

**Mr R.S. Love:** It is not my first commitment by any means.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** So he is saying that it is not his first commitment, but it is a commitment. I am glad the Leader of the Opposition is out there committing to scrap it, because that is what I am hearing today.

I want to say something about the increases to the levy. The former government increased the Perth parking levy by 400 per cent. The Liberal–National government increased the Perth parking levy by over 400 per cent.

**Mr R.S. Love:** Do you support that?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We have —

**Mr R.S. Love:** You were asking me a question. Do you support that? Are you going to go with that? Why do you not reduce it?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I will tell the Leader of the Opposition what we have done to show him the difference. From 2017–18 to 2023–24, we have increased it by seven per cent, compared with 443 per cent under the Barnett government. The Perth parking levy increased by seven per cent from 2017–18 to 2023–24 compared with 400 per cent under the previous government.

I turn to the cost of living. I will tell members what we have introduced. We have capped public transport fares at the cost of two zones. That means we have cut public transport fares for tens of thousands of Western Australians every day so they can now get to the city for much less. That was not funded from the Perth parking levy, but it helps support public transport and reduces congestion in the city. We have fare-free Sundays on the first Sunday of every month. We have expanded the CAT bus system. We have undertaken all these measures to improve the affordability of transport into the city from the suburbs. We are building Metronet, something that the Nationals WA oppose. What is that about? It is about reducing congestion into the city and supporting public transport. We are doing more to reduce congestion into the city and improve affordability of travel than anyone I have ever seen. For example, Metronet identifies new ways and routes to support public transport usage. The idea that these measures cannot be examined in this context is completely false. We have undertaken a number of measures in relation to this. The other point is that not everything we have done for transport in the city has been funded by the Perth parking levy. Matagarup Bridge was not funded from the Perth parking levy. Improvements to Perth train station were not funded from this levy. Fixing the Hay Street overpass was not funded from the levy. The idea that we only fund city transport projects from this levy is false again. Yes, the funds accumulated. That is because we were funding other projects outside of the levy. As I said, the Matagarup Bridge was not funded from the Perth parking levy; it could have been, but it was not. Therefore, funds accumulated. The funds accumulated under the previous government as well. Funds in the Perth parking levy accumulate, and then they are spent on major infrastructure. Funds accumulated under the previous government, and it then funded the Wellington Street busport. That is what happens; funds have accumulated and now we are funding the overpass.

Turning to some of the comments made, the idea that we should just spend what comes in the door because we cannot let funds accumulate is completely false with special purpose accounts. I say that is false as Treasurer. For example, under the previous government tens of million dollars accumulated, and then the government spent the money—that is what happens—on major pieces of infrastructure. The government saves and then it spends. That is a smart way of doing things. I wish the Leader of the Opposition would absorb this but he is not.

**Mr R.S. Love:** I am absorbing all these things.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, he is not. I am trying to correct all of the things that he said.

**Mr R.S. Love:** I am listening; I am listening to every word.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Did the Leader of the Opposition just hear what I said about Matagarup Bridge?

**Mr R.S. Love:** Yes, I heard what you said.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, he did not. He is too busy scrapping the Perth parking levy. I will tell the Leader of the Opposition the impact it has on regional residents in a minute, when he does that.

We have spent tens of millions of dollars not from the Perth parking levy in the Perth parking levy management area. In relation to the whole idea that we have not thought of things to spend it on, we have; we just did not fund them from the Perth parking levy.

The Leader of the Opposition cannot come in here and say, “These changes are terrible”, but support the purple CAT. The purple CAT arrangement is an example of how the existing legislation did not fit. As I said, we had to manipulate the boundaries to support the purple CAT. Of course, that service supports the CBD and the Perth parking management area. It has been one of the most popular public transport initiatives that we have introduced to increase the number of people who can easily connect to the hospital or universities from the city. It also supports travel through the city.

I have a couple of other things to say. People should think about the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, Perth Cultural Centre and Perth Concert Hall. Those three examples have car parks. The Perth Concert Hall, convention centre and cultural centre car parks have been managed by the City of Perth. Perth parking levy money has been collected at these venues, all three of which need an upgrade. The cultural centre is getting an upgrade, but the convention centre and concert hall also need upgrades. The question is: where do we get that money from? All the theatregoers and people using the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre have been paying money to the Perth parking levy and the City of Perth. The City of Perth has not spent money on the cultural centre, concert hall or convention centre. The City of Perth has collected that money, which has gone into its revenue base. The Perth parking levy has also collected money. A lot of the money saved in that bank account has been collected through users of the convention centre, concert hall and concert centre, so why should that money not be used to improve facilities there in the future? Why would it not?

The convention centre needs a lot of spend; we all understand that. We are working through all the different options. Who should pay for that? Should it be the users of the convention centre who paid in the past or should it be regional residents? The Leader of the Opposition is saying that upgrades of economic, cultural or transport facilities in the city—everything from a new cultural centre to any upgrades to the convention centre—should be paid for by ratepayers and taxpayers of the regions. That is the Leader of the Opposition’s logic. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that if we accept that an upgrade to the convention centre needs to be done, although it is not entirely transport but might have transport elements, past and future users of the car park should not pay for it, but regional

taxpayers should. He wants to transfer obligations away from those using city facilities to people in the regions. I will point out to the people of regional WA that the National Party is arguing against city people paying for city projects; instead, it is arguing for regional people to pay for city projects. By the Leader of the Opposition claiming that he would either scrap, reduce or limit that system, he is saying that regional people will have to step in and the government will have to use general regional taxpayer funds paid by regional people for city projects. That is his logic.

We are widening the scope of the scheme because we understand that a lot of things need to happen in the city. We are doing a lot of those things, whether it be building the new Edith Cowan University campus, a new primary school, new paths that stretch over the water or connecting buses to Subiaco and Nedlands. There is much to be done to continue to activate the city. Those who use the city normally also use some of these other assets that need an upgrade. The proposal is fair. Does the Leader of the Opposition know what is not fair? It is not fair that people who have attended the Perth Concert Hall over all these decades have been paying to use the concert hall, but those who have received those funds have spent nothing on the concert hall—and now its car park is falling in. That is not fair. People have been paying to use the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre, and now its car park is so bumpy it looks like some sort of ocean. No upgrades have been made, and some car park spaces are unable to be used. This is about using a source of revenue to help support further upgrades to transport infrastructure and other key investments in the city.

As I said, we funded a lot of things in the city without using the levy, such as \$2.5 million for the Perth train station forecourt, \$50 million for the Public Transport Authority building, \$2.5 million for the new ferry, \$6 million to raise the Hay Street overpass, over \$80 million to Matagarup Bridge and a million for upgrades to the Elizabeth Quay bus station. A lot of other works have been carried out throughout Claisebrook. We could have used the Perth parking levy, but we did not because we paid for those projects through other parts of government.

We want the ability in the future to help support and expand investment to activate parts of the city. That will also bring in a number of different elements that the opposition will oppose. By voting no to this bill, the opposition will oppose differential rates in the city, the ability to waive fees, the ability to support the connection of new bus services in Subiaco into the city, and using the levy to improve things like cyclepaths in South Perth.

The Leader of the Opposition said that we spent Perth parking levy money on a swimming pool. We have not. He has misled this house again and again on that matter. I will say this in relation to a community aquatic facility in the city: the ratepayers of Northam and regional WA had to pay for their swimming pools. Again, the idea that we should not support this type of infrastructure through this proposal is foreign. The Leader of the Opposition is saying that the ratepayers of Northam who paid for their swimming pool should be paying for the one in the city.

I am a little surprised that the first election commitment from the National Party is to scrap the Perth parking levy. It is now incumbent on the Nationals to stand up and confirm that that is the position of the National Party. Through opposing this bill, it is saying that it will scrap the levy. I will send this to Treasury to have it costed. It will be the National Party's first costed election commitment for the next election campaign. We will get a full costing of what it will mean over the next four years. It will probably cost hundreds of millions of dollars that the Nationals have already committed to. I am not sure that the people of regional WA will support that. I do not know whether the Liberal Party is agreeing to scrap it, too. I suppose it depends.

**Mr R.R. Whitby:** Which minister!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It depends on which shadow minister or Leader of the Opposition decides—the ones inside Parliament or outside. It depends upon who has policy control. It may be the position of the opposition to scrap the Perth parking levy. I cannot wait to explore that a little in consideration in detail. I want to know when members opposite will scrap it and when their legislation will come in. In effect, by opposing this bill, to not be a complete hypocrite, the National Party opposes the levy—thereby making it its first election commitment. As I said, I am happy to debate this in the streets of Northam, in the streets of Margaret River, in the halls of Kununurra and in the less densely populated areas that the Leader of the Opposition is abandoning.

**Mr R.S. Love:** Five years—you've not been able to spend it!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Did the Leader of the Opposition understand it?

**Mr R.S. Love:** You can't spend it on transport infrastructure, and now you've given up on spending on transport infrastructure. That's what you're saying, minister.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** If the Leader of the Opposition could understand English—I do not think he can—I said we have spent \$130 million on transport-related infrastructure in the city that we could have funded from the Perth parking levy, but we chose not to. We have spent money in the city, including on fare-free Sundays and fare caps. We have spent money to reduce congestion. But as I said, if the Leader of the Opposition wants to scrap it, that is up to him. The Leader of the Nationals WA has seen more on the streets of Perth than in regional WA. He is effectively abandoning regional WA in his quest to remain relevant, and targeting the metropolitan area and seats that are held by the Liberal Party. That is what he is doing. I do not know how you guys actually sit in an opposition party room; it would be quite awkward.



The Nationals WA is abandoning regional WA and making this legislation—out of all the legislation—its number one priority. It supported the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill but it is opposing the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023. That is quite a contrast. The opposition wants to scrap the levy. When the National Party is out there campaigning in the seat of Nedlands, the member for Nedlands can talk about how a Liberal–National government would probably see the end of the purple CAT; it would have to go. If the National Party gets its way, it will scrap the levy. That will mean that initiatives like the purple CAT will not be funded.

**Dr K. Stratton:** That's nearly a million people who will be affected.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, one million people will be affected. That is what the opposition is saying: scrap the purple CAT; and there will be no chance of a Subiaco CAT under a Liberal–National government.

**Dr K. Stratton:** So all those kids will have to keep on crossing Thomas Street.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes. There will be no chance of a Subiaco CAT and no more bridges connecting the city to other parts of the southern foreshore. That is an interesting position for the Liberal and National Parties to take.

This is a sensible reform that will modernise the act and support businesses. The member for Cottesloe raised other points. I reiterate that the bill will provide more development certainty for businesses, differential rates, the ability to waive fees and support infrastructure in the city, which will support foot traffic for all businesses. It will help to completely revitalise the CBD.

We have invested in a lot of things including Matagarup Bridge, the new Causeway connection, new pathways and cyclepaths, and the Edith Cowan University campus and Bob Hawke College. We have invested hundreds of millions of dollars into the city and we will continue investing. We want to make sure that that investment continues for many years, but that there is a fair way to pay for it. We have kept levy increases to a minimum; I think it has increased by seven per cent over seven years, compared with 440 per cent under the previous government. We support affordable travel into the city by expanding our rail system, with new train stations at High Wycombe and Redcliffe—I see the member for Forrestfield here. There is also a new train station in Lakelands, the new Ellenbrook and Yanchep lines and the Thornlie–Cockburn Link. We are expanding the network to get more people to leave their cars at home. We have a two-zone public transport fare cap, which I think is the first to have been rolled out in Australia. We are continuing to expand our free bus network through the CAT system. We are doing a lot to reduce congestion and improve revitalisation in the city.

This is a good package of reforms. The Leader of the Opposition never quoted the Auditor General Act, which I asked him to do. He quoted the reporting of it, but did not actually quote the act. As has been confirmed, we have never expended funds outside the criteria of that act. We went beyond some of the original intentions of the act for the purple CAT. We had to change the boundary of the Perth parking management area to follow the route of the purple CAT, so that we would not pick up new businesses to pay the levy, but we were able to fund the CAT. That is what we did. I am proud of the fact that we did that so that we could introduce the purple CAT, but we do not need to change these boundaries every time we want to introduce a new service. The member for South Perth raised a very good point about the South Perth foreshore and the connections to the new Causeway pedestrian bridge. The idea that supporting people getting to the Causeway does not reduce congestion is false. Like I said, I am happy that we are modernising the act and providing a lot of support for businesses. We have invested hundreds of millions of dollars in transport infrastructure.

With regard to the Auditor General's report, it is quite a weird criticism to say that the government is not spending enough money. That is not really an audit criticism. It is a bit of a weird criticism that I am not spending enough money. That is a weird basis for an audit. I have never been criticised for not spending enough money; it would be the first time, in both my private and public life! We are carefully making sure that the levy is used wisely. We see it as a part of continuing to drive activity and support businesses in the CBD. Businesses in the CBD need support; they need foot traffic and people going into the city. The retail section of the CBD is desperate for more people; we are absolutely 100 per cent sure of that. That is why we are creating new bus links; even if they start outside the Perth parking management area, that is fine. We can do that, if it means more active transport connections.

Members should think about the new Causeway bridge and imagine a family day out. They will be able to go across this iconic bridge, which will be both a bridge and a work of art, into the city or along the foreshore. There will be more foot traffic in Elizabeth Quay, and they can then go into the city to support the businesses there. We will see more of that, including a new convention centre and an improved Concert Hall, which will bring even more people into the city. All these things are about bringing more people into the city, more activation, more foot traffic and more support for businesses in the city.

Some of the policies of the past have not worked, and we have all seen that, so let us try to get more people into the city. I agree that country people love the city, and people in the suburbs like the city. They want to be able to go in affordably, and that is why we have fare-free Sundays on the first Sunday of every month. That is why we have capped transport fares, and that is why we are building Metronet—to get more people onto public transport to get around more easily. That is why we introduced the purple CAT.

We also want to continue to support the cultural institutions of the city, like the Perth Cultural Centre Precinct and Perth Concert Hall. We have allocated tens of millions of dollars for upgrades to the concert hall, even though it had car parks attached. The users of those facilities paid for them, but they were not maintained. The Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre will be upgraded and a new Aboriginal cultural heritage centre will be developed—again, it will be a new major tourism icon. There is also the new ECU campus and the new school. Hundreds of millions of dollars are being invested in the improvement of economic activity, better transport connections and better cultural facilities.

If some Perth parking levy funds are used for any of these initiatives, I think it is a good thing, because we want to support the growth of the CBD. Fighting over whether we should be funding the change of colour of a footpath from grey to purple is not where I want to be. I want to support the city growing and, wearing my tourism hat, becoming a place where tourists want to be—a place that is full of activity and life. I want people from the suburbs to come into the city and catch a purple CAT to university or the QEII site. That is where I want things to be. I want to have activity. People have the idea that we will sit around with all our focus on whether we should change the colour of footpaths. I think one of the criticisms from the Auditor General’s report was that I did not give enough consideration to some projects, such as changing the colour of the footpath from grey to red. No, I did not because I am looking at building connections and trying to change the entire fabric of the city because without this type of intervention, the government would not be upgrading the cultural centre, building a new Aboriginal cultural centre, and updating and improving the Perth Concert Hall where the car park was left to fall apart, even though people were collecting revenue from that car park for years. It is about creating the new Edith Cowan University district. It is about a new primary school. We built the new high school with Bob Hawke College. It is about more residential buildings. It is about connections—that is what it is about.

I think this legislation is really good policy. There has been an underinvestment in a lot of different institutions and we are playing catch up. This bill is about making sure that the levy can support businesses in the city because some of the policies of the past did not. The best way to support businesses is to bring customers to their door. That is what this legislation is about for retail businesses—getting customers to the door. This bill is part of the overall package to bring more people into the city and more customers to the door.

#### *Division*

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr D.A.E. Scaife) casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

#### Ayes (43)

Mr S.N. Aubrey	Mr M.J. Folkard	Ms S.F. McGurk	Ms J.J. Shaw
Mr G. Baker	Ms K.E. Giddens	Mr D.R. Michael	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski
Ms L.L. Baker	Ms M.J. Hammat	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Dr K. Stratton
Ms H.M. Beazley	Ms J.L. Hanns	Mr S.A. Millman	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr T.J. Healy	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Mr D.A. Templeman
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mrs L.M. O’Malley	Mr P.C. Tinley
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr S.J. Price	Ms C.M. Tonkin
Ms C.M. Collins	Ms A.E. Kent	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr R.R. Whitby
Mr R.H. Cook	Dr J. Krishnan	Mr J.R. Quigley	Ms S.E. Winton
Ms L. Dalton	Mr P. Lilburne	Ms R. Saffioti	Ms E.L. Hamilton ( <i>Teller</i> )
Ms D.G. D’Anna	Mrs M.R. Marshall	Mr D.A.E. Scaife	

#### Noes (6)

Ms M.J. Davies	Mr R.S. Love	Mr P.J. Rundle
Dr D.J. Honey	Ms L. Mettam	Ms M. Beard ( <i>Teller</i> )

Question thus passed.

Bill (Perth Parking Management Bill 2023) read a second time.

[Leave denied to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

### **PERTH PARKING MANAGEMENT BILL 2023**

#### *Consideration in Detail*

**Clause 1 put and passed.**

**Clause 2: Commencement —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The commencement provisions for the bill are in three parts. Clause 2(c) states —

the rest of the Act — on a day fixed by proclamation.

Discussion in the briefing indicated that fresh regulations were to be drafted due to the nature of this being completely new legislation rather than a rewrite of the 1999 act. What is the state of development of those regulations? What consultation has been undertaken? When is the likely proclamation?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The drafting of regulations will commence once the bill has been passed. Some background policy work has been done to allow consultation to shortly commence with a range of stakeholders, including local councils, peak bodies, such as the Property Council, and other government agencies. There have been wideranging discussions since 2017, but consultation will start and drafting will commence once the bill has been passed.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 3: Objects of Act —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** This is a new insertion—obviously, it is a completely new act—but a difference from the 1999 act is the inclusion of the “Objects of Act” clause. Proposed section 3, “Objects of Act”, states —

The objects of this Act are —

- (a) to provide for licensing and authorising of parking spaces in the PM area in the metropolitan region to manage parking including for 1 or more of the following —

It goes through those areas that have been well-identified in the previous act. It continues —

- (i) to mitigate traffic congestion;
- (ii) to promote a sustainable balance between different modes of transport;
- (iii) to improve accessibility, economic activity or urban amenity;

And, interestingly —

- (b) to provide that licence fees and other revenue may be used for the benefit of the PM area to improve transport, accessibility, economic activity or urban amenity.

We had the discussion in the second reading, but I am wondering whether the minister could work through what she sees as the role of the licence fees and revenue collected from the parking management area. What level of expenditure does she see moving into areas of economic activity and urban amenity as opposed to traditional areas of transport connectivity?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We undertake a lot of initiatives that support accessibility and transport into the Perth parking management area. We could argue that Metronet’s new rail lines and new ways of getting to the city support the objective of this act. That is not and will not be funded by the Perth parking levy. The cap on fares, which makes it more affordable to move into the city, is not funded by this levy, nor will it be. The Matagarup Bridge, which created a new connection into the city, was not funded by the levy. There are a lot of things we have done, and will continue to do, which are not funded by the levy. It will depend on the priority as to how things are funded.

When the member was in government, his government allowed funds to accumulate over time, then spent it on the new busport on Wellington Street. That was a wise decision. It did not build a busport every year. It did not spend everything it collected every year, because that is nonsensical. We accumulate the funds then identify the priority. The priority, part of the City Link project, was to fund the new underground busport. That is what the Liberal–National government did with that money. As a government, we identify emerging priorities and then find sources of funding. An example is the Perth Concert Hall. The car park is unsafe. We have had to close parts of it. We are injecting—I cannot remember. Member for Perth? There is a lot of money in the budget to improve the concert hall. There was a car park under the concert hall. Who collected the revenue? Was it the state government? It collected some of it through the Perth parking levy. Some of the money currently in that fund was collected by people going to the concert hall. What do they get in return from the cultural institution? They get nothing. There are things that may be on the horizon. The concert hall is one, but that has already been funded from other sources.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** Actually, we are spending \$134 million.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We are spending \$134 million on the concert hall. The concert hall had money collected by the city of Perth plus the Perth parking levy. So when the member is talking about the funds in the bank account, some of that was collected by people going to the Perth Concert Hall. Should some of that money be used to support the Perth Concert Hall? Probably, if we are looking at it from a need and nexus point of view. We would suggest it was, from an economic point of view. Tens of millions of dollars were collected through the Perth parking levy from the Perth Concert Hall car park and by the City of Perth and they did not invest in it. Should we fund massive upgrades to cultural institutions with some Perth parking levy funds in the future? Maybe. That is not the plan currently, because we have already funded upgrades to the Perth Concert Hall through the consolidated fund.

We talk about urban amenity and economic activity. Those things help support business. There was another busport in the city—the one that is part of the convention centre. We could potentially use funds from this to support a new busport as part of the convention centre rebuild. But if we were to spend—according to the economic geniuses from the opposition—everything we collect from this fund every year, then we would have no money to fund major infrastructure projects, like the Barnett government did. It increased the levy by 440 per cent. It accumulated funds. It did not spend everything that came through the door. It accumulated funds and then, as part of the City Link project, it built the new underground busport. That was a sensible thing to do. We will look at priorities after the bill is passed; they will be things that improve economic activity. John, do you want to hear from me?

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Perth.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** Keep going. My apologies. You are amazing.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** That was seamless—Austin Powers seamless!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** It is all under control!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** They may be things that we will fund. All I am saying is that we are going to try to support major transport and other infrastructure, economic activity and people coming into the city. The best thing we can do to support businesses in the city is getting customers into the city, especially for the retail stores and cafes. Cafe districts are massive in other cities. There is a lot of activity. We need to continue to support this.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The objects of the act, again, describe that we can expend money in the manners that are prescribed. The bill's name is the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023. The objects of the act refer to the parking management area in the metropolitan region. It does not specify Perth and I understand it is expanded into Subiaco and into the City of Vincent as a parking management area. Is there scope for a review for expansion, given the definition or description of the parking management area as being in the metropolitan region? Is that something the minister is considering as part of what may be allowed under the new act?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, the aim is to allow for expenditure outside the Perth parking management area.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 4685.]

### **GREEN HEAD COASTCARE FORUM**

*Statement by Member for Moore*

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition)** [12.50 pm]: I rise today to commend the organisers and participants of the highly successful Green Head Coastcare Forum held on 11 September. This was the third such forum organised by Northern Agricultural Catchments Council and local Coastcare groups. An annual event, the forum offers local Coastcare groups from Guilderton to Green Head the opportunity to share knowledge and experience in order to promote learning.

This year's forum featured academic presentations on terrestrial and marine environments, followed by reports from local Coastcare groups. The first forum highlighted management of off-road vehicle access to coastal areas across the Shires of Gingin, Dandaragan and Coorow. The Turquoise Coast Management Group and local governments have now created an environmental projects role and that person will produce a management plan to address off-road vehicle access.

The host of this week's forum, the Green Head Coastcare Group, has worked tirelessly over many decades to improve the local coastal environment and its dune restoration works continue. One of its longstanding projects has been the Three Bays Walkway, a 2.8-kilometre sealed footpath, extending from South Bay to Dynamite Bay and Anchorage Bay, offering stunning coastal views. Funded by royalties for regions and Lotterywest and with much in-kind support from the Shire of Coorow, the quality concrete path is truly accessible to all, including people using wheelchairs, prams, gophers and wheeled walking frames.

I thank the Green Head Coastcare Group for its past efforts and ongoing works.

### **MARTU YOUTH FESTIVAL**

*Statement by Member for Pilbara*

**MR K.J.J. MICHEL (Pilbara)** [12.52 pm]: Since being elected in 2017, I have always wanted to attend the Martu Youth Festival. This year, I had the opportunity to attend the festival and drove nearly 12 hours to get to Punmu in the Western Desert.

The Martu Youth Festival is attended by people from the remote communities of Jigalong, Punmu, Kunawarrtji, Kiwirrkurra, Warralong, Strelley, Parnpajinya, Nullagine, Yandeyarra and Parnngurr, who participate in various sports like Australian Football League, softball and junior baseball. The festival has developed into an event providing opportunities for youth through competitive sport, music and culture. It also includes nightly performances in which local musicians and community members perform.

I would like to thank Michael McMonigal, elders Bruce Booth and Milton Chapman, and Newcrest Mining for welcoming me to join the groups of volunteers and teams that work behind the scenes, including Keep Australia Beautiful, the Western Australia Police Force, Football WA, Football West, Fair Game Australia, Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service, Mark Keogh Training, the Australian Army, and the Pilbara Regiment for being there to help in the daily proceedings.

I really enjoyed being a part of the Martu Youth Festival and speaking to members of the surrounding communities. It was an exciting few days in remote Punmu and I give my congratulations to all, especially to the Nullagine Irrungadji Dockers for winning the tournament. I look forward to going to the tournament next year.

**PREMIER'S SCIENCE AWARDS***Statement by Member for Cottesloe*

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe)** [12.53 pm]: I rise to acknowledge the winners and contenders of the annual Premier's Science Awards announced this week. As a scientist, I am always pleased when plaudits are directed to science and scientists, when the significance of scientific contributions to our quality of life and to the expansion of our knowledge of the world is publicly recognised.

I was delighted to learn that this year's Scientist of the Year is Professor Kadambot Siddique, a man I personally know and greatly respect as a person and scientist. Professor Siddique arrived in Western Australia almost 40 years ago as a PhD scholarship recipient to undertake his agricultural PhD research at the University of Western Australia, producing the first thesis on chickpeas in Australia. Professor Siddique is now Hackett Professor of Agriculture at the University of Western Australia.

Professor Siddique has done an enormous amount of work aimed at improving grain and legume production in lower rainfall environments. This work has delivered advancements in agricultural production in our state and far beyond, resulting in his international renown. Professor Siddique is a luminary in his field and can now add to his accolades the title of Western Australia's Scientist of the Year Award.

I wish to congratulate and acknowledge all award winners and nominees for their scientific endeavours and for their contributions to advancing our knowledge of the world around us. Congratulations.

**SPORTING CLUBS — BATEMAN ELECTORATE***Statement by Member for Bateman*

**MS K.E. GIDDENS (Bateman)** [12.54 pm]: I rise to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of the local sports clubs in the Bateman electorate. Sport is an integral part of our community, fostering social inclusion, physical and mental health, community pride and excellence. This is exemplified by Kardinya's own Sam Kerr.

I would like to highlight some of Bateman's other local legends. Palmyra Rugby Union Club had a huge season, capped off by hosting the RugbyWA grand finals at Tompkins Park. Palmyra took out the men's premier division, scoring the winning try in overtime, to bring home the flag for the first time in 32 years. Seven "Pally" players were named in the RugbyWA team of the year. I congratulate the club president, Justin Petersen, and all the Pally family who contributed to this fantastic day.

I say "well done" to Gail Dela-Marta, from Booragoon Junior Football Club, who was named the East Fremantle district winner and finalist from 1 400 nominations in the Rio Tinto WA Football Volunteer of the Year awards.

In a tight match last weekend, the Applecross Mt Pleasant Junior Football Club year 8s took out the win against the Kardinya Suns. I congratulate both teams on a great season.

I recently attended Melville City Hockey Club's milestone awards, and I would like to acknowledge Sophie Vowels, who won the pride of work award; Graeme Coleman, who was awarded the Paul Harris fellow award; and Brianna Rennie, who was awarded life membership. David Timmel has a special club there. Good luck to the men's division 1 and women's division 2 teams for this weekend's grand final.

I thank and congratulate all the players, coaches, officials, volunteers and supporters who have contributed to our local clubs at all levels. I am very proud to represent such a vibrant and diverse sporting community in this Parliament.

**KELLERBERRIN SHOOTING***Statement by Member for Central Wheatbelt*

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt)** [12.55 pm]: Last Thursday, the small wheatbelt town of Kellerberrin suffered a tragedy that resulted in the violent loss of two lives.

Kellerberrin is a town of about 800 people—people who live and work alongside each other, and have extended family and friends, some going back generations. In the wake of this event, grief, sadness and a sense of disbelief are rippling through the close-knit community.

Sadly, Mr Terry Czernowski, a father, valued employee and community member, lost his life due to gunshot wounds. From the outset, I would like to extend my deepest sympathy to the Czernowski, Sparrow and extended families for their loss.

I also feel deeply for the family and friends of Mr Lachlan Bowles, who took his own life on the same day.

I offer my gratitude and thanks to the Western Australia Police Force, which responded swiftly on the day. From all accounts, police have been sensitive and respectful in their interactions with those who were directly impacted at the scene of the shooting and in the aftermath.

I pay tribute to the first responders, who were Terry's work colleagues, St John Ambulance volunteers and hospital staff. They faced a horrific situation, dealing with people they knew. Emotions are still very raw, but the foundation

of the town—the good people, strong local leadership, neighbours and friends—will provide support to those who need it. As the local member, I will work with community leaders and service providers to ensure that this little town receives the support it deserves.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr D.A.E. Scaife):** I take the liberty of adding Parliament’s sympathies to the Czernowski family and the Kellerberrin community.

**Members:** Hear, hear!

#### EDMUND RICE CENTRE — TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

*Statement by Member for Mirrabooka*

**MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka — Parliamentary Secretary)** [12.57 pm]: I rise to acknowledge the incredible work of the Edmund Rice Centre WA in Mirrabooka, which is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary this year. From humble beginnings in 1998, the centre has remained at the heart of the Mirrabooka community for 25 years. The Edmund Rice Centre now provides a wide range of support services to refugee, migrant and Aboriginal people in Mirrabooka and around the metropolitan area, with a special focus on diversity, dignity, empowerment and youth leadership. Its services include settlement services for refugees, language classes, women’s programs and programs for Aboriginal children. It offers extensive youth services, with a focus on sport, the arts and leadership.

The developing community leaders program has produced many outstanding community leaders, including Senator Fatima Payman and Hon Ayor Makur Chuot. Several of its alumni have been recognised in Western Australian youth and multicultural awards, which is a testament to the outstanding work the Edmund Rice Centre is doing to encourage and support young multicultural community leaders.

I would particularly like to acknowledge Amy Berson, the general manager; the indefatigable Christina Ward; and all the board members and staff for their contributions to the success of the Edmund Rice Centre. I also thank the many, many volunteers for their extensive contributions over the last 25 years. Congratulations to everyone who has been a part of the Edmund Rice Centre story. We are so lucky to have them. I look forward to seeing what they achieve over the next 25 years.

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*

#### VISITORS — BINDJAREB MOB

*Statement by Speaker*

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [2.00 pm]: On behalf of the member for Murray–Wellington, I welcome the wonderful Bindjareb mob to the Speaker’s gallery today. It was a delight to meet them briefly in the corridor before this. Welcome.

#### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

##### VIOLENT OFFENDERS — BAIL AND SUPERVISION ORDER RELEASE

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** Thank you!

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Madam Speaker!

**The SPEAKER:** Leader of the Opposition.

**629. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I do not believe the Speaker had finished her request before the member for Mount Lawley got up.

**The SPEAKER:** There is a good reason that you got the call, Leader of the Opposition. It provided entertainment for idle minds, but I could also see that the public gallery was quite engaged with the member for Mount Lawley’s efforts. Good effort, member for Mount Lawley; better luck next time!

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Before I ask my question, I would like to take a moment to acknowledge that today is R U OK? Day. I see the Premier is wearing his badge. I must have missed the message about wearing the badge because I have not been able to find one.

**Mr R.H. Cook:** I’ve got a spare one in my office, member. I will get it for you after questions.

**Ms S.E. Winton:** Are you okay?

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Well, that is the question people should be taking the time to ask others today, as it is very important to look after one another and simply ask those words: are you okay?

I refer to the outrageous revelation that Mr Danny Hodgson’s attacker, who was out on bail at the time of that attack, has now been charged with assaulting yet another Western Australian after being released early on a supervision order.

- (1) Why is it that violent offenders continue to be released early only to go on to reoffend against innocent Western Australians?
- (2) Noting that the Attorney General called this man a “hardened criminal”, why has he not been treated as such in the government’s justice system?

(3) Does the Premier accept that his government is now soft on crime?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please, members!

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

I thank the member for the question. Do we wish people a happy R U OK? Day? Perhaps I will wish people a proactive R U OK? Day. I invite everyone to reach out to their friends and neighbours to ask them this very important question.

(1)–(3) I know the Attorney General spoke extensively to the media about this matter earlier today and I entirely agree with him. I think the comments that he made were absolutely appropriate. We are appalled by the repeated attacks by this particular offender and saddened that Danny has to relive the trauma that he experienced as a result of the initial attack. I remind members that this perpetrator was a juvenile, and so we are all, I think, bound both morally and legally to make sure that we make our comments in an appropriate context and say that this person was arrested and the police opposed bail, as we expect them to, but, ultimately, the courts decided to provide him with bail. The courts are independent. It is not a reflection of government policy. It is not a matter for the opposition to enter into political hyperbole; it is simply a fact of life.

Subsequent to this most recent offending, the Commissioner for Victims of Crime contacted the Prisoners Review Board, and as a result of that the perpetrator was put behind bars, as we would expect. That is as we would like the system to operate. Obviously, the judge made a call. I will not reflect on whether that was the right or wrong call, but, obviously, we expect the system to be able to respond by making sure that this person is removed from the streets. In this case, the Commissioner for Victims of Crime was able to make their opinion heard.

That R U OK? Day badge is from my office.

#### VIOLENT OFFENDERS — BAIL AND SUPERVISION ORDER RELEASE

**630. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. What is the Premier's government doing to improve the safety of the Western Australian community in the face of these repeated incidents?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

We are making people responsible for their actions. In this instance, the young perpetrator in question will be held responsible for his actions, and there are consequences for that. We all wish that the circumstances did not occur and we all sympathise and empathise with Danny Hodgson and the trauma that he has experienced as a result of this young offender's actions. We are absolutely appalled by it. In this instance, the police have done the right thing by opposing bail, but the courts overruled the police and released him. I understand that the Attorney General has sought advice on whether this individual should have been out in the community at the time. What happened to Danny Hodgson was appalling and should not have happened, but the Commissioner for Victims of Crime was able to reach out and make the appropriate appeals and as a result of that the perpetrator of this offence is now behind bars.

#### HOSPITALS — EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

**631. Mr S.A. MILLMAN to the Premier:**

Before I ask my question, on behalf of the diligent and hardworking member for Churchlands, can I please acknowledge in the public gallery the year 11 students from Newman Senior High School, and everyone else who is in the public gallery this afternoon for question time.

I refer to the Cook Labor government's investment and reforms to enhance Western Australia's emergency departments.

- (1) Can the Premier update the house on this government's efforts to reduce ambulance ramping hours?
- (2) Can the Premier outline how reforms will continue to optimise emergency care across to Western Australia's public hospitals?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

(1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. It is an important one. As we all know, health systems worldwide in recent years have experienced the biggest pressure test in more than a century. The after-effects of the COVID-19 pandemic globally have put health systems around the world under unprecedented pressure and our health system is not immune to that pressure. The pandemic was a major challenge in itself, but the after-shocks of COVID have been felt universally. Health service providers of more than 50 000 people who work in our public health system have done an incredible job throughout these difficulties, and we

thank them for their incredible efforts. As a government, we are backing up their hard work with strong investment. We have dedicated significant funding to them, and the Minister for Health is delivering important reforms. We have committed more than \$452 million of new and continuing initiatives to improve emergency access to our hospitals. That investment is in this term of government alone and is starting to make a difference.

Changes are afoot in emergency care, and continuous improvement is the ongoing goal. The government is currently implementing major reforms, and I will go through a few of those. The government is establishing a virtual emergency department with new community-based services; implementing the first phase of the state health operations centre; introducing new dedicated teams in hospitals to address discharge delays and barriers to timely care; and reducing the number of long-stay patients awaiting aged-care or National Disability Insurance Scheme support. It is a broad approach because there is no simple fix for the wide range of issues impacting our health system, and all other health systems at the same time. It is about the patient journey as a whole, from the start to the finish.

The progress is incremental, but we believe that it is making inroads, particularly in the area of ambulance ramping. I will take the chamber through some of those details. At our metropolitan hospitals, we saw an 18 per cent reduction in ambulance ramping hours between February and July compared with the same period last year. This is particularly notable given an increase of nearly 150 per cent in flu hospitalisations in January to June compared with the same period in 2022. Even though we have had a nine per cent increase in the number of ambulances presenting to our EDs, the ramping times have reduced significantly. This was coupled with a significant surge in RSV cases and COVID-19 complications this winter season. In July alone, the number of hours that ambulances spent ramped outside hospitals dropped by 30 per cent—almost one-third. At the same time, Western Australia recorded the strongest population growth in the country. Even though we could anticipate, throughout the flu season and given we had population growth, that we would see an increase in emergency department presentations, ramping actually dropped by 30 per cent, and that is a great outcome for the health system.

I want to thank all those who have been involved as parts of this journey and the important work that is being done at all levels of our health system to continue to make sure that we improve the patient experience and journey. I commend the Minister for Health for the work that she and her team have been doing. This work is not going to change results overnight, but we can now see it starting to have an impact. Our health system has confronted these challenges and dealt with them better than most others, so we are really pleased to now see them taking effect. This is in sharp contrast to observations of our health system and these measures that other people have said are bandaid measures that achieve less than nothing.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** As we have shown time and again —

**The SPEAKER:** Order, members! I want to call the Leader of the Liberal Party to order. You did not ask this question. Your interjections are incessant. You are just provoking other people to respond to them. That is not acceptable. Please discontinue.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I did not even refer to the member for Vasse, but I was going to observe that, once again, we have demonstrated that the member for Vasse is wrong.

#### PRISONERS REVIEW BOARD — EARLY PAROLE — LUKE NOORMETS

**632. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:**

I refer to the opposition's repeated calls for an urgent government review of decision-making processes by the Prisoners Review Board following the PRB's decision to ignore Luke Noormets' violent history and past convictions when approving his early release.

- (1) Given the news that Danny Hodgson's one-punch attacker had been released early and has since assaulted a woman, what is the government going to do to stop repeat offenders from being released early?
- (2) Why is the Cook Labor government putting the freedom of violent offenders ahead of community safety?

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

- (1)–(2) The member for Vasse takes my breath away, fair dinkum. It was this government—sorry, it was Premier McGowan's government, of which the present Premier was Deputy Premier—that introduced the serious high-risk offenders' legislation to keep dangerous offenders in prison beyond their sentence. It was criticised at the time by some members of the opposition. We have taken away the liberty of people who are dangerous who have already served their sentence. That is what we are doing.



I turn to the case of Noormets, which the member raised. I have sought information on this. Members will see and no doubt have noted that on the Prisoners Review Board website, the board gives reasons for its decisions. The reasons given for the Noormets matter and for him being suitable for parole was that there was no prior history of violence. I am a little at a loss to understand that. He had not been convicted of an assault prior to the dreadful incident resulting in the murder, the loss of life. However, on 12 April 2011, he went to his former partner's home and made a menace of himself at the front door. He was not granted access. He was making threats about taking his own life or damaging himself. The police were called because the occupiers would not let him in and a police order was issued for him to stay away from the premises for 48 hours to give the lady and the occupants the opportunity of getting a violence restraining order. But before they had that opportunity, he returned later that night, in the early hours of the morning. He hid in a bush, contrary to the police order. When the couple went inside, he kicked the door in, smashed a stained-glass window so that he could put his hand through it and unlock the door and he went inside and issued threats against the new boyfriend, who the family had wisely secreted in a linen cupboard. This was a violent occurrence. However, he was charged with trespass, wilful damage of the doors and breaching the police order. They were the three convictions. Those three convictions on his record were before the Prisoners Review Board. I regard that there has been insufficient detail placed before the Prisoners Review Board. It had no knowledge of what was on the integrated court management system. I am making the inquiries into whether we need to have better information, going forward. I regard any breach of a police order or a family violence restraining order as a circumstance that the Prisoners Review Board should give great weight to because it is a predictor of further violence.

We have done a lot. We have done more than the conservative government did in eight years to keep violent people off the street. I will leave it there and wait for the member's supplementary question.

#### PRISONERS REVIEW BOARD — EARLY PAROLE — LUKE NOORMETS

##### **633. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:**

I have a supplementary question. Why has it taken another example of a violent offender being released early and reoffending for this government to act, and when will we find out the outcome of the review into the reckless decision, which has ended in tragedy?

##### **Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

Firstly, it is not a reckless decision. It was a decision made on the evidence before the board at the time. Unfortunately, not all the information that had been gathered by the police some years before was placed before the board because it was not part of a conviction. Optimally, it should have been before the board so that it had a greater view of the person's background, but it was not. An inquiry is not being commissioned, as such. I, as the Attorney General with the Prisoners Review Board fitting within the basket of portfolio responsibilities that I have, albeit that it is a completely independent body, will be making the appropriate inquiries about what we can do to improve the system so more of this information is put before the board at the time. It has to be put before the board and it should have had the information before it that was on the police computer.

#### TOURISM — DIRECT FLIGHTS

##### **634. Ms H.M. BEAZLEY to the Minister for Tourism:**

I refer to the Cook Labor government's efforts to build a strong and sustainable tourism industry.

Can the minister update the house on this government's efforts to secure more direct flights to Western Australia, including with important markets like Vietnam, and can the minister outline what this means for local jobs and communities, particularly in regional WA?

##### **Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

From the outset, I have a couple of thank-yous. Thank you to the students from a school in the member for Scarborough's electorate who have made these beautiful bracelets. I thank the year 6 students of Yuluma Primary School for these beautiful R U OK? bracelets that we have all received, so thank you very much.

I have news hot off the press about WA's performance at the national tourism awards. The members for Mandurah and Murray-Wellington came up to me very excited this morning.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** And the member for Dawesville.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The member for Dawesville as well.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** She was so excited she has gone home!

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** There was too much excitement for her to take, so she has headed home to celebrate.

Mandurah was crowned the nation's Top Tourism Town, recognised for its aquatic adventures, fine dining and entertainment and tourism experiences, as well as its accessibility to the capital city, being connected by a train line.

Dwellingup took out the Tiny Tourism Town category, putting the Murray River region's swimming holes and world-class mountain bike trails on the map. In the member for Kimberley's electorate, WA-based Rosanna Angus took the Top Tour Guide Award for her work running Oolin Sunday Island Cultural Tours as well as on the board of the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council. It was a big night at the awards. I congratulate all regional tourism operators.

On the question of direct flights, we know that the COVID-19 pandemic hit the worldwide aviation market very hard. Following the strong leadership of the previous Minister for Tourism, the now Premier, we have invested significantly in reconnecting WA to the rest of the world. The good news is that our aviation capacity is up to 92 per cent of pre-COVID levels and we are working to establish direct links around the world. Of course, we have seen the recommencement of direct flights to Rome. More recently, I had the great pleasure to announce that, from December, Vietnam Airlines will be flying into Perth. That new direct link will start on 7 December. I know the Vietnamese community has strongly supported and is very excited about this direct connection. Vietnam, with its growing middle class, is keen to expand its connections to the rest of the world. Of course, many people with Vietnamese ancestry would love to host their friends and families in Perth. I was very excited to work with Vietnam Airlines on that connection. In recent months, we also announced new connections into Auckland, Jakarta, Singapore and Tokyo. The first flight from Tokyo will happen soon. There is more work to be done. It is no secret that we want direct flights to India. The Indian connection in our caucus is very strong. We are very keen to work with Indian airlines to get a direct connection. We are also keen to recommence direct flights to China as well.

Direct flights will provide a more stable environment for our tourism industry by enabling more visitors to come to WA, and a bigger market for international education and international students. Parents are far more comfortable with putting their loved ones on a direct flight to Perth, so we understand that direct links will help the international education space. We are keen to keep working on this. The job is not finished. I am very excited about and very much value the connections we have made. I thank everyone, including the former tourism minister, who worked hard to secure and commit funding to get those connections around the world.

#### FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDERS — GPS TRACKING

##### **635. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:**

I refer to the WA Labor government's \$15.5 million, two-year GPS tracking trial for family and domestic violence offenders that was launched in August 2020 and concluded more than 12 months ago. So far, the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence has been unable to answer simple questions about this.

**The SPEAKER:** Member, you cannot run an argument or commentary in your question. You can have a preamble in order to make your question intelligible, but I urge you to ask the question appropriately of the Attorney General and not to include criticism, real or otherwise, of other members.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I ask the following questions.

- (1) What was the total number of FDV offenders subject to GPS tracking during the trial period?
- (2) Are any FDV offenders in WA still subject to GPS tracking; and, if not, why not?
- (3) What has happened to the additional 15 adult community corrections staff and two dedicated, around-the-clock police officers announced as part of the trial?

##### **Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

- (1)–(3) As to the last question, I will wait for my friend and colleague the Minister for Corrective Services to return to the chamber. I would be asking his empty chair at the moment.

It is a very serious question. The two-year FDV GPS tracking trial was an election commitment, as the member stated in her question. The department is evaluating the data from those packages. The evaluation is examining three key questions: Was the trial implemented as intended? Was the trial aligned with best practice? Did the trial achieve the intended community safety outcomes? I have asked the Department of Justice to provide me with its findings. I have a document called *Evaluation of the FDV GPS tracking trial—Early insights*. It is not the final report. As the member said, the trial ran for two years. It has been a year since the trial ended, but some people were put on the trial towards the end of the two years, so those people had to be tracked for a period after the conclusion of the trial. It would not be right to include someone in the twenty-third month and then conclude and report because the department would not know what had happened to that individual. I expect to receive a comprehensive evaluation in the coming months. In the meantime, most of the answers to the member's inquiries are set out in this preliminary report, which I now table.

[See paper [2231](#).]

**Mr J.R. QUIGLEY:** I refer to the key findings of that report. GPS tracking conditions were imposed on 137 FDV offenders in 159 cases throughout the two-year trial. There is no end date on the legislative amendments that enabled the GPS tracking of FDV offenders—that is there forever. The take-up of the new GPS tracking option for FDV

offenders has continued to increase since the trial ended and more people have gone on that program. In fact, almost double the number of offenders had GPS tracking devices fitted in the year following the trial than the average number during the trial period. We have doubled the number of people with GPS tracking in one year since the conclusion of the trial. Since August 2022, 122 FDV offenders had been fitted with GPS tracking. The department advises me that with a new sentencing option such as this, it takes time for the courts and other stakeholders to ramp up awareness of the program. As the judiciary and more stakeholders become aware of it, we expect a bigger take-up, with more tracking devices ordered to be fitted.

The Commissioner for Victims of Crime has been actively engaged in supporting victims involved in the trial and monitoring their perceptions. In 83 per cent of cases in which GPS monitoring conditions were being considered, 60 per cent of victims wanted tracking imposed. The preliminary report shows that GPS tracking has not been limited to offenders who breached a family violence restraining order with a further act of family violence, which was the initial parameter, and that 19 offenders who met this specific criterion were tracked during the trial. Early analysis of the data indicates that at least 118 additional FDV offenders were tracked in the trial period, taking it to a total of 137 offenders tracked during the trial, with the monitoring condition imposed on 159 occasions. I particularly thank the Commissioner for Victims of Crime, Ms Kati Kraszlan, and the Western Australian Office of Crime Statistics and Research. That was another initiative of the Labor government on coming to power—not to introduce policies based just on guesswork but to have an Office of Crime Statistics and Research to guide us on policy issues. I thank them for expediting the *Early insights* paper for Parliament. I look forward to receiving the final report, which I will table in due course.

#### FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OFFENDERS — GPS TRACKING

##### **636. Ms L. METTAM to the Attorney General:**

I ask a supplementary question. Will the GPS tracking trial for family and domestic violence offenders now be permanently in place and will Dave Tax, who assaulted an individual in Kununurra, be subject to it?

**The SPEAKER:** Sorry, member, you have asked that question. You cannot ask two questions by putting “and” in the middle.

##### **Mr J.R. QUIGLEY replied:**

As to the second part of the question, I cannot answer that. That is giving an opinion. As to the first part of the question, as I said, this legislation is in place for the ages. We had a trial to see whether the right offenders were being fitted, how the program was going and what improvements we could make to it. As I pointed out, since the conclusion of the trial, more offenders have been fitted with bracelets than during the trial. It is there forever to protect victims. Some victims do not want their abusers put on the trial, and there are a couple of reasons for that. One is that they are in a continuing relationship and they do not want their abuser to wear a bracelet. Another reason is that the victim has been relocated to a secret address and they do not want their abuser to know that. There are a number of reasons that will all be addressed in the final report, which I will table in Parliament as soon as possible.

#### SOCIAL HOUSING — HOUSING AUSTRALIA FUTURE FUND

##### **637. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Housing**

I would also like to acknowledge in the Speaker’s gallery today the wonderful Bindjareb mob from the Harvey Aboriginal Corporation and thank them for all their cultural awareness of my region.

I refer to the Cook Labor government’s commitment to deliver 4 000 additional social homes across Western Australia.

- (1) Can the minister advise the house how this government is working with the federal Labor government to deliver thousands of additional affordable homes in Western Australia through the Housing Australia Future Fund?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house if he is aware of anyone who opposes this important investment in housing?

##### **Mr J.N. CAREY replied:**

I want to —

##### **Mr W.J. Johnston interjected.**

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** Yes, I might. I want to thank the member for her question.

- (1)–(2) As members may be aware, there is fantastic news from the federal Parliament that the Housing Australia Future Fund Bill has now passed through Parliament. What that means for all Australians is a very ambitious program with a clear fund. That \$10 billion fund will generate ongoing income for investment in social and affordable housing. Although it has a very bold target of 30 000 affordable and social homes, it guarantees that \$500 million each year will be invested in that housing and that states will be given an individual guarantee of 1 200 homes. I am really excited by this ambitious program that will match the work that we are undertaking with our \$2.6 billion program in social housing and homelessness to deliver 4 000 homes.

It took a bit to get there and I am pleased to see that finally the Greens came to the table, but it is sad to note that the Liberal and National Parties opposed this fund. In fact, the federal Liberal shadow Minister

for Housing, Hon Michael Sukkar, said it is “utterly ridiculous”. I find that the Liberals and Nationals are isolated on housing and planning matters. In fact, industry stakeholders, community housing, social housing and everyone else who is deeply concerned about housing, has endorsed our program and the federal government. In fact, I note that the Community Housing Industry Association’s chief executive officer said —

“If we look back over the last 10 years, there have not been any federal government programs of note,” ...

That is a brilliant description of the previous Liberal–National federal government. It took no action on housing. In fact, it finished and cut funding for housing in remote communities. As a result, our state government had to step in.

Of course, we see a similar picture at a state level. The Liberal and National Parties have no policies on housing or planning. As the Minister for Transport highlighted yesterday, the shadow Minister for Planning is focused on traffic in Cottesloe. The primary focus of members opposite is traffic in Cottesloe. Every state in Australia is facing incredible housing challenges. The national cabinet says that we must streamline planning approvals and processes, and that is what our state is doing. We are working on a second package of planning reforms to boost housing supply. What do we see from the Liberals and Nationals? They want more red tape by opposing significant pathways that will oppose major housing development, and their primary focus for their planning spokesperson is traffic in Cottesloe. If that is not a demonstration that that side is completely out of touch, that all they care about is traffic in Cottesloe, we face a very clear choice at the next election between a side that has not one policy on streamlining housing approvals versus this side that has a very clear record and an ambitious agenda to deliver housing for all Western Australians.

#### CORRECTIVE SERVICES — ON-COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

##### **638. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier**

I refer to comments from a Department of the Premier and Cabinet spokesperson in November last year that the Kimberley on-country facility was progressing well and that the program was expected to commence in 2023. I also note the answer provided to me by the Minister for Regional Development stating that only \$564 000 of the allocated \$3 million has been spent and that that money is purely for planning.

How can Western Australians be confident in this government’s approach to youth justice given the lack of progress in delivering the on-country facility?

##### **Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

I thank the member for the question. I would also like to commend the Minister for Regional Development who is doing a lot of work in this area. It is an important project and one to which we are committed. In November 2022, I suspect that particular member of the public service that the member paraphrased was probably correct. What that particular member of the public service did not have an insight into was that by January 2023, we would have a once-in-a-hundred-year flood episode in the Kimberley that changed everything.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please, members! I would like to hear from the Premier.

**Mr R.H. COOK:** I appreciate the Leader of the Opposition’s frustration because we are all frustrated by the flood but for different reasons. We are concerned about the impact it had on the community, the devastation that it caused and the wiping out of the Fitzroy River Bridge that devastated the economy of the region. The Leader of the Opposition is worried because he has perhaps missed out on the opportunity for a little political hit here, but that is not our concern, member. That was a one-in-a-hundred-year event and the particular facility that we are anticipating for the Marlamanu project was impacted by that flood. Obviously, we need to take account of that. It has an impact in terms of our risk management profile for the facility and on our ability to redevelop the facility because, quite frankly, we wanted all tools and shovels on the job to fix the impact of that devastating flood episode. But we are committed to the project and we will continue to move forward with it.

Since November 2022, as the member mentioned, something else happened: I became Premier. I am committed to the project, and I have tasked the Minister for Corrective Services with the job of including it as part of his work around juvenile detention to continue to make sure that we reform that area. Progress is being made. I am sorry that it is not to the member’s satisfaction. I think a once-in-100-year flood probably has something to do with the delays that we are experiencing, but we look forward to continuing that project. Progress is being made. I am sorry that it is not to the member’s satisfaction.

#### CORRECTIVE SERVICES — ON-COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

##### **639. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I have a supplementary question. How can Western Australians take the Premier’s commitment seriously when we understand that he has not yet even approved the facility at cabinet level?

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

I am not sure that the member has insights into cabinet decisions.

**Mr S.A. Millman:** Not for a while yet!

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Member for Mount Lawley, members of the Nationals WA used to excuse themselves from cabinet if it was not something to do with RforR. They did not care about any other decisions that were made in cabinet.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Mr R.H. COOK:** Even if he was in cabinet, he would not have been there to see that decision getting made!

Progress is being made, and we are continuing to work up the model of care that will take place in that facility, we are continuing to understand the construction opportunities that are there and the challenges that have now presented as a result of that flood incident, and we will continue to move forward.

This is an important project because it is what we are about, and that is making sure that people can receive appropriate care when they are in detention, and, in this case, on country. This stands in stark contrast with the approach of members opposite to juvenile detention when they were in government, which was to shut the remand centre and put all those kids from Rangeview Remand Centre into the same facility at Banksia Hill Detention Centre. We are all now reaping the rewards of their neglect. We are here to fix up their mess. We are making progress on that, I think the Minister for Corrective Services is doing a great job, and we look forward to more progress.

## INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

**640. Ms L.L. BAKER to the Minister for International Education:**

My question is to the member for the best tourism town in Australia, who also happens to be the Minister for International Education.

In relation to his recent visit to Indonesia with the Premier's delegation, could the minister outline to the house how the Cook Labor government's commitment to diversifying the economy is resulting in an increased number of international students?

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:**

I thank the member for Maylands. Just before I answer, I want to correct something. In the debate yesterday about the Western Australian Institute of Sport, I referred to the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers to conduct the cultural and governance review. That is not correct; it is actually KPMG. I just correct that.

I also want to bathe in the glory of Mandurah winning the top regional tourism town, and, of course, bathe in the glory of the Murray River, with Dwellingup being announced as the top tiny tourism town. I acknowledge both local governments, the City of Mandurah and the Shire of Murray, for their commitment to tourism in our region, on Bindjareb country.

**Mrs R.M.J. Clarke:** And the Peel Development Commission!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes, indeed; we will mention that!

Today, we are talking about international education. This is a great news story for Western Australia, the Western Australian economy and our education sector in the state because, as we know, the figures for international education continue to climb, and we continue to claw back our market share of the number of international students. As the member highlighted, my recent trip to Indonesia with the Premier, Minister Johnston and Minister Jarvis continues to build upon a range of connections to our near neighbours, including an international education sector.

In answer to the member's question, I am really pleased to highlight that we are seeing a wonderful increase in recovery. Our numbers now see just under 50 000 international students enrolled as at June 2023, which is 8 540, or 21 per cent, more than the previous record high for June of 40 000 in 2020. Western Australia had just over 24 000 international student commencements as of June 2023—again, a 36 per cent increase over the previous high record of 18 000 in June 2016. The trajectory is going very well. This is very good for not only the economy, but also the community of Western Australia, because it means that young people are studying in Western Australia from all around the world, many of them from our near neighbours, building great relationships and great cultural relationships.

We know the strength of the alumni; we know that international students who have studied in Western Australia are tremendous alumni and tremendous marketers themselves of the benefits of Western Australia to international students. We know that we are considered a very safe place. We know that we are considered to deliver high-quality education and high-quality vocational education and training. Those numbers continue to grow, and we will keep on doing that. We have done that, as the member will be aware—as I look at her there; yes, there she is—through investment by the McGowan and then the Cook government. The record investment in international education of over \$41 million over two budgets is delivering bursaries for students who have come to Western Australia, and

delivering accommodation support, and I will announce very shortly the Premier's scholarships. There is a raft of programs aimed at supporting students as they arrive in Western Australia to study, and many of them, of course, work and support our industries like the hospitality industry.

We are also growing in the regions. We have a regional focus as well. I am pleased that the program within the TAFE regional international student strategy that is offering \$5 000 bursaries is now seeing numbers increasing. That program is being delivered in Broome, Geraldton, Northam, Kalgoorlie, Bunbury and Albany, and I am really pleased for the member for Murray–Wellington and the member for Dawesville, who is still celebrating that wonderful win. She is out there; I can hear her running around. I know what she is doing! She is down there on the foreshore waving the flag! But the Peel campus in Mandurah will commence in semester 1.

This is a great story. This demonstrates why investment in the international education sector is so important, but it also underpins the Cook government's and the Premier's absolute commitment to making sure that we continue to diversify our economy. Whether it is in the creative industries or in international education, science and innovation, this is all about diversifying our economy. It is a great news story. I am very pleased to share it with the member for Maylands and all the members here, and we will keep working hard to continue to increase those numbers into the future.

#### TARGET 120 SITES

#### 641. Ms M. BEARD to the Minister for Community Services:

I refer to the government's single policy to address youth crime across regional communities, the Target 120 program, which the minister described as the most important and significant social program of this government.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that the program is now operational in all nine expanded locations announced in May 2022?
- (2) Can the minister confirm that the program is operational in all 20 locations announced to date?
- (3) Can the minister provide details of how many participants have been through the program to date?

#### Ms S.E. WINTON replied:

- (1)–(3) I thank the member for her question and her interest in supporting young people, and particularly young people at risk in our communities. We know that providing supports for young people at risk is a complex thing. We also know, as the member rightly identified, that the Target 120 program—a key priority of this government, with some \$43 million investment into this program in 20 locations around the state—is absolutely essential if we are going to make a difference in young people's lives to intervene, to support them early, and to steer them away from a path of coming before the juvenile justice system. Since I have been the minister, it has been my great privilege to travel around the state to meet with various community sector organisations and Aboriginal community-controlled organisations that are delivering this program right around the state. Also, every three weeks, I hook up specifically and talk to project leaders in each of the locations to understand the successes they are having with young people, and also to understand some of the challenges—they are complex challenges when working with these young people—and how we can better support the program to have further success.

In relation to Carnarvon, I confirm that on Tuesday I had a phone hook-up with Ngala, which is now running the program there and having great success in onboarding young people and supporting them. In that instance, it is having great success in working closely and collaboratively with the local school in Carnarvon, because we know that one of the main drivers of keeping kids engaged is education. Many of the young people who are coming into the Target 120 program are disengaged from schools. The Carnarvon example is just one example of a community service organisation that is working with young people and building relationships with schools and other service providers in its community to help support those young people.

If the member would like to put the question on notice, I am happy to provide her with more specific numbers around locations. We have funded 20 locations in the state. I am happy to take it on notice to provide the member with more specific information about which locations, how many young people are currently in the program and the kind of success we have had with them.

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** Is it operational in all 20 locations?

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** Can I finish?

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

Several members interjected.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** Can I finish my answer?

In relation to two of the locations, Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek, negotiations are at an advanced stage with a service provider to roll out the program in those towns. I repeat what I have said in this place before: it is challenging

for service providers right around the regions to have the capacity to roll out some of the programs, least of all because of staffing issues and the need to onboard people to roll out those programs. We are working as hard as we can to support local organisations. We have provided funding of \$43 million to help them step up and roll out the initiative.

TARGET 120 SITES

**642. Ms M. BEARD to the Minister for Community Services:**

I have a supplementary question. If the program is running as expected and promised, will the government extend existing funding arrangements to extend the program across a broader region?

**Ms S.E. WINTON replied:**

The member might remember that in this year's budget, we extended the funding for all the sites until June 2025. That provided the certainty and confidence that sector organisations needed that this government is committed to that program.

JOHN FORREST NATIONAL PARK

**643. MR S.J. PRICE to the Minister for Environment:**

Just before I ask my question, as a Harvey boy, I, too, would like to welcome to Parliament Sharon Cooke and the other representatives of Harvey Aboriginal Corporation who are here today. It is great to see you all.

I refer to the Cook Labor government's commitment to transform the iconic John Forrest National Park. Can the minister outline to the house how the delivery of this redevelopment and improved facilities will enhance the recreational opportunities available at this popular tourism destination?

**Mr R.R. WHITBY replied:**

I thank the member for Forrestfield for his interest in and ongoing advocacy for the environment. I have visited his electorate many times and engaged in environmental activities on sustainability. As do many members and others in Western Australia, the member has a great regard for our oldest national park. John Forrest National Park was the first national park in Western Australia. This government has a great record in creating new national parks and investing in infrastructure for them. We are also getting on with the job of looking after our established legacy national parks. There is no finer old national park in Western Australia than John Forrest, which is a very convenient day trip up into the hills.

**The SPEAKER:** Hear, hear.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** It has sensational views across Perth. We are investing heavily in re-creating infrastructure or providing new opportunities so that the national park is a key destination for not just local people but also people from around Australia and internationally to visit. Our investment includes new and improved trails, a new access road and parking facilities, and a new visitor hub with picnic facilities. Approximately 10 kilometres of hiking trails have been completed, adding to the existing trail network. Also—this is important, members—the construction of 16 kilometres of new off-road cycle trails will be completed by the end of 2023. We know that the growth in cycling in Western Australia is all about mountain bikes, the bikes we take off-road. There is amazing interest and popularity in this area, and we are providing the venues and trails for people to enjoy this sport. Construction has begun on a new day-use area, with universal access picnic and barbecue facilities, landscaped gardens and pathways. The day-use area will connect to a new cafe and visitor space at the park hub. Legacy infrastructure has been there for many years, dating back to the 1970s, but it is run-down and not fit for purpose. This investment will transform John Forrest National Park into a place that is world class, with facilities that are equal to the environmental values that surround them.

We are also getting on with the job of building a new pedestrian bridge. It is not just the Minister for Transport who is building bridges. This is a bridge that I will build. It is set to rival the Matagarup Bridge.

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** At least it will in environmental terms! The bridge over Hovea Falls will provide an excellent visitor experience and improve visitor safety, and it will open later this year. This will be one of the finest bridges built in Western Australia in recent years.

I am also very interested to tell the chamber that the west ridge car park will be the next component of improvements at John Forrest National Park.

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** She is not the only concreter in the room!

This car park will improve visitor safety and address a real issue. Because John Forrest National Park is so popular, people park along the road's edge, causing a safety issue at busy times on weekends and during the summer. That extra car park will not only provide extra access to the park, but also improve community safety. The project is being delivered by the great folks at the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. When that construction work is completed, John Forrest National Park will be even more of a destination for Perth.

**The SPEAKER:** The Leader of the Opposition with the last question.

COOK GOVERNMENT — PERFORMANCE

**644. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:**

I refer to WA Labor's failure to listen to 30 000 petitioners, the government's refusal to release Aboriginal heritage regulations in the time frame promised, worsening family and domestic violence levels, a crime crisis that is spiralling out of control, ongoing collapses in the building industry, a governance crisis at the Western Australian Institute of Sport —

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** — and the Premier's inability to garner the attention and good favour of his colleagues in Canberra. How has the Premier lost control of the state in just 16 weeks?

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please! Many of you may have an opinion, including the Minister for Housing, but we will ask the Premier to respond, please.

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Sixteen weeks?

**The SPEAKER:** Not the Deputy Premier; the Premier, please.

**Mr R.H. COOK replied:**

Madam Speaker, I thought that the member was going to say, "Are you okay?" at the end of that!

The member's question is absolutely ridiculous and based upon hyperbole and misrepresentations. Quite frankly, it just sits on top of his own political rhetoric, which bears no resemblance to reality. Take, for example, the repeal of the Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act. We said that we would provide the opposition with the regulations ahead of the bill being debated. That is what we have done. The Leader of the Opposition reinvents history because he has some sort of anger issue with a government that does what it says it will do. He basically retrofits an entirely different personal narrative in order to make himself feel better. That is the definition of irrelevance. This is the opposition's fundamental problem. The Nationals WA occupy the Leader of the Opposition's office. Does it do that, or has it made an offer to the other side? I am not quite sure whether the member wants to be the Leader of the Opposition. As part of the Nationals' on-again, off-again relationship with the Liberal Party, it is not exactly sure how it wants to move forward, but it keeps offering the Liberals the Leader of the Opposition's job.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Order, please!

**Mr R.H. COOK:** The Nationals WA wants to preserve its upper house seats, rather than do the job of being the opposition. The Liberal Party wants to be one thing, but then Hon Nick Goiran says, "Hang on; you are actually going to be this." I point to these issues and ask the opposition: are you okay?

Some great statistics came out recently that speak to the strength of our economy at the moment: 14 700 more Western Australians secured a job last month. The number of people who have found jobs since we were elected in 2017 has now clicked over to a quarter of a million. A quarter of a million extra jobs have been created in this economy during the time of both my government and Premier Mark McGowan's government. The participation rate has increased to 69.3 per cent. That is a sign that people recognise that now is the time to get jobs. We have the lowest underemployment rate in the country. We had more people come to Western Australia in the last quarter than any other state. More people came to Western Australia to secure their future because they see the jobs being generated. They see the opportunities being created. They see the state marching forward. Because we are a Labor government, they see a state government that is not only nurturing these jobs but also looking after those who are doing it tough. Only a Labor government will do that. Only a Labor government will secure jobs for locals, look after those who are doing it tough and deal with the cost of living.

In July, a month after I was elected to the role of Premier, the electricity household rebate went out. A \$200 credit was applied to the bill of every single household in Western Australia because people are doing it tough. Because we have a strong economy, we can look after them.

Just a month later, the Minister for Sport and Recreation and I announced our new \$300 KidSport voucher program, doubling the \$150 voucher program and extending the reach of the program to include not only registration but also essential equipment for sports. We also extended it to new Australians, such as refugee applicants and people seeking asylum, and kids in care. We are very proud of the record our government has already created. We are doing what we said we would do. We continue to keep the economy strong, we create jobs for Western Australians and we look after those who are doing it tough. That is what the WA public expects from my government, and that is what the WA public is getting.

Several members interjected.



**The SPEAKER:** Members, that concludes question time.

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

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, question time has already taken more than an hour. I did not really need that interjection from you at the end.

### PERTH PARKING MANAGEMENT BILL 2023

#### *Consideration in Detail*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

#### **Clause 3: Objects of Act —**

Debate was interrupted after the clause had been partly considered.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I think we were discussing the objects of the act. I had been asking about the fact that the proposed act will be the Perth Parking Management Act 2023, yet the objects of the act refer to the parking management area—the PM area—in the metropolitan region. It is not clear to me whether that is referring to what we understand to be the Perth parking area now, whether there is potential for further expansion, or whether it is envisaged that there might be other parking management areas, such as in the centre of Joondalup or somewhere else. Could the minister just expand on that and whether my interpretation of the words is correct? Will it leave it open for there to be further or different definitions of the parking management area throughout the metropolitan region?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is only one area. It will be defined through regulations. I also take the opportunity to point out that the Perth parking policy that sits under the act states that one of its objectives is —

Ensuring the continued economic and social vitality of central Perth;

This concept of having economic and social vitality has been around a long time and even exists under the existing legislation. The original act looks more broadly at measures to support the economic and social vitality of the area.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Does the minister accept that this legislation will take a wider interpretation of what might be acceptable to spend the money on than has been the case under the current act?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, that is one of our intentions. Another point to note, though, is that we believe that transport will continue to be a big part of the expenditure, with nearly half of our annual licence fee funds being committed to the CAT bus network, free public transport around the city, traffic management and other types of initiatives. We still see transport as being key, but this will give us the ability to fund some other projects in the future.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The objects of the act are split into two parts. Paragraph (a) is about managing parking to mitigate traffic congestion, promote balance between different modes of transport and improve accessibility, economic activity or urban amenity. I think that is also reflected in the act. Paragraph (b) refers specifically to licence fees and revenue. That sets up an object of the act. It does not refer within the objects to the existing system of the Perth parking policy. Am I to take it that there will be a policy to drive where those fees will be spent?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The existing policy helps determine, for example, the number of car bays for developments and so forth. It is about managing parking and creating an area. The expenditure is there to meet the objectives of the act. There is not an existing policy on how we spend the funds. It is a policy that more generally manages parking in the Perth parking management area.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** When the minister was making a comment about the deterioration of the car park at the Perth Concert Hall, she said that it may be appropriate to spend some of the money in the fund on that car park. Would that not already be possible given that the car park is a transport matter?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** As I said, we committed \$130 million to the concert hall. It would be hard to say that improvements made to the concert hall would come under the existing legislation. The proposed changes to the act will broaden the purposes for which the fund can be used, so funds could potentially help fix the concert hall.

In relation to the car park, the real issue relates to the podium level of the concert hall and its impact on the car park. As it currently operates, we would be hard pressed to use the Perth parking levy to fix the Perth Concert Hall.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I will not labour the point too much, but I would have thought that the provision of parking would fall within this legislation and if parking could not be provided, moneys from the fund could be spent on that. I appreciate that general repairs to the concert hall would fall outside the scope. I guess I am asking whether it would be possible to sequester part of the cost of those total repairs that relate to transport.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No. We have never used the existing Perth parking licensing account to create car parks. That was not the intention of the account. If we think about it, the whole purpose of the act was to reduce congestion and improve air quality. Building car parks is probably not consistent with the act; it is quite contrary to the act. It is all about pushing people out of cars. The state government collects funds through the Perth parking levy. The City of Perth collects a lot of funds because it collects the revenue from the Perth Concert Hall car park. The issue

is that the car park and the building have deteriorated to the point that state taxpayers are now putting \$130 million into the account. If we look at the concept of “need and nexus”, we could suggest that those people who visit the concert hall and use the car park are contributing a payment, in a sense, for a car park and some of that revenue should be used to redevelop the concert hall. There is a bit of a need and nexus when it comes to cultural institutions and the existing car park levy. The car park levy has collected funds from a lot of the commercial or non-residential car parks throughout the parking management area. In return, we have provided CAT buses and free public transport, upgraded the CAT buses to electric and carried out a number of other measures. We have not been able to upgrade the facilities that, in essence, people are contributing to when they park at these cultural institutions.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 4: Terms used —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I will run through a couple of definitions in clause 4. They will probably be pretty simple for the minister to explain. I refer to the definition of “development approval” on page 4 of the bill, which states —

(a) means —

...

(ii) a prescribed approval, authorisation, consent or permission, under any written law, for the development of land;

That is different from a development approval in a planning sense. Can the minister give an example of the circumstance in which such an approval may be given? Would there be any interaction between approvals given under the Planning and Development Act 2005 or under the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority Act 2011? Perhaps other bodies could be giving that approval. Would that include Main Roads down the track under the amendments being made to the Main Roads Act 1930 that are currently before Parliament?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** This is more a case of futureproofing, so it will basically pick up anything that requires approval under the Planning and Development Act. If any other types of approvals are needed in the future, the legislation will include all development approvals.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I turn to the definition of “PM Area Account” at line 4 on page 6 of the bill. It refers to proposed section 126(1). We could perhaps talk about it when we consider clause 126. Is that the same account that is already reflected in the budget or is it a different account? Does a separate account have to be established for this money? Does it have any money in it at the moment?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It will replace the existing parking licence account, which will be renamed.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** There are a few explanations of terms including the word “relevant”—“relevant approval holder”, “relevant licence holder”, “relevant owner”, “relevant pre-authorisation holder” and “relevant vehicle”. I think they are all related to a position whereby there might be multiple persons or a multiple right to have a licence. Would that generally be the case—that a number of potential persons may have that right?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** They are parliamentary drafting terms used to ensure that they relate to the vehicles or owners in question. They are trying to describe a certain vehicle or owner rather than any vehicle or any car bay or any owner. They are really just terms used to help, in a sense, narrow or apply to certain considerations in the legislation.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** We could move on to a different point, because there are further questions that I can ask on clause 5 about the relevant owner. I might leave it there and ask a question on the next clause.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 5: Owner —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** On page 8, subclause (1) of clause 5, “Owner”, has the definitions of different scenarios relating to potential situations for trustees, bankruptcies, public authorities and a whole range of things. Subclause (2) on page 9 tries to define what an owner, in relation to land, means. I am trying to get an understanding of this. In part, the clause defines who is an owner, in relation to land, if the land is common property, or a lot, in a community titles scheme, strata scheme, survey strata, crown land and various other matters where there might be a freehold estate et cetera. What will happen in a tenancy-in-common situation? Will the owner of the land be the relevant owner? In a social grouping of four or five people who own a block, must one of them be the designated relevant owner or will all the responsibilities and ongoing rights be shared equally between those tenants in common? Can the minister give me an understanding of how that will work?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The rights and obligations would be shared as in any situation with a tenancy in common. It would apply to all the owners who are on the land title.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I will conclude with that, but I will probably ask more on the penalty clause around what that might mean for people.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 6: Parking management area (PM area) —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I refer to what we were talking about a minute ago in the parking management area. Clause 6(1)(a) states that an area may be prescribed as the parking management area if —

- (a) the area is in the metropolitan region; and
- (b) at least part of the area has, or is capable of having, 1 or more parking spaces.

That would imply that it will not just be the existing area; there may well be other areas. Is the government looking at further extensions or new areas for a similar type of scheme to reap some benefits for the licensing of parking spaces?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No. We are not looking at having a new parking management area.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 7 and 8 put and passed.**

**Clause 9: Exempt circumstances —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Clause 9 deals with circumstances in which an area—not a parking bay; the occupation of a parking bay will be exempt—might be exempt under the bill. Clause 9(1) states that “relevant accommodation” means “prescribed short-term, temporary or specialised residential accommodation” and, further down the page, that the “residential land” does not include that relevant accommodation. In the case of an apartment complex, will there be some calculation of the level of occupancy through Airbnb or some other type of short-term accommodation and would that then mean there will be a difference in the residential exemption for car parking in the area?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It all depends on what planning approval the people have; for example, if they wanted to register as an Airbnb, they should have the relevant planning approval, so that would then prescribe what they would fall under. They would attract the levy if they were a registered Airbnb. But the current issue with Airbnbs is no-one is sure exactly where they are.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Thank you, minister; that was the nub of the question. An apartment complex can be a mix of apartments, some of which are later made into Airbnbs. It is not unheard of for people to do that after they have taken ownership of the property. In fact, the uses of an apartment have changed and do change with having an Airbnb, having someone renting permanently or having an owner–occupier in the apartment. Is there a calculation required by Revenue WA, or something else, that would apportion a charge to that complex based on the level of relevant accommodation within the complex?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** In many instances, there may be a mix of residential and commercial anyway, so there are existing provisions that identify which bays have a levy on them and which bays do not. In relation to Airbnb, it depends on the planning approval. If people are using a residential apartment for an Airbnb but not disclosing it to anyone but their clients, they would probably avoid paying the levy, but they are probably contravening their strata title agreements and the planning approvals for their apartment.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 10 put and passed.**

**Clause 11: Owners of land must not permit parking in unapproved parking spaces —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Clause 11 outlines some of the offences and penalties under the legislation. This goes back to the question that I was asking before about tenancy in common. There may be people who are the owners of the land but are not involved in the management of it—other people might have actively sought to manage that land. What will happen when a person who owns the land “in common” allows unauthorised parking without having the approvals in place and they incur a penalty? Will the penalty go only to the person who was actively undertaking that or will it be a shared responsibility between the tenancy in common? It could be as simple as the tenancy in common being a husband and wife or some other arrangement whereby one of them is unaware that the land is being used for that purpose? If it is the case that it is a shared responsibility, will the fine be apportioned or will each person be responsible for the full amount?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It will depend on the structure of the tenancy-in-common arrangement. In areas of tenancy in common, with multiple owners, it would be a shared obligation. Again, with strata title, it would depend on the structure of the strata arrangement, and the strata company would be responsible, as the strata company would be defined as the owner.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I am not looking specifically at a strata company but at fee simple and joint owners—tenants in common. It might be a family arrangement or a husband and wife or the children of the husband and wife who eventually own it. I know that there are a number of commercial properties that families over the years eventually own and there are different levels of interest in the management of them. I can see a possibility whereby people might be exposed to a penalty when they are perhaps not aware of what the land is being used for. I am trying to understand what would happen in that circumstance. Perhaps that is not the most common circumstance, but it does happen.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I do not expect it would be the most common circumstance. I am well aware that in family tenants in common relationships, there are sometimes multiple names on the land title and maybe one person is more proactively managing those issues. However, just as there is a joint benefit, there is a joint responsibility. The joint benefit, of course, is being a part owner of a property. Joint benefit and joint responsibility have everything to do with tenancy in common.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The provisions are quite similar for a number of these examples. The provisions in clause 11 are for fines, depending on the number of vehicles or spaces that might be involved. Clause 11(f) has the maximum penalty in any other case, which is \$250 000. That is quite substantial. It then refers to a daily penalty, which is a fine of \$2 000 for each day or part of a day during which the offence continues. Can the minister explain how that will work? Will it be a \$250 000 fine and it is done? Could the person be found to be liable for \$250 000, plus \$2 000 per day that the offence continues or will it be a maximum of \$250 000? Can the minister explain how it will be structured?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** This is the maximum fine. The court will not have to apply the maximum penalty. The maximum fine would be \$250 000, depending on how many vehicles were in question. As the member can see, it is a graduated system. The \$2 000 penalty would apply if the court made a determination that the owner still was not complying with the legislation.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Thank you. I turn now to page 20 and clause 16, “Responsible occupiers must not advertise parking on land without parking space approvals”. It goes on to give some offences, specifically in subclauses (2) and (3), which refer to the defences to those particular matters. Again, I think they are reflected in other clauses further in the bill. I will not talk about them all. Can the minister give me an understanding of the defences to these charges? How would someone honestly and reasonably believe that an approval was in place if it was not? How would that be determined? Could the minister explain how subclauses (2) and (3) will work? They are both part of that defence.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** An example is occupiers or leaseholders who assumed that their car space was properly licensed and things changed without them knowing. The owner might have changed the circumstances without informing them and they honestly believed that the parking bay was still licensed. If they were caught with an unlicensed car bay in that circumstance, that would be a reasonable defence.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 12 to 21 put and passed.**

**Clause 22: Grants of parking space licences without approval from Minister —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** We are making steady progress. Looking at the clock, I think the advisers will not hit too much traffic—or maybe it will be peak hour.

Clause 22(3) states —

Despite any development approval referred to in subsection (2)(b), the CEO may grant fewer parking spaces, or fewer parking spaces of a specified category, under a parking space licence than the maximum allowable under the development approval.

I am trying to get an understanding of this because it is a theme throughout the bill. The point is illustrated in other clauses. Without the approval of the minister, how would the flexibility between what the development approval may have stipulated and what the CEO may grant manifest?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Regarding the planning policy, the example was the planning on an approval for 20. The policy will determine only 15. The CEO can approve only the 15, which is consistent with the planning policy, but the Minister for Transport can approve up to 20, or over, depending on the minister’s wish. This is trying to pick up when there is a differentiation between the planning approval and the policy recommendation or determination for that site.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 23 put and passed.**

**Clause 24: Grants of parking space licences with approval from Minister —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Could the minister provide me with some understanding of circumstances in which the owner of land in the parking management area makes an application under proposed section 21 for a grant of a licence, and the CEO refuses to grant the licence, and the owner then gives written notice to the CEO for the action to be considered under the provision? Under what circumstances would a minister exercise ministerial discretion in this matter? Is it simply the case that the minister has described in which the minister might override those considerations? Perhaps the minister could explain practically how this will work.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Clause 24 gives the points that will need to be considered when making determinations that are not consistent with the policy. This has happened in the past in general anyway. I remember when I was minister responsible for the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority—now DevelopmentWA—there were circumstances

in which developments at Elizabeth Quay required changes to be consistent with the Perth parking policy. It occurs from time to time. That is why this bill will allow for differential rates, more consistency in the development application process, and some flexibility with new buildings versus refurbishments to buildings, which has been an issue in the past.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** In practical terms, the CEO would have to consider the application to be reasonable, shall we say, and justifiable according to all the criteria outlined, and then send that referral to the minister for consideration. Would there be any circumstances in which the minister might reject that application?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** If the minister were to reject an application made when the CEO thought it passed all the criteria outlined, would that be subject to judicial review? What would happen at that point?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Would there be any circumstances in which the minister could grant an approval when the CEO was not of the view that those criteria had been met?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It would have to be considered meritorious by the CEO for it to be referred to me.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 25 to 27 put and passed.**

**Clause 28: Applications for pre-authorisations —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The application for a pre-authorisation is one of those streamlining provisions within the legislation that I think is meritorious. Some parts of the legislation may be less so, but I am not contending that. I want to get an understanding of the ability for a pre-authorisation to survive if there is a succession in the project management or ownership, or ownership of the land, or the proposal that has been put forward for the land. Will pre-authorisations be transferrable; and, if so, what will be the process for that to occur?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It will be attached to the DA, so it will be transferrable to owners—similar to development applications themselves.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 29 to 32 put and passed.**

**Clause 33: Applications for special purpose authorisations —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** There is reference to a fee structure in clause 33(3). I understand from the briefing that a fee has not yet been set. Can the minister give me an idea whether it is the case that the fee will be set? How will that fee be set, when will it be set and will it simply be an amount of money determined to be the cost of the application or will it be determined as something that is more or less a tax?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We do not see that a significant fee will be required, and we will be consulting on this, but it will be prescribed by regulations.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 34 and 35 put and passed.**

**Clause 36: Duration of special purpose authorisations —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Special purpose authorisations are a good thing to have. Clause 36(3) refers to a special authorisation granted for a period. The clause goes on to state that it will be for a period of 30 days or a longer prescribed time. What is the reason for a prescribed period? Is the intention that there will be some period set in the yet-to-be-redrawn regulations? What circumstances might affect what that matter would be?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The “30 days” is there because normally events do not go for longer than 30 days, but the “longer prescribed period” is for parking for construction purposes. For example, one of the development blocks at Elizabeth Quay at the moment is full of parking bays for, I think, not the Chevron building, but the next Brookfield building development. This provision prescribes temporary parking for special events or other construction purposes.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Will each of those particular matters need a fresh authorisation or is there another category, if you like, for a construction site and the period over which the construction is carried out? Is it some other measure? How will that be dealt with in future?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The regulations will specify the types of parking. This provision gives us the ability to go into further detail in the regulations.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 37 to 55 put and passed.**

**Clause 56: Applications to transfer parking space licences —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Clause 56 (1) outlines the process to be undertaken by a person who wishes to become the new owner and it mentions a period of 20 days. The clause also outlines the fee structure. Is there a fee for the transfer of parking licences at the moment or is this a new fee; and, if so, has that been set or how will it be set? Will that be done per licence or as some other value? If we have the system that is proposed in the part of the legislation that sets different licence fees, will different fees be set for the transfer of that licence?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is unlikely that any fee will be set for the transfer of the licence. If a fee is set, it will be contemplated at a cost-recovery level, but we are not planning to do that at this stage, and it would be done by regulation.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 57: Transferring parking space licences —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Clause 57(2) says that the CEO may transfer the licence if satisfied that the owner will do various things and that the fees are paid et cetera. Subclause (3) sets out what will happen to the licence if the CEO refuses to transfer it. If the CEO is satisfied by the conditions set out in subclause (2), under what circumstances would a refusal to transfer a licence occur?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** We have never had that situation with a transfer, but an example is if someone has not paid their licence fee on multiple occasions. The CEO may potentially consider not transferring a parking bay licence to someone who has a past record of not paying their fee, and this can be reviewed by the State Administrative Tribunal.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** If we have a new owner of the land and the licence transfer is refused, I would have thought that could have a deleterious effect on the use of the land. Is there a process by which that decision can be reviewed?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Notice will have to be given of the upcoming decision, and the decision can be reviewed as well. That is the legal process. As I said, it has never happened before and it is unlikely to happen, but that is the process.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 58 to 62 put and passed.**

**Clause 63: Period of suspensions —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** This clause deals with the suspension of parking approvals and when they will take place. It is pretty straightforward as to how these measures are brought forward. In terms of suspensions, are the days set out in this provision equivalent to those in the existing act or have some changes been made to the provisions related to the suspension periods and processes?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The suspension powers in the current act have never been exercised, but there is no time limit on those existing powers.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 64: Effect of suspensions —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Clause 64(4) states —

A licence holder whose parking space licence is suspended is liable for licence fees for the licence during any period of suspension.

Why is that provision there? If a person is unable to use the bay, it would seem reasonable for the suspension to mean a suspension of the charge. Why is that provision written in that way?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** This is part of the compliance tool kit. It is part of a range of measures being used to ensure that people comply with the legislation.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 65 put and passed.**

**Clause 66: Cancelling parking space approvals —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** This is a similar discussion, but we are talking here about cancellation rather than suspension. I would imagine that the cancellation could be because, as it says in clause 66(1)(f), there is a development approval affecting the situation, or there might be a whole range of reasons. In the ordinary course of events, under the existing legislation, have there been cancellations due to lack of compliance with conditions, or are they normally because of some change in use or change in other circumstances of that type?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, not yet.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 67 to 69 put and passed.**

**Clause 70: Licence fees —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Division 12 is titled “Licence fees for parking space licences”, and clause 70 is “Licence fees”. I want to confirm that this is the provision that allows for the variation in fees that the minister has spoken about. Clause 70(2) refers to —

- (iv) the location of the parking spaces specified under the licence, with different rates for different locations;
- (v) categories of parking spaces under the licence, or parking spaces in specified locations, for which nil fees are payable;

Can the minister, perhaps for context, explain the rationale for the change and whether there are any immediate plans to change the fee structure following the passage of this legislation; and, if so, can she explain whether that would be within the existing footprint, or is there a plan to increase the footprint? For instance, if we look at the map with the CAT bus route, is the minister going to fill in the bit in the middle with some sort of differential rate? Is there a plan at the moment? I will let the minister answer that and then I will ask some other things.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** There are no plans to increase the rate. Differential rates, which industry in particular was very keen to see, are subject to further regulation and a lot of further work. We will have to consult with business and key stakeholders like the Property Council of Australia about what would be included. It is trying to pick up, for example, that there are some parts of the parking management area that are not in as close proximity to the CBD central transport network as others. They are things that we will be considering, but it is something we will do in consultation with all the key stakeholders.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** With whom specifically would the minister consult? Obviously, it would be with the affected landowners in that particular area, or is it a situation whereby a landowner or parking licence holder may come and say, “I’d like you to review the rate for this area”? How will the process work in practice?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** There are a couple of things. Firstly, we will consult with the Property Council and relevant local governments, and we will generally look at, from our perspective, the nexus between the development and existing public transport. The second thing is covered in the next clause, and that is exemptions. Normally, businesses or developers seek exemptions for their development. That is what normally happens to allow them to transition their development into normal operations, and that is what we would normally get a request for.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** In terms of the immediacy of the development of the system, when will we begin to see people able to be involved in those consultations, and can the minister again outline a bit of a rough time frame on how she sees that progressing?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Once the bill has passed, we will start that process of consultation and regulation drafting. I will not put a time limit on it, but we will seek to start negotiations very soon after the bill has passed.

**Clause put and passed.****Clause 71: Exemptions from licence fees —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** This clause is about exemptions from the licence fees, and I think the minister just touched on this herself. A whole range of exemptions might apply beyond the strict exemptions for residential and others that are already incorporated in the act. I assume we are talking here about matters that are not already covered elsewhere in the legislation. Can the minister give us an understanding of how the exemption process will work and how an application for an exemption will be made? Again, I would imagine that we are talking about regulations, but perhaps the minister could explain something of the process.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** This is the clause that tackles the COVID experience. In a state of emergency or a major public health outbreak such as COVID, businesses may apply for an exemption. This arises from our experience during COVID; it was really something that we wanted to introduce, so we are going to create a regulation that allows us to enact these exemptions for those particular purposes.

**Clause put and passed.****Clause 72: Notices of decisions —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The table here lists to whom the CEO must provide written notice of a decision in a variety of situations; I think 28 different situations are listed. Also, if it is a reviewable decision, they must state the reason for the decision and that the person has a right to apply for a review under part 4. Are these notices also made public, or is this entirely a communication between the notifiable person and the decision-maker?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is confidential information, so it will be limited to the person whose application has been refused.

**Clause put and passed.****Clause 73: Parking space register —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** This clause states that the CEO may establish and keep a register of parking space information relating to all the approval matters laid out in the clause.

Where will that register be kept? Will it be publicly available? Is there any idea of the format the register will take? Will it be in paper form in the office or on a website? How will it be made available?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** A register is kept and will continue to be kept. An owner-occupier can contact the department to access information from that register, but it is not intended to be public.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 74 to 123 put and passed.**

**Clause 124: Ancillary area —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The minister might be able to provide some further examples and illustrations of what constitutes an ancillary area and who will determine the ancillary area. The minister will make the declaration, but what process will lead to the declaration? Will it be purely at a ministerial or cabinet level? Will it come through the department? Could other people make an application or suggest that a project should be considered an ancillary area? Perhaps the minister could give us an idea of those matters for a start.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** They will be gazetted. We are very keen on areas that are contiguous to a parking management area. Examples include the ability to provide funding from the Perth parking area account so that we can land a bridge in the Victoria Park area; for a bike path that stretches from one part of the city into South Perth; for a ferry system from Perth to Coode Street, not just Mends Street; for a bike path that connects from just outside Newcastle Street into the city; or for a CAT bus that goes to Nedlands or Subiaco. Those are examples of areas that are contiguous and ancillary and those sorts of projects could be funded from this account.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Is the minister saying that the ancillary area will have to be contiguous? Could it not be an area that might be connected by a continual bike path from Perth but might be some distance away, such as Curtin University? Will it have to be a contiguous connection between something that is divided already by some physical barrier, be it the river, the freeway or some other barrier? Is that the definition we are talking about here?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes, there would have to be some connectivity with the parking management area. That is the point. As I said, the Nedlands CAT bus is universally loved and owned by many people. A lot of people claim credit for the purple CAT bus. We had to draw an incredibly convoluted—I would even go so far as to say mischievous—boundary to allow the purple CAT bus to be funded from the Perth parking licensing account, because we had to draw a map that followed the road but did not capture any properties, because if it had, the properties would have been liable for the payment of the levy. We did not want the good folk of Nedlands or Subiaco to pay that levy, so we created a situation that allowed the purple CAT bus to be funded. As I said, the whole point is to enable services or infrastructure that will link into the city and bring significant benefits to the parking management area to be funded. It is possible that we could fund, as one project, the bridge to Victoria Park, for all those people who run the bridges, the ferry service from Perth to South Perth, and a CAT bus into Nedlands to deliver those services.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I think I have the same map here; I was in the briefing that the minister just described. The area that is now connected by the CAT bus is outlined on the map. That is surely not considered an ancillary area; is that not just an extension of the parking management area itself?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I am confused by the member's question. The map that the Leader of the Opposition has now, as he can see, is for the Nedlands CAT bus. This bill will do away with the need to change the boundary to allow that CAT bus to be funded. We would not need to do that boundary change for the parking management area. We could have funded it, because it is contiguous and could be defined as an ancillary use. Landing a bridge on the foreshore on the other side of the river was an example. Let us say the good member for South Perth lobbies me about the extensive use of South Perth cycleways and the congestion between walkers and cyclists who do the circuit. Those people are running and cycling in and out of the parking management area. I think that project would benefit the city, because people start in South Perth and Victoria Park and head into the city. If we were to try to fix that by partly funding it from the parking levy account, we would somehow have to draw a line that covers just the footpath that we wanted to increase and not capture any other land, because that would then be subject to the licensing levy. This allows us to do the Nedlands CAT bus service—I think it was a bit mischievous, but we did it—without extending the parking management area to follow a certain bus route; otherwise, we would be doing that for quite a bit, and possibly into Subiaco and across the river.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Yes. But that does not really tie in with the definition of “ancillary area” in this legislation as I read it. Clause 124, “Ancillary area”, states, in part —

- (2) The Minister may make a declaration of an ancillary area under subsection (1) if —
  - (a) the ancillary area is outside but contiguous with the PM area;

But the University of Western Australia is not contiguous because Crawley is in between. How do we meet that definition unless the map has changed from the one I have here? It does not meet the specifications outlined in the legislation to my reading. I am here for the minister to explain why I am wrong.



**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I do not quite get what the member is saying. The CAT bus will leave the parking management area and then go into another area and then go back. To me that is contiguous. I do not understand. The council area is contiguous to the parking management area and it will run through that. I do not understand.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** If the minister would let me ask some further questions, is the minister saying that the route is the contiguous area, not the area that it binds?

**Ms R. Saffioti:** Yes.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** If that is the case, any route that comes in and out of the Perth metropolitan area, no matter the Perth parking area, could be considered contiguous. It could be quite an extensive network of cycleways, for instance, that somehow or other spider their way back into the area. It is a very loose definition if that is the case. It is not that the land in which the route lies is contiguous. It is simply that the route starts from the parking management area.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** First of all, it is primarily going to benefit the parking management area, and all this will be in the City of Nedlands. The City of Nedlands area is contiguous to the City of Perth parking management area. That is how I would define it.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 125: Infrastructure, projects or services —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** This clause refers to some of the infrastructure projects or services that we may seek to fund. They were defined in clause 123, which we skipped over, but this clause refers to their use and what might be paid for by the fund. It states —

- (a) capital costs relating to the infrastructure, projects or services;
- (b) costs other than capital costs including running or administration costs relating to the infrastructure, projects or services.

That is pretty straightforward if we are running the CAT buses or something else because we are running a service and obviously we have to pay for that. But is the intention that there would be ongoing commitments to the running costs of some of those infrastructure projects into the future, or is the minister prepared to rule that out at this point?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I will give the member the example of the new pedestrian Causeway bridge. I suspect there will be some cleaning and continual maintenance of that bridge and that could be funded from here.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Let us look at the situation with Perth Concert Hall and an application that was made there. Would it be considered that there should be ongoing funding of that or the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre or whatever project it is that we put large amounts of capital money into? Is the minister conceding that we will pick up related running costs into the future?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The running costs could be considered, but they are probably not what we are planning for. It is mainly to do with, in particular, large transport infrastructure—things such as bridges and other maintenance. It may be something that is considered by future governments, although the member is repealing the parking levy. Regarding his access to the parking levy, I just clarify that he is repealing the parking levy.

**Mr R.S. Love:** No, I am not repealing the parking levy. I said it should have been paused or it should have been examined —

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Are you committing to pause it?

**Mr R.S. Love:** It should have been examined for the amount of money that you are charging the taxpayers—the motorists.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Sorry; I am asking: are you pausing the payment of the levy?

**Mr R.S. Love:** At a reduced amount of money that you are talking about —

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** You are committing to reduce it.

**Mr R.S. Love:** I would have reduced it —

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** You are committing to reduce it.

**Mr R.S. Love:** — for a period time so that you could catch up with the projects because you are at a time of a cost-of-living crisis.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** He doesn't have a policy position.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** No, he does.

Several members interjected.

*Point of Order*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Please, Acting Speaker!

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr P. Lilburne):** Thank you very much, members!

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you very much, members! Points of order will be heard in silence, thank you. Member for Cottesloe.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** We have a minister sitting behind the Minister for Transport shouting across the chamber and the minister is interrogating the Leader of the Opposition. It is quite clear that this is the consideration in detail stage and the minister is answering questions from the Leader of the Opposition without interjections from other ministers.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I thank the member for Cottesloe. Minister, if you would like to have interjections across the chamber, please put them through the chair. Please continue, minister, with your last response; thank you.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Thank you. I think it is clear that the Leader of the Opposition has committed to pausing the levy. I think he has to be proud of that decision and his first election commitment that he has made—a commitment that will cost about \$200 million. Unlike in the previous election, the Leader of the Opposition will be asked to cost his election commitments because he needs to be held to account. He is saying he would pause the levy. To me, that is an election commitment and it is worth about \$200 million. As I said, if that is what he wants to do to appeal to the densely populated areas of the city, we welcome his announcement. But it will be costed, and then he will have to work out the impact on the state's finances, which is probably more than what he did when the Nationals WA were in government.

Back to the use of the funds, as I said, it will be considered by the minister. The minister will be held to account, as we are in the expenditure of funds, and we will make sure that we continually support transport and the assets of the city.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 126: PM Area Account —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I note that we spoke before about the parking management area account and the minister confirmed that a special purpose account exists already. My reading of this is that the fund is to be established. Will this be a new fund or will this be a continuation of the fund, as the minister stated earlier in the discussion?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It is the same fund but with a new name.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Money is already in the special purpose area fund, which is a different fund. The minister has just confirmed a new fund has to be created, so will all that money flow into the new fund?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Yes. Clause 182 covers the transition provisions, which describe the transfer of the funds.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Thank you.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 127: Approval by Minister for payments from PM Area Account —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Clause 127(1) states that the minister may approve money in the account for payment of the following —

- (a) a fundable project in the PM area;
- (b) a fundable project in an ancillary area to the PM area.

Does that imply that there is an amount of money that is purely programmatic and funded in the normal course of decision-making by the CEO or the department and that only new projects and undertakings will require ministerial approval outside the normal budgetary process?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have to approve ongoing programs each year.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 128: Regulations —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Is it the case that a completely new set of regulations will start from scratch? Is it not expected that what is already in place will simply be transferred with a few new words here and there or maybe a few new provisions? Will there be a complete rewording of the current regulations? Can the minister also outline the review process for those regulations? There will be a considerable change and a considerable body of work will be needed. What will be the process for further review and consultation going forward about the efficacy of the new regulations and so forth?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Some—very few—regulations will be transferred. During the drafting of the new regulations, there will be wideranging consultation with key stakeholders. I am sure that if they are not comfortable, they will make it known to me and the Parliament. As occurs with all regulations, a level of consultation will be undertaken.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clause 129: Parking policy —**

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Can the minister outline the status of the current parking policy that was attached to the old act? When was it last reviewed? Will it be considered as part of the body of work for the new policy that will be developed?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** It was last reviewed in 2014. As part of the new legislation and regulations, it will be reviewed and restated.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I just confirm that it is a new piece of legislation and we will have new regulations, but the policy itself will be reviewed so there will not be a “back to the drawing board” type of arrangement. Since 2014, we have seen a lot of change in transport. We will see a lot of change in technology going forward. I could have spoken about infrastructure and all the rest.

For instance, will there be an emphasis on electrification and the needs of the transport sector to provide more parking facilities that include charging bays, and the effect of that on infrastructure? Will the parking levy be used for any of those matters going forward? Will the government also look at some of the disruptors that might occur? In a very short period of time, we may see computer-guided vehicles plying the streets. What effect will that have? Is that something the government will look at in this policy or will it just pick up the 2014 policy, dust it off the shelf and make a couple of tweaks here and there?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The member is right; there have been a lot of changes since 2014. For example, rideshare as opposed to taxis was a big issue. I received complaints from taxi and rideshare drivers about pickups and short-term deliveries. Another big issue that is raised with me relates to delivery trucks and access to sites. Another issue that has emerged more recently relates to the location of charging stations. All those things can be considered as part of the rewrite of the policy to reflect more modern practices. Another issue is food delivery. More generally, whether it is in Perth or across the suburbs, there is changing demand for how businesses and hospitality venues interact with Uber Eats and other food delivery services. There are probably not enough short-term parking spaces for food delivery services, which sometimes makes it a bit dangerous when delivery drivers park on footpaths or other areas. All those sorts of things will be considered as part of our future policy.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The old policies were fairly stakeholder driven. Will the minister undertake to make public the process of new policy development so that people with diverse ideas can make contributions going forward, including persons who may have expertise in making cities more connective but who are not necessarily working in one of the cities, the Property Council of Australia or some other body? Surely there must be a benefit from having a wider view of the policy going forward, regarding not only the provision of parking bays per se, but also some projects that could be funded and different methods of transport that come into the mix.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The policy will not be a determinant or provide guidelines on expenditure; it will be more about land use planning and types of parking and their location. It also requires that I consult the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Planning to ensure that we try to balance all issues.

It is not a bad idea to seek feedback from users more generally. It is more of a land use document. It will not involve expenditure of funds; it will create a policy on how parking spaces are approved and also the types of parking around the area.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The minister said that the policy will not involve expenditure as much as land use. Is it not the case that part of the considerations for the policy will be decisions the minister will make on infrastructure and services going forward? I understand that the current arrangement provides a place for that.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** To confirm, under the existing Perth parking policy, there is a section that deals with the objectives of the act. We will move the objectives into the legislation, and the policy will become more of a guideline on approving parking licences in the parking management area. As I said, it will provide the guidelines and rules about the number of parking bays, the types of parking bays and the interaction between residential and commercial and other parking. It will set the rules and framework of the licensing of the bays.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** That will be an interesting change in emphasis for the policy document. What approach will be taken to planning the expenditure for the parking fund going forward? Will there be a formal document with a plan for the fund, or will it be done on a year-by-year, case-by-case basis? Who would be consulted in those decisions? Is it the case that we will move from a planned use of the fund to whatever the minister of the day thinks is important? The Deputy Premier might not always be the minister of the day; there could be another one somewhere down the track. I would have thought that when we are talking about the interaction with local government and industry and a whole range of other players, there would be a place for planning not just parking management, but also expenditure of the levy fund.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Currently, the Premier and Minister Michael, the Minister for Local Government, meet with the City of Perth every six months, and sometimes budget priorities are discussed—for example, our future expenditure of the parking management area. In relation to a joint plan, I am one of those strange people who think that ministers should make decisions and be held to account for their decisions, and that is what we do. If

there is a decision that people do not support, I am sure I will get negative feedback. The decisions that I have made on the expenditure of the fund include the purple CAT bus, which everyone loves so much that they have taken credit for it, and the Causeway pedestrian bridge, which again was pretty well supported. The decisions that we have taken in consultation with others have been very widely supported, and I suspect they will continue to be widely supported.

We could have retrofitted the Matagarup Bridge with expenditure under the parking levy to bring that account down, but we did not do that. With the Sunday free travel, we could have calculated the cost of free travel in the city or wider as soon as someone hit the parking management area and we could have tried to use that for the parking levy area, but we did not. We could have funded a number of things from the parking levy area, which we have not done. I would rather have a holistic view. We upgraded the Perth train station. People will now see that there are beautiful, colourful lights on the exterior of the train station. We upgraded the forecourt to improve safety at a cost of \$2.5 million. We could have funded that from the parking levy, but we did not.

As I said, the major decisions that we have funded are the purple CAT bus and the Causeway bridge, and I am very, very happy to be held to account for those decisions.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** I take the minister's point about ministerial discretion and the like. I refer to an issue identified by the Auditor General in her report on the Perth parking levy as it existed under the previous regime. That regime had a policy with some level of planning attached to it. The Auditor General mentioned that there was an absence of a specific planned agreement across government as to how the collected levy would be expended, and went on to say that there remained uncertainty with stakeholders about what future projects, such as the Perth City Deal, might be funded from the increasing account balance. Will the minister lay out a five-year plan for the funding rights? Will it be something that will be done each budget year? Will the minister give me an idea of how that will work? Will the minister be calling for input from others on those decisions at any stage?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I have a couple of things to say. There is a statutory budget process and I have never been one to try to abuse that process. That process is that the Expenditure Review Committee, cabinet and Parliament make annual budget allocations and they will continue to undertake that. The whole idea that this is a special purpose account does not mean that we will designate every dollar of that account for the next five years—that is not the case.

To be honest, I was surprised by the Auditor General's assessment because it appeared to be an assessment not, in a sense, on the nature of the expenditure, but more of a political assessment. I found it quite surprising, to be honest, that somehow the Auditor General asked me to do things that are not required. Somehow I should be laying out and committing every dollar of the account over the next five years according to a plan, which has never been required and never been done. It is what other people want, but I was assuming that Auditors General looked at how one acquits funds to make sure that the process is strong and there is no abuse of the process, but that did not seem to be the case.

In relation to opening up for ideas, I get ideas all the time about how to spend money. I walk down the street and people give me ideas on how to spend money. Councils will come in every week and give me ideas on how to spend money. Every time the government meets with councils, they give us ideas on how to spend our money, so we are constantly reviewing how to spend money. Would members go and tell every land tax payer how they would spend their revenue in every budget? We do not do that; we consider these issues properly. We make decisions that I think are of benefit to the community—the Causeway pedestrian bridge and the purple CAT bus being two benefits. There was the idea that somehow I should have just spent it on anything to run the account down. Like I said, I have never quite seen an Auditor General criticise someone for not spending enough and not spending recklessly. That is what she was calling for me to do—to run the account down to zero every year. There is no requirement to do that. There are many special purpose accounts wherein we accumulate funds to then spend on a major capital item. When one of us wants to buy a car, what do we try to do? We try to save. It is basic financing. Like I said, the criticism was that I did not spend enough and I did not run the account down to zero. That is a bizarre criticism—I am going to say that. We budget prudently.

In relation to the expenditure, I will continue to make sure, both as transport minister and now as Treasurer, that we meet the growing demands and needs of the state. For example, the member for Nedlands is consulting with her community about a CAT bus to Subiaco, and I think she has lots of signatures already. That may be something that we consider and will have discussions about. But I am not going to run the account to zero to satisfy the Auditor General. It is not a legal requirement. It is not a budgeting requirement. I do not know what it is, to be honest. It was a political requirement from someone else. I do not know. I am not going to run the account to zero just so it looks clean. I think it would be a reckless way to deal with this account.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Does the minister not accept the Auditor General's views on the need for a plan for the expenditure of the fund going forward?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** I am not sure on what basis that would be made. As I said, I do not understand that. We have plans for expenditure and they are considered each year as part of the budget process. That is a good

Expenditure Review Committee budget process. A transport plan was developed in conjunction with the city that included a lot of different footpaths. We are funding tonnes. We funded the Trinity footpath, the Roe Street footpath and the Kings Park footpath. We have done a good amount of work. The Auditor General never talked to me before determining that report. I was never given the ability to present what strong budgeting is under our government. Strong budgeting is just the same as the former government did when it accumulated funds and then spent them on the busport.

Did the former government have a plan out there for everyone to consult on? No. The former government accumulated funds and spent them on the busport. There is no legal requirement. There is the annual budget process. I do not accept it. Claims were made about me in that report that I was never given an opportunity to either see or discuss. That is my point.

**Clause put and passed.**

**Clauses 130 to 194 put and passed.**

**Title put and passed.**

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to third reading.]

*Third Reading*

**MS R. SAFFIOTI (West Swan — Minister for Transport)** [4.53 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a third time.

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition)** [4.53 pm]: I will not take long discussing what we went through in consideration in detail. I think that confirmed the difference in view between the opposition and the government on the Perth Parking Management Bill 2023. I would like to thank the advisers for their good advice to the house and for their time and professionalism. As always, they have done a great job. The minister has also assisted in providing clarity to the questions that were asked of her, and I that thank her for that. We had only one or two tense occasions throughout the discussion.

I think we have a better understanding of some of the nuances of the new Perth Parking Management Bill that will replace the 1999 act. It has within it some very good measures that will streamline some of the approvals processes to give a better understanding of some of the exemptions that will exist. We will get pre-approvals laid out and processes that will provide certainty for development going forward around the parking bays and parking licences that are required for developments to go ahead.

There was a little bit of discussion around some ancillary matters. Perhaps time will tell how that will work out. There does seem to be some agreement at least about connecting contiguous areas to the parking management area. I think, on balance, they are supportable matters. Of course, there will be the ability to charge a differential rate, if you like—a differing rate of fees—depending on the access to transport services and the centrality of some of the locations within the area. At the moment, that is pretty well from Kings Park across to Thomas Street, Newcastle Street and back to the Swan River. That has within it areas of different amenity and needs. Having the ability to provide that difference in rates will be a benefit going forward and I strongly support that.

I thank the minister for her answers, but it is clear that we have a different view about the need to incorporate a planning process laying out the future expenditure of the fund. I have said that the minister had the option—it is in the Auditor General's report as well—to examine the need for the levy to be set at the rate it is at because, seemingly, the government was unable to spend it in the way that the 1999 act required. We have heard about some of the differences between the 1999 act and the current bill with regard to planning. The objects that are laid out in the act were laid out in the old Perth parking policy arrangements. That is where they will be found. As I understand it, within that were projects that were mentioned and there were thoughts about infrastructure, not just the land use matters, that will apparently now be part of the Perth parking policy. It is clear that the money that already has been accumulated through the special purpose account will be reflected in the budget even though it will move to a newly named account and be collected under a different regime. It will be expended under the new regime, which has a different ethos and way forward in how the moneys will be expended.

The discussion has confirmed those differences, but I think it was a productive discussion and a good airing of some of the different points of view as we went forward. The opposition opposes the bill because of the cost-of-living situation and the fact that the government did not need that amount of money to presumably undertake things like the CAT services and those matters that already have been undertaken. The government is now spending the money on projects that have a much looser nexus to the collection of the funds for traffic congestion and amenity issues that were the focus of the 1999 legislation. There are differences. I think we will have to accept that we have a difference of opinion between the two sides on those matters.

I conclude by saying that there are very supportable matters in the legislation but that, on balance, we have chosen to oppose it because of the impost on taxpayers when the government clearly did not have a plan to expend the money in a way that the money had been expected to be spent when it was collected.

*Division*

Question put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr P. Lilburne) casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

## Ayes (33)

Mr G. Baker	Ms M.J. Hammat	Ms S.F. McGurk	Dr K. Stratton
Ms L.L. Baker	Ms J.L. Hanns	Mr D.R. Michael	Mr C.J. Tallentire
Ms H.M. Beazley	Mr T.J. Healy	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Mr P.C. Tinley
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms C.M. Tonkin
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr H.T. Jones	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Mr R.R. Whitby
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr D.J. Kelly	Mr S.J. Price	Ms E.L. Hamilton ( <i>Teller</i> )
Ms D.G. D'Anna	Dr J. Krishnan	Mr J.R. Quigley	
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr P. Lilburne	Ms R. Saffioti	
Ms K.E. Giddens	Mrs M.R. Marshall	Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski	

## Noes (5)

Ms M.J. Davies	Mr R.S. Love	Ms M. Beard ( <i>Teller</i> )
Dr D.J. Honey	Mr P.J. Rundle	

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Council.

**PERTH PARKING MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2023***Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

[Leave granted to proceed forthwith to the third reading.]

*Third Reading*

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Ms R. Saffioti (Minister for Transport)**, and transmitted to the Council.

*House adjourned at 5.06 pm*

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### QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

#### POLICE STATIONS — ONSLOW

**833. Ms M. Beard to the Minister for Police:**

I refer to the condition of the Onslow Police Station, and I ask:

- (a) When was the Onslow Police Station first built;
- (b) What has been the annual amount spent on the maintenance budget for Onslow Police Station since 2017;
- (c) How many complaints have there been to Western Australian Police Force (WAPOL) by serving officers related to the condition of the Onslow Police Station since 2017;
- (d) What is the current cyclone rating of the Onslow Police Station;
- (e) Does it meet all current workplace safety and security requirements;
- (f) Has the station ever been impacted by flooding? If so, when; and
- (g) If so, what remediation works have been conducted to mitigate against this future risk?

**Mr P. Papalia replied:**

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

- (a) 1980.
- (b) Average of \$46,000 per annum.
- (c) All 133 reported maintenance issues since 2017 have been addressed.
- (d) Category D.
- (e) The WA Police Force are in the process of securing contractors to complete required works.
- (f) No.
- (g) N/A.

#### POLICE OFFICERS — ASSAULTS AGAINST

**836. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Police:**

I refer to assaults on police officers, and I ask:

- (a) How many police officers who were on duty were subject to an assault that resulted in a charge of assault police officer in the year July 2021 to June 2022;
- (b) How many police officers who were on duty were subject to an assault that resulted in a charge of assault police officer in the year July 2020 to June 2021; and
- (c) How many police officers who were on duty were subject to an assault that resulted in a charge of assault police officer in the year July 2019 to June 2020?

**Mr P. Papalia replied:**

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

(a)–(c)

Financial Year	Number of victims	Number of Assault Police Officer offences where at least one offender was processed
2021–22	895	1,154
2020–21	790	1,049
2019–20	746	956

Note:

Statistics are provisional and subject to revision.

#### CHILD PROTECTION — FOSTER CARERS

**842. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Child Protection:**

I refer to foster carers engaged by the Department for Child Protection and Family Support as at 31 May 2023, and I ask:

- (a) How many foster carers were registered with the Department;

- (b) How many foster carers currently with children in their care did not have a valid Working with Children card;
- (c) How many foster carers currently with children in their care had an interim Working with Children card;
- (d) Of those referenced in (c), what was the average length of issue of the interim Working with Children cards; and
- (e) Of those referenced in (c), what is the longest length of issue of an interim Working with Children card?

**Ms S.E. Winton replied:**

The Department of Communities advises:

Data as of 11 August 2023 has been provided, as it is not possible to provide retrospective data.

As at 11 August 2023:

- (a) 2530.
- (b) Nil.
- (c) There is no provision in the *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004* for an interim WWC Card.
- (d)–(e) Not applicable.

**FIREARMS — HIGH-CALIBRE WEAPONS**

**846. Ms M. Beard to the Minister for Police:**

I refer to recent changes to high caliber weapons which came into effect on July 1 2023, and I ask:

- (a) Who is responsible for undertaking valuations for the purposes of the buyback of very powerful firearms associated with this change;
- (b) Can the valuations process please be outlined;
- (c) Can you please provide the list prices for firearms in this buyback process;
- (d) Was this list published;
- (e) If not, why not;
- (f) Has the freight to the regions been factored in on the buyback amounts; and
- (g) What has been the average wait time for reimbursement?

**Mr P. Papalia replied:**

The Western Australia Police Force advise:

- (a) The WA Police Force Firearms Act Reform project team, in collaboration with the licence holder.
  - (b) Each firearm type voluntarily involved in the compensation scheme was researched including the use of open source information for current and historic sales of the same firearm type;  
Further research was also done on the cost of any enhancements that could be made to those firearms;  
Assessment of the original purchase invoice or market valuation provided by the licence holder was made;  
Where required, contact was made with the valuer and/or original place of purchase to review the market valuation;  
Where appropriate, advice was sought from independent market experts to review any valuation;  
Where appropriate, the licence holder surrendering the firearm was contacted to discuss the compensation amount and ensure their awareness of all their options for disposal of the firearm.
  - (c) No defined list for specific firearms was established. Each firearm was assessed based upon the process outlined at (b).
  - (d) Not applicable.
  - (e) Not applicable.
  - (f) No.
  - (g) 6.2 days on average from the date of surrender.
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