



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2023

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Tuesday, 12 September 2023

Legislative Assembly

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THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) took the chair at 1.00 pm, acknowledged country and read prayers.

POYNTER PRIMARY SCHOOL — STUDENT SAFETY

Petition

MR P. LILBURNE (Carine) [1.01 pm]: I have a petition that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Assembly. It has 42 signatures. The petition reads —

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

We, the undersigned, call attention to the dangerous commute faced by children of Poynter Primary School. Despite the presence of safe footpaths on the busy main roads, children are often forced to walk or bike on the adjoining, unpaved side streets right up to the adjoining main road, where a footpath eventually becomes available. By forcing the children to travel on the street in such close proximity to a main road, we are placing them at unnecessary risk of harm.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to acknowledge and raise this issue with the City of Joondalup LGA, and further, to hold the City of Joondalup LGA accountable for any further inaction.

[See petition 43.]

WATERMANS BAY — PROTECTION

Petition

MR P. LILBURNE (Carine) [1.02 pm]: I have a petition with 241 signatures that has been certified as conforming with the standing orders of the Assembly and reads —

Petition to Parliament of Western Australia—The Future of Watermans Bay

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

We, the undersigned, say the maintenance of Watermans Bay is of significance for future generations. The City of Stirling is in the process of reviewing the Coastal Hazard Risk Management Adaption Plan (CHRMAP). The CHRMAP supports maintaining the current unsightly sandbags and allowing the erosion to take its course. We say that a permanent solution should be sought to ensure the ongoing enjoyment of Watermans Bay for future generations. We propose a limestone wall, or similar, as a permanent replacement to the sandbags.

Now we ask the Legislative Assembly to engage with the City of Stirling and provide financial support for a permanent solution to this issue.

[See petition 44.]

VISITORS — KUYBOKAROV FAMILY

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [1.03 pm]: Member for Carine, I think you also have some guests in my gallery, whom I will acknowledge. We are very privileged to have here Western Australia's first chess grandmaster, Temur Kuybokarov, and his parents. Welcome to the Parliament. To be just 23 years of age and chess grandmaster is a very big achievement.

[Applause.]

BILLS

Assent

Message from the Governor received and read notifying assent to the following bills —

1. Appropriation (Recurrent 2023–24) Bill 2023.
2. Appropriation (Capital 2023–24) Bill 2023.

PAPERS TABLED

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

CARERS ADVISORY COUNCIL: COMPLIANCE REPORT 2020–21*Correction — Statement by Speaker*

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [1.05 pm]: I received a letter from the Minister for Community Services requesting that an erratum be added to the Department of Communities' *Carers Advisory Council: Compliance report 2020–21* tabled on 23 June 2022. The erratum clarifies information on pages 75 and 76 regarding the relationship between the Mental Health Commission and funded non-government organisations and their compliance with the Carer Recognition Act. Under the provisions of standing order 156, I authorise the corrections to be attached as an erratum to the tabled paper.

[See paper [2219](#).]

EDUCATION — GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE*Notice of Motion*

Mr R.S. Love (Leader of the Opposition) gave notice, on behalf of Mr P.J. Rundle (Deputy Leader of the Opposition), that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house condemns the Western Australian Labor government's continued neglect of the state's education system and acknowledges its failure to prioritise the needs of students throughout the entire state.

WESTERN AUSTRALIAN INSTITUTE OF SPORT — BOARD APPOINTMENTS*Statement by Minister for Sport and Recreation*

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Sport and Recreation) [1.06 pm]: I rise to inform members of four new board appointments to the Western Australian Institute of Sport: Dr Neale Fong, Gary Dreibergs, Fabian Ross and Darren Foster. Dr Neale Fong has been appointed the chair of the WAIS board. Dr Fong is a respected and experienced leader in the medical and sporting community. He brings to the table 40 years' experience as a medical practitioner, 30 years' experience in sport governance and experience in the role of chair. Gary Dreibergs is a former Deputy Commissioner of the Western Australia Police Force, with experience in working across government and in governance. Fabian Ross is currently the chief executive officer of Hockey WA, with 20 years' experience in the financial sector, demonstrating expertise in change management, strategy and business planning. Darren Foster has previously held leadership roles in commonwealth, state and local governments. He is a former director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, with expertise in regulatory reform and cultural change.

Along with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries' ex-officio board member, these appointments ensure that quorum requirements for this board are now met. I thank all the previous board members and board chair, Priya Cooper, for their service.

I stood in this place on 22 June 2022 and apologised to the gymnasts who suffered as a result of participating in the WAIS program. The government remains committed to ensuring that the restorative and reconciliation process and the cultural and governance review is undertaken. It is my intention to add further experienced board members to the WAIS board in due course.

**CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS —
OUTSTANDING COMMUNITY LANGUAGE TEACHER OF THE YEAR AWARD***Statement by Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests*

DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale — Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests) [1.08 pm]: I was honoured recently to host the Outstanding Community Language Teacher of the Year Award, which recognises the importance of language diversity in our community. Knowing more than one language can help strengthen relationships and forge connections within our households and families and across the world. Learning languages can increase job opportunities, promote intercultural understanding and help improve business connections at home and abroad. For Western Australians from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, a strong connection to language allows for connection with extended families, countries of ancestry and cultural heritage. The Outstanding Community Language Teacher of the Year Award celebrates excellence in teaching by community language teachers and recognises the commitment, passion and innovation of community language teachers in Western Australia and the impact they have on their students and communities.

The award is presented to a community language teacher who has made an exceptional contribution that has significantly enhanced the quality of teaching and learning in a community language, and has a commitment to excellence, innovation and making a positive difference in the teaching of a community language.

The Cook Labor government is proud to support our community language schools and the Outstanding Community Language Teacher of the Year Award, which was established in 2018. This year, 21 nominations were received for the Outstanding Community Language Teacher of the Year Award. This was a significant increase in nominations from 2022, which is a testament to the important role that community language teachers play in our communities.

I am pleased to advise members that the winner of the 2023 award was Ms Poornima Mayurathan from the South Tamil Language School of Western Australia. The judges recognised Ms Mayurathan for creating an engaging and inclusive learning environment for her students and for using culturally appropriate programs to create a safe and fun environment for students to showcase their language ability.

I commend Community Languages WA and my Office of Multicultural Interests for partnering to deliver this important event. I am sure that all members will join me in congratulating the winner of the Outstanding Community Language Teacher of the Year Award, and applauding all teachers from our community language schools for their continued commitment and dedication to the sharing of their language.

SCARBOROUGH FORESHORE DEVELOPMENT

Statement by Minister for Planning

MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Minister for Planning) [1.11 pm]: I rise to inform the house of a significant milestone in the Scarborough foreshore development, marking the end of nearly a decade of the fruitful collaboration between the state government and the City of Stirling.

I am pleased to say that the state government has officially handed back control of the Scarborough foreshore development to the City of Stirling. It is a \$100 million redevelopment project that has not only revitalised this popular seaside activity hub, but also greatly contributed to the ongoing transformation of Scarborough. Under the guidance of DevelopmentWA, close to 2 000 new residential dwellings have been approved within the redevelopment precinct. Among these, 422 units have already been constructed. An additional 1 200 units are in the delivery pipeline, including 170 units dedicated to affordable housing. The redevelopment project has been a testament to the power of effective local and state government cooperation. By harnessing our strengths and streamlining approval processes, we have activated the full potential of Scarborough's foreshore.

I commend the City of Stirling's commitment to cutting red tape and driving community-focused solutions. This foreshore development has already proven its mettle, drawing in both locals and visitors to enjoy its world-class beach and thriving entertainment precinct. I am confident that the City of Stirling will steer this success story towards an even brighter future, making it a sought-after destination for people, locally and across the country, and beyond.

This will also be a pivotal factor in our aspiration to attract over 700 000 new visitors to the city by 2041, further fuelling economic growth in one of the state's most vital, vibrant employment centres outside of the Perth CBD. The redevelopment project has been instrumental in enhancing Scarborough's reputation as a premier beachfront attraction.

As the Minister for Planning, I express my gratitude to all those who have contributed to this achievement, including the member for Scarborough. I look forward to the continued success of this precinct.

ABORIGINAL RANGER PROGRAM

Statement by Minister for Environment

MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Minister for Environment) [1.13 pm]: I am pleased to inform the house that I recently announced the awarding of \$11 million to 12 successful applicants under round 6 of the Cook Labor Government's Aboriginal ranger program. The ARP is one of the cornerstones of the government's commitment to supporting Aboriginal-led projects to protect country. The program provides key deliverables towards our government's commitment to Closing the Gap. People funded through the program grow their knowledge and improve their skills in conservation and land management, site management and tourism opportunities. Since the government's initial commitment of \$20 million in 2017, the program has grown, with a further commitment of \$83 million. The program supports the development and expansion of ranger groups with innovative projects. The program spans the state and supports Aboriginal ranger groups in remote and regional locations.

The ARP has funded more than 800 employment opportunities across all regions of the state. Of these jobs, 95 per cent have gone to Aboriginal people, and almost half of them are women. A total of 650 jobs have been ranger jobs on country. Examples of projects from round 6 include developing programs, including a junior ranger program and a tourism capacity building program, in the Perth and Peel regions; establishing a facility for seed production to grow vulnerable and in-demand native seed stocks to meet the growing demand of the sector and reduce the reliance on unsustainable wild-harvest operations in the Pilbara; and expanding services from nursery operations to a ranger program that will target the carbon, restoration and bush food markets in the midwest and the wheatbelt.

The involvement of Aboriginal organisations and traditional owners in these endeavours ensures that the projects are grounded in local perspectives, needs and aspirations, leading to more holistic and impactful outcomes. I congratulate those Aboriginal organisations that were successful in round 6. I look forward to seeing what these innovative projects will discover and how this knowledge can be shared with all existing ranger teams.

I am also pleased to inform the house that on 11 August, Minister Buti joined me in opening the \$13 million development fund, which is round 7 of the program. This round is open for applications until 9 October 2023. I look forward to seeing which new and emerging Aboriginal ranger groups come forward to apply.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — TASKFORCE*Statement by Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence*

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) [1.16 pm]: Just over a week ago, the government listened to women with lived experience of family and domestic violence, and representatives from the Centre for Women’s Safety and Wellbeing and Stopping Family Violence. We came together following the recent horrific deaths of several women. I again extend my condolences to the families and friends of these women.

The forum’s focus was to do more together across the continuum to focus on primary prevention and early intervention to stop violence before it starts, keep women and children safe and hold perpetrators to account. It was recognised that across government and the community sector, we need to keep working to break down silos and better share information and data, including about patterns of perpetrator behaviour.

We have listened and acted quickly. The Cook Government will establish a special taskforce to help guide the next phase of the work to address family and domestic violence, building on the major work done and over \$200 million invested since 2017. The taskforce, a key request from the forum, will consider and advise on other priorities put forward at the forum, and examine broader system reforms to improve victim–survivor safety and perpetrator accountability. It will be co-chaired by Professor Colleen Hayward, AM, a senior Noongar woman and former ambassador for the Commissioner for Children and Young People, and Emily Roper, the director general of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet.

Government members will include directors general and commissioners of key agencies, including the Department of Communities, the Department of Education, the Western Australia Police Force, the Department of Health and the Department of Justice. The non-government members are being finalised so that work can get underway this month. The taskforce will be time limited, initially for six months.

The government has also committed to the forum’s second key ask—a lived experience advisory group to provide an ongoing voice for those with lived experience to help shape policies on family and domestic violence. The taskforce will start work on establishing this important group.

In addition to these important responses, building on the work across government and in the sector, the government today also announced changes to the Firearms Act to include mandatory disqualifying offences that will ban serious violent offenders from holding or retaining a firearm licence, interim services at the Armadale One Stop Hub, expanding the Keeping Women Safe in their Homes program to Fitzroy Crossing and Katanning, and a statement of intent with the non-government school sector on a shared approach to respectful relationships.

There is more to do, and the taskforce and lived experience advisory group will play critical roles in guiding our future work. Family and domestic violence is a scourge in our community. Everyone has the right to feel safe in their home, and everyone in the community has a part to play in stopping family and domestic violence.

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

Resumed from 17 May.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition) [1.19 pm]: I rise to make a brief contribution to the debate on the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. I am the lead speaker for the opposition on this matter in this place and we will be supporting the bill to see that it makes its way through both houses of Parliament as quickly as possible.

We know that consultation has been undertaken with groups such as the Property Council of Australia and the Urban Design Institute. We have also had some discussion with those bodies or members thereof about some of the matters contained in this legislation. At the moment, the Western Australian building industry is facing a number of issues in terms of the financial strength of its builders and the pressure that the building industry has been under more generally in not only the apartment sector, but also the housing sector. It is very clear that more could be done to assist the building industry to ensure that the houses being built are of the highest standard, that protections are in place for home owners and that builders are encouraged to have reliable cash flows and be in a sound financial position. Many building companies have been very badly hit by the cost escalations experienced right across the economy, especially in the construction industry, with many of those companies having signed fixed-price contracts leading to builders having a lot of difficulty in delivering those homes. We have seen many examples of builders that have become financially unviable and had to declare bankruptcy, leading to home owners being out of pocket or, in some cases, without a home. As an example of that, some years ago, a family that I represent from the area of Gabbadah, which is located along the coast in the southern part of the Shire of Gingin, were constructing their house. They had paid a considerable amount of money to the builder up-front. The family felt that the materials on site were theirs because they had paid money to the builder. The house had been bricked up to about the top of the windows but had not quite been finished and the roofing materials had been brought to site. The builder went broke and the family found that they did not have the money to complete the project because they had already paid

a substantial amount—probably more than they should have—to the building company for the work that had been done. They thought that the home indemnity insurance payout would come to several hundreds of thousands of dollars, but, as the parliamentary secretary knows, at that stage it covered them for only \$95 000 because of the limit of \$100 000 on the home indemnity insurance policy that included a \$5 000 excess. That is one example of a family that could not afford to carry on. That family, including four children, was living in a tin shed on the property. In the end, they had to sell the project and move to another form of accommodation with their dream of home ownership ending in collapse.

We have heard plenty of other stories. The parliamentary secretary may know that I have made representations on behalf of another of my constituents when the house that she and her partner had built together was not built on the best foundations. In fact, the foundations for the building were inadequate and the house was cracking. I believe that the quotes to fix the house to make it habitable were in the order of \$500 000. Again, only \$95 000 was available through home indemnity insurance. That particular lady had a lot of input with the Building Commission, as well as the minister at the time. Her example was, I think, instrumental in the government eventually doubling the home indemnity insurance limit to \$200 000. Unfortunately, she received no benefit from that. That situation is just one of many that highlights the stress on not only families, but also builders who are still trying to honour the contracts and build the houses. They have been under an enormous amount of strain to do that, so if anything can be done to assist them, I urge the government to do what it can.

Today we are talking about the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. This concept involves developments of at least 40 apartments that will be leased out for a period during which a 50 per cent land tax exemption will apply. The exemption will apply to land that is used for rental accommodation. If the development is a mixed-purpose development, the exemption will apply to only that land that is used for the rental portion of the development and used by residents, as opposed to that part of the land used for perhaps shops or other buildings. The exemption would also apply to land used for common areas for residents, such as an exercise area, a swimming pool or something like that. The purpose is to ensure that these properties are available for rent. The properties must be offered for a term of three years, as I understand it. The tenant can choose to rent the property for a shorter term, but the expected target is three years. I understand that the premises must be rented out for 15 years for the exemption to continue to apply. If, at some point, the dwellings are no longer eligible for the exemption under the provisions in this legislation, the tax can be retrospectively recouped.

Similar exemptions exist in Victoria and New South Wales. Of note is that the minimum number of dwellings in those two states is 50, as opposed to 40 in this state, and that the duration of the exemption is 30 years in Victoria, as opposed to 20 continuous years for every project in Western Australia.

The government has not given us any idea of what the financial impact of this legislation will be on the state's coffers because there are no projections, from what I can see, as to how many of these projects will take off. At the moment, this industry is not widespread in Western Australia, or it is not something that many developers have considered building. It is possible that the types of investors that may be able to participate in this type of development are perhaps those larger groups that are involved in property, rather than collections of mum-and-dad investors.

The legislation also appears to have been introduced in the hope that someone might build some of these apartments. From what I can understand, very few builders in Western Australia are in the business of building apartments at the moment. A number of projects have been shelved and that is largely due to the fact that the builders needed to build the apartment complexes have not been there. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary might be able to give some practical understanding of the likelihood of this legislation having an effect and the government's expectation of the take-up of the exemption. Has it been actively involved in discussions with groups that might be looking at this? Could the parliamentary secretary give us some idea of the types of projects that the government envisages may be developed and perhaps even where they may be? It seems pretty clear that there is not a lot of appetite for investment in this field. Although I commend the government for endeavouring to put in place a measure that may help to encourage it, I am not sure whether a 50 per cent reduction in land tax will be sufficient. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary could explain why 50 per cent was chosen as opposed to, say, 100 per cent for a period. What was the rationale? Was it simply that this is what has happened in other states so that seemed to be a reasonable proposition?

As I said, I think the legislation has a laudable aim—that is, to increase the availability of rental accommodation in the state. This type of accommodation may be in demand from a consumer's point of view but perhaps is not all that attractive for the investment sector. Perhaps the parliamentary secretary could outline what he sees as useful and practical things that the government could do to encourage people to take up this exemption and to begin to build the properties that we all understand are needed. It is pretty clear to everybody that there is a housing shortage, and diversity of housing product is perhaps part of the answer. Building more and more four-by-two homes on an allotment of land is perhaps not the best way to provide that diversity. Again, I commend the government for its aim and what it hopes will be achieved. I would like some practical assurances about how it thinks there will be some take-up, how it sees that contributing to the mix of building in the state going forward and how that might help to alleviate some of the issues faced by people trying to find accommodation in Western Australia at the moment.

I do not have a lot more to say on this bill. It is pretty straightforward legislation and I am sure that government members want to talk about it, so I will conclude my discussion at this point and again reiterate that we will support this bill through Parliament. I do not see it as being contentious. I do not see it as legislation that will necessarily lead to a sudden burst of apartment building in Western Australia, but perhaps it is one small step to achieving that. I would like to know whether other measures are being contemplated that may help further that aim in the future.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie) [1.34 pm]: I am very pleased to speak to the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. I know the parliamentary secretary will do an excellent job of conveying back to the minister with responsibility for this legislation any of the issues that I raise.

As has been outlined by the Leader of the Opposition, the bill is primarily about improving the diversity of rental housing stock by providing an incentive for investors to look at the cost of building a complex with a minimum of 40 dwellings and see that it makes financial sense for them to proceed with that model of building properties for rental. That incentive will be delivered through the mechanism of a 50 per cent concession on land tax.

I think the need for rental properties is very clear to every member of this chamber. Many people on lower incomes look towards finding a rental property. It is also very important to know that many people in fairly comfortable salaried positions, perhaps in their early professional years, are not really in a position to commit to holding a mortgage, so they want that flexibility. Today they could be working in Perth, Western Australia, but through their professional opportunities they might well see opportunities on the east coast or overseas. People want that flexibility to move and rental properties provide that. My understanding is that as a percentage of our overall housing stock in Australia—not only Western Australia—the number of rentals is declining. We have fewer rental properties at the moment than we have had in the past. Clearly, we have to do something and this legislation will deliver by providing an extra incentive for investors and builders to provide this rental product through this build-to-rent concept.

I think it is also worth noting that build-to-rent properties could perhaps be—I certainly hope they will be—much more exciting than the standard boring block of flats within which we might imagine some rental properties are encased. By that I mean that we really have an opportunity to see those sorts of complexes. We have heard about these a little when talking about new strata title arrangements. Certainly when I hear from members of organisations such as Strata Community Australia, I realise the enormous potential for housing of the future to include all sorts of things such as gymnasiums, swimming pools and parks with barbecue facilities as well as being very close, if not absolutely adjacent, to shopping precincts. Then people can have a very good quality of life with accessible amenities all within very close range of where they live. That is a wonderful goal for us to aim towards. I see the virtues of this legislation being about not only the incentive that it will provide to investors, but also developing those newer dwellings of the future whereby we get towards the very laudable concept of the 20-minute city. I know that in some quarters the idea of the 20-minute city has become controversial, for some unknown reason, but I think it is a highly laudable objective. If we consider the alternative to the 20-minute city, it is an urban sprawl whereby people's lives are consumed by one of the least productive aspects of modern living—that is, sitting in traffic jams, sitting in congestion and sitting on freeways that are moving at a dreadfully slow speed. They are getting nowhere and literally wasting hours, and we must stop that.

A few weeks ago I heard on the radio someone from one of the property organisations—I cannot recall which one it was—trying to advocate that sprawl is good and that we should consider sprawl as something that is misjudged and misunderstood. They said that we should not even use the term “sprawl” because it is a bit derogatory. It is a derogatory term and we should all want to avoid urban sprawl. Encouraging sprawl is absolutely abominable. People who live at the outer limits of a city having to spend hours getting to their place of work is a real blight on their quality of life.

I hear that the Perth area extends 160 kilometres in one continuous urban sprawl from Mandurah all the way up to Yancheep. That is bigger than Los Angeles. I have heard that Sochi in Russia is comparable. Clearly, urban sprawl condemns people to hours of commuting time. That is just not healthy for society.

Mr D.A. Templeman: We, in Mandurah, of course, like to consider ourselves regional.

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Indeed, of course it is. Members have to commute here on days when the Parliament is sitting. I think that is quite different from people who have to commute to Perth's CBD five days a week. That would be a pretty appalling scenario. We take on the responsibility of representing our communities. People have to cope with commuting an hour to work and an hour to get home. They lose two hours a day just in their commute time, which is terrible. I suppose there is some recompense for people who are fortunate enough to travel on the good public transport that we have here in Perth so that they are not just sitting behind the wheel of a car but are able to read or listen to podcasts and the like, and use their time profitably. There is some virtue in that.

The argument by some in the property industry is that we need urban sprawl because there is no land supply. Land developers have said to me, “Mr Tallentire, we don't understand what you're on about because you've got to provide the land. Where's the land going to come from? We can see this growth and this demand, but where's the land going to come from?” Looking around my electorate, I can see how much land is available within a 14 or 15-kilometre radius of Perth. It is quite astounding. For some reason, elements in the Western Australian property development industry have developed their whole business model around cookie-cutter developments on the outer periphery of

the metropolitan area. They want a big flat area of yellow sand that they can put cookie-cutter houses on. That is their business model. They struggle with the idea that they should be doing versions of infill housing. They struggle to understand how to relate to the various infrastructure agencies and local governments. They do not seem to have the entrepreneurial skill to bring about investment, development and construction within that 15-kilometre radius. That seems to be a big challenge. I understand that elsewhere in Australia property developers are quite enthused and capable. They are highly skilled at doing those inner city-type developments, but for some reason in Western Australia we have a serious skill deficiency in clever infill housing. I hope that the passage of this legislation will enable property developers to see that they can do it. They can talk to people on the east coast and work out how to do it and then talk to investors and feel that the incentive mechanisms are there so that they can enjoy a very financially lucrative option of property development in the inner and outer metropolitan area.

I just said that in my electorate I have an abundance of land. I want to quickly substantiate that point. I hope that the Minister for Finance, with carriage of this bill, and the parliamentary secretary, will look very closely at this. I hope we get some build-to-rent properties on the land that I am about to mention because it is desperately needed. We have land that is 15 kilometres from the CBD that has been lying vacant for literally years. I want to talk about the example of Corfu Way in Maddington where there are a number of lots that were developed by the state government over 10 years ago. They have roads, paths and lighting. It is all there. The expensive, heavy infrastructure is all there and ready to go, but, for some reason, we have not been able to develop it. It is really serious that we are missing out on this development opportunity. Meanwhile, the property industry is telling us that there is no land and that we need more land supply. Lot 221 in Corfu Way is 4 298 square metres, lot 222 is 4 563 square metres and lot 223 is 8 194 square metres, all with roads, paths and lighting. Everything is there and ready to go. I would like to see that made an absolute priority. I understand that the Department of Fire and Emergency Services just very recently heard about this land and thought it would be a nice spot for a fire station. That will add complexity into the mix of consideration. I would really urge against that. I do not think it is the ideal location for a fire station. Of course we need fire stations in good locations, but I think that the Corfu Way development is absolutely prime residential land. Its current zoning is mixed business. The intention is that some of it will be used for office space and commercial properties on the ground floor and the next level up will be used for residential housing. That can go ahead or we might have to change the zoning or whatever, but to leave land like this undeveloped for such a long time does not make sense. When the property industry wants to push its outer-suburban cookie-cutter development approach, we must be aware of all the possibilities for development in the inner city.

I will turn to another development that is very close to Thornlie train station. It is 5 Aylesford Way. The Department of Communities owns the land, which is zoned R20–R60. It is split zoning. It is 872 square metres and is vacant. The old house was knocked down years ago and we are still waiting for the land to be developed. It is more evidence of land supply. I know that the Deputy Speaker is well aware of Maddington Oval and the incredible potential for development along that oval. That is a seven to eight-hectare site. It is beautiful and has incredible potential for what will soon be termed, I think, inner-city development. I think that is within 14 kilometres of the CBD. It is right near Maddington train station and has all sorts of potential for development, but I do not see our property developers. Where is that entrepreneurial drive that we hear spoken of? Where are the entrepreneurs coming to government saying, “I’ve got a plan for sites like Maddington Oval?” Instead, they say, “Give us more land at Yanchep or Mandurah.” They do not seem to have a nose for development opportunities in areas like Maddington. What a great boost it would be to see a good property development somewhere like Maddington. Maddington Oval could be a prime example. A stream runs through it. It has a living stream opportunity along the lower park road. There is great potential there.

I know that just outside my electorate in the member for Southern River’s electorate is a 600-hectare parcel of land. It is the largest contiguous landholding owned by a single landholder—the Della Vedova family. That is bounded by Tonkin Highway on one side and Passmore Street on the other. That is Tonkin Highway in Champion Lakes, for members who have passed through that area. That 600 hectares of land could potentially become a new suburb, with 20 000 people easily fitting into that sort of area. It has enormous potential and is the sort of development that should proceed. Perhaps with the passage of this legislation and a build-to-rent scheme, property developers will be given that extra incentive to get developments over the line and see what opportunities are available.

A property at 2 Stalker Road in Gosnells is currently with the Department of Communities. I am very pleased that a community-driven e-waste recycling facility has taken up residency on that block on a short-term lease.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE: Sam’s Spares, which I have spoken of before—an award-winning community organisation—is currently installing itself into 2 Stalker Road. That property measures 4 000 square metres. I am very pleased that Sam’s Spares is using that land but I understand that it will not be a permanent arrangement. It will probably be there for a number of years. It is an example of a piece of government-owned land that has the potential for redevelopment. It is very well located, being close to Gosnells train station. I saw it yesterday when I was down there campaigning for the Yes campaign. I noticed all the signage for the local government candidates, who are getting ready for the election campaign. I believe that will come to a conclusion around 21 October. We really are in the midst of a lot of campaigning at the moment. Personally, campaigning for people to vote yes in the

referendum is an absolute priority. I received a very pleasant and positive reception from the people I talked to on their way to the train station in Gosnells. They made very considered and thoughtful remarks. I was really pleased to hear that. A couple of people mentioned to me how impressed and captivated they were by John Farnham's song *You're the Voice* and the video clip. Thanks to John Farnham, we may have seen a really strong turning point in the trajectory of the campaign. It is quite something to behold. I think it was a brilliant campaign strategy. Some very good work has been done.

I refer to the endeavour to provide a land tax concession to those entering into a build-to-rent arrangement. Under this arrangement, I note that the dwelling must be developed and occupied between 12 May 2022 and 30 June 2032. Typically, dwellings must be available for rent for a minimum of three years. This is in keeping with the flexibility arrangements that we would expect with the market segment that I spoke about earlier, which tends to be younger people who want a short-term rental. There is a capacity in the legislation for a resident to choose a shorter lease. That is another commendable feature of this legislation.

I also wanted to say a little about the building industry in general. I have been keeping an eye on articles written by John Flint in *The Sunday Times* about some of the dreadful stories of what we could somewhat dismissively describe as shonky builders. These builders often take people's life savings, playing on their emotions when they embark upon the biggest investment of their lives—building a new home. The builders do not take care. They find themselves going bust and try to hand off the building company to someone. In one case, a builder tried to sell off the building company to an overseas student. They are terrible circumstances. That person was Mr Muhammad Salman, a Greens candidate for the federal seat of Burt at a previous election. He stood against the current member for Burt, Matt Keogh. Mr Salman was a director of Opus Homes. It was disgraceful to see what happened. It was unfortunate that some people really trusted him and Opus Homes. They thought they were dealing with a reputable builder with whom they could make big cash advances of \$30 000 to \$50 000. When they put up that money, they were told the builder would get on to the next stage. Unfortunately, it slowly began to unravel and people found that nothing was happening on their block. In this case, Opus Homes completely let them down. That sort of thing is totally unacceptable.

We need various measures in place that ensure that building companies meet certain financial requirements that enable them to have a successful business and that they have good connections with various trades—for instance, ensuring that someone can lay the slab and when plumbing works have to be done, and good connections with the plumbers, electricians, brickies and roof carpenters, ensuring they are all ready to go. All those different trades have to be coordinated. I have heard it said that being a licensed builder is a bit like being a maestro in an orchestra—bringing in different people at different times to deploy their skills and build on a property. It is absolutely essential that we have highly skilled people who have the financial backing to do the job and make it happen. That needs to be the same with these build-to-rent properties. We have to have good-quality reliable builders. We have to be very careful that we filter out those builders who potentially see an investment opportunity and a chance to say to investors that their land tax could be reduced by 50 per cent if they come on board. We have to make sure that the people involved in these build-to-rent arrangements are part of our most reliable building firms.

As I said before, when it comes to these sorts of urban renewal projects—I think a lot of them will be in this urban renewal category—we see a much higher skill capacity among some of the east coast builders. We do not necessarily find that skill capacity—that entrepreneurial flair—here in Western Australia. I am hoping that with the passage of this legislation, we will be able to attract those skilled people to WA, making sure that we have those 40-dwelling complexes with the additional advantages found in these complexes that provide for people's recreation and shopping needs within walking distance of their home. We need to create and develop the idea of the 20-minute city and enable people to have a much higher quality of life than the one that some people are opting for, where they are shackled to their car for two hours a day as they commute to work. We have to give people options that enable them to live much closer to their workplace and their recreational and shopping needs. This legislation will be very valuable as it will provide that extra bit of incentive to investors so people choosing to invest in property will see the long-term benefits of a build-to-rent development. I would love to see greater detail of what the cash flow will look like. However, the social advantage to Western Australia will be enormous.

It is incredibly important that we provide a diversity of housing in Western Australia. We want to see more diverse housing stock, and by that I mean housing stock that caters for people at different stages of their lives—for those who may not want to take on a mortgage or who want to have a property for just a couple of years.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 4447.]

VISITORS — BEAUMARIS PRIMARY SCHOOL AND OCEAN ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Statement by Speaker

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) [2.00 pm]: On behalf of the member for Joondalup, I acknowledge the student leaders of Beaumaris Primary School in the public gallery. Welcome. I also welcome Ocean Road Primary School on behalf of the member for Dawesville. Welcome to those students who are here for question time.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE
FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

596. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I refer to claims by the former Premier in September 2017 that domestic violence was at crisis level, with cases at an alarming 32 597, and note the more than 25 per cent increase in cases since that time.

- (1) How does the Premier explain his government's dangerous inaction, which has led to this increase and is failing Western Australians?
- (2) Is it excusable that what the government's former leader referred to as a crisis has been left to worsen under this Premier's watch?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) Domestic violence is a scourge on our community. It is something that we all stand united against. Violence of any form is not acceptable, but violence in the home is one of the more insidious forms. The place that one goes to for comfort and security should not be the place where one fears any form of violence. Therefore, it is not surprising that this government has done so much work in this area and will continue to do more. We were the first Western Australian government to appoint a Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. We were the first government to put in place the 16 Days in WA program, which is an important opportunity for everyone in the community to build their awareness and understanding of domestic violence so that we can all stand against it together. This government has invested over \$200 million since 2017 and brought in a raft of legislation and measures to protect victims of family and domestic violence, whether through protecting their rights as tenants to change locks in the event they are a victim of family and domestic violence, the one-stop hubs that allow people to get all the support they need in a single place without having to shop around, or the current pilot program around forensic services to understand people who are subject to sexual assault. A whole range of measures, right across the board, go to the heart of our commitment to make sure that we stand against domestic violence.

These are difficult issues and they will not change overnight, but our government has done more than any government before it to put measures in place to support the victims of family and domestic violence, provide extra resources to those who work on the front line and expand those services through the expansion of the number of women's refuges and safe places. We are making sure that we are doing the things that are important—that is, listening to the victims of family and domestic violence, acting on their concerns and making sure that the government is doing all it can to stand against family and domestic violence. This is a deep cultural problem that is impacting on our community. I am pleased that people feel more able to report incidents of family and domestic violence. If we are to take comfort from anything, that must be the opportunity. Let us not for a moment rest on our laurels; let us take this opportunity to continue to do more, and we will do more.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

597. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. The confronting statistics on occasions of domestic violence continue to grow under this government. How does the Premier explain his failure to effectively intervene?

Ms S.F. McGurk: Absolutely nothing in eight and a half years!

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Ms S.F. McGurk: Absolutely outrageous!

The SPEAKER: Minister for Training, order, please.

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I am reflecting on the interjections from the Minister for Training. She is absolutely right. When we came to office, we took over from a government that had been expressly disinterested in this issue. It is a difficult issue, and we understand that. That is why we got involved. We appointed a Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, we increased the resources and we brought in legislation and other measures to make sure that we support victims better. We have done more in the short time that we have been in government than members opposite did in their entire eight and a half years, and we will continue to do more.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — SPECIAL TASK FORCE

598. Mrs M.R. MARSHALL to the Premier:

I refer to the establishment of a special task force to help guide the state's efforts to address family and domestic violence.

- (1) Can the Premier outline to this house how this task force will work to improve victim-survivor safety and perpetrator accountability?

- (2) Can the Premier advise the house how the task force will build on this government's ongoing response to addressing family and domestic violence?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Rockingham for her very important question. As we know, domestic violence is one of the saddest reflections on our society. It is an ominous shadow that looms over an otherwise prosperous state. It is a scourge. It is an epidemic. It is occurring behind closed doors. Although it might happen behind closed doors, it is not a private matter. Addressing the scourge of domestic violence is everyone's business. Domestic violence has created permanent damage for too many families. Nearly one in four murders in Western Australia are family and domestic violence related, victim-survivors' lives are uprooted when they leave an abusive relationship and they require ongoing support, and families are trapped in a cycle in which abuse is normalised. It must stop! My government is taking this issue very seriously. In 2017, we appointed the first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, and over the last six years, we have invested more than \$200 million in vitally important programs and infrastructure. We have also introduced critical reforms for victim-survivors to hold perpetrators to account. However, we cannot turn around ingrained societal issues overnight, and there is always more that can be done.

Like all Western Australians, I was completely shocked by the most recent domestic violence tragedies. In the wake of those tragedies, I, along with four ministers in my cabinet, attended a forum organised by the family and domestic violence sector. It was an important opportunity to hear from advocates, victims and victims' families and understand the impact this violence has had. We heard their stories of violence and we could feel their trauma. They raised a range of issues at the forum that they wanted to bring to the government's attention. This government is listening.

The priority request from the forum was to form a special task force to help guide the next steps in addressing family and domestic violence. I am very happy to report that this task force will first establish a lived experience advisory group to ensure that the voices of victim-survivors and the families of those we have lost will always be front and centre in our policymaking. The Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence and I had the opportunity to announce these important measures today. We expect the task force to report back over a period of time—initially, a six-month period. However, that will not stop our assertive and deliberate march to continue to improve services for the prevention of family and domestic violence, it will not stop us from continuing to bring issues into this place to better support victims of family and domestic violence, and it will not stop us from identifying more opportunities to fund important programs. We very much look forward to receiving advice from the task force, but also hearing from the advisory panel—from those with lived experience—to continue to make sure that the government is informed on these matters.

In addition to that, we are amending the Firearms Act to take guns out of the hands of those who are unfit to hold firearms licences, including family and domestic violence perpetrators. This is the second priority arising from the forum. We want to do everything we can to make it safer for victim-survivors, and this is another important first step. We will introduce mandatory disqualifying offences and orders to take guns out of the hands of domestic violence perpetrators. Our laws will ban serious violent offenders from holding or obtaining a gun licence. The nature of the offence will determine the period of disqualification, so those convicted of more serious offences will be banned from holding a gun licence for longer. These laws will be applied retrospectively, meaning that those who have previously been convicted of a serious offence can have their firearms licences revoked from the point at which the laws are passed. Our laws will also ban anyone subject to a violence restraining order or a family violence restraining order from holding or retaining a gun licence. These are important reforms that will help protect victim-survivors and the wider public.

I thank all those who organised the recent forum, and in particular I thank those at the forum with lived experience who shared their stories in what must have been a painful recollection of their experiences. By their sharing those experiences, we are hopeful that we can bring about real change to people's lives. This is not a quick fix. It will take a combined effort from government, the support sector and the entire community. It is when the entire community stands united against family and domestic violence that we will make progress. We are committed to doing everything we can as a government to make sure we eliminate this scourge on our community.

PRISONERS REVIEW BOARD — EARLY PAROLE — LUKE NOORMETS

599. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the government's firearms reforms announced 18 months ago and today's announcement that anyone issued with a violence restraining order will automatically be banned from owning a firearm. Earlier this year, WA mother Georgia Lyall was shot dead by her ex-partner, who had been released from jail on early parole after serving time for torturing a man for 13 hours.

- (1) Are the WA Prisoners Review Board's decision-making processes being reviewed following its move to grant early parole to Luke Noormets?

(2) How can such a violent individual be released early?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

(1)–(2) As I have just said, we will introduce laws that will mean that individuals like the one that the member mentioned will not be eligible to hold a gun licence, but, of course, that would not have stopped him. My understanding is that he had an illegal firearm and utilised that in undertaking that criminal activity. That is regrettable, but as the member for Vasse has just observed, we will bring in the most comprehensive reforms of firearms legislation in over 50 years. I commend the Minister for Police for the very important work he has done with the police force and all the stakeholders who have had input into these laws.

We will not be able to take all illegal firearms off the streets, but through these laws we will have much greater control and the police will have more powers. That is why it is important that we have the opportunity to debate these laws. They will be completed in the coming months, and we look forward to these laws finding their way to Parliament probably at the beginning of next year. I recommend that every member of Parliament familiarises themselves with these laws and listens to any issues in their communities. Let us stand resolute in making sure we have firearm laws that can, as much as possible, eliminate the use of firearms, either illegally or legally, when it is not necessary.

PRISONERS REVIEW BOARD — EARLY PAROLE — LUKE NOORMETS

600. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Are the WA Prisoners Review Board's decision-making processes being reviewed following the decision to grant early release of this monster?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

The Prisoners Review Board undertakes extensive longitudinal monitoring of prisoners right throughout their time within the justice system. It does a tough job, and it does not always get it right. We will continue to listen to the board and any advice it might have for us about how we can assist it to continue to improve on its work. It is difficult work. It is obviously important that we make sure that the systems in place are fit for purpose. At the moment, the board does the best it can in difficult circumstances, and it will continue to make these difficult decisions on behalf of the community.

STATE ECONOMY — FINAL DEMAND DATA

601. Mr M.J. FOLKARD to the Treasurer:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's prudent management of state finances, which has supported Western Australia as a strong economy.

(1) Can the Treasurer update the house on the recent state final demand data that demonstrates the strength of the Western Australian economy?

(2) Can the Treasurer outline what this positive result means for jobs and businesses in WA?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

(1)–(2) I thank the member for that question. Most recently, we have seen further strong economic news for Western Australia. Of course, that means that with strong economic growth comes growth in the jobs market, making sure that people in WA can get a job, and the ability for the government to then support the WA community through measures addressing the cost of living. Strong economic growth is fundamentally important to the WA community and society.

The state final demand figures released last week showed that the domestic economy grew by 3.7 per cent in the last financial year, which was higher than our budget forecast of 3.25 per cent. The domestic economy has now grown by a cumulative 16.5 per cent since the onset of COVID, well above the national growth rate of 11.1 per cent. We have seen strong and continued growth in household consumption, which is very, very good given the significant interest rate issues for the community. Dwelling investment has also increased, together with business investment. Importantly, a strong factor in the strong economy has been government investment, with government investment increasing by 15.8 per cent over the last financial year. Government investment, for example, includes our record spend on infrastructure around the state on transport, Metronet, regional roads and all our other services like utilities, whether it is the Water Corporation or the electricity network. There has been a significant spend across the state.

I turn to the other side to the Liberal and National Parties, whose stewardship saw the state economy contract four years in a row, with state final demand shrinking 1.3 per cent, 2.2 per cent, 4.7 per cent and finally 7.1 per cent in 2016–17. This opposition of course opposes our infrastructure program and does not want to create jobs in the WA community. We will continue to grow jobs and opportunities for Western Australians and to support the community through measures like our cost-of-living measures in the state budget. Strong economic growth and strong financial management are key pillars of this government.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY — LYNN CANNON

602. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the tragic family and domestic violence murder of Lynn Cannon. Ms Cannon's 000 calls for help were downgraded from level 2 priority to level 3 priority, even though she had been threatened by her killer earlier that day, and it still took police more than an hour to respond. Ms Cannon's family believes that she would still be here if police had categorised her call appropriately and responded in the target time frame. Why, when Lynn Cannon was threatened with a knife by her ex-partner, was the priority downgraded?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

These are complex situations, and it really is not appropriate to seek to politicise them in the context of these sorts of debates. It is important that members appreciate that a range of factors that night led to the obviously difficult situation of the police not being able to get there as soon as they would have liked. Those issues are being discussed with the victim's family so they can have an explanation about these things. I will not go over those issues, nor is it appropriate to make them so public in this forum. I do not think we can do justice to them. I can say that the whole community felt let down as a result of that series of events. It was not good enough; the government has acknowledged that and the Commissioner of Police has acknowledged that as well. The police, through their inquiry—and, ultimately, through a coroner's inquiry—will be able to make investigations into that particular matter. They are ultimately operational matters for the police to address, and we will expect them to do so. Any death is difficult, Madam Speaker. It was remiss of me earlier to not acknowledge that we had another firearms death in Kellerberrin just last week. On behalf of the Parliament, I place on the record our deep regret and sadness about that event. I am sure all our hearts go out to the victim of that particular violent act and that victim's family.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY — LYNN CANNON

603. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Is the government giving Lynn Cannon's family's demands for change—"Lynn's Law"—real consideration?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I can confirm that the police and the Minister for Police are working with the victim's family to understand the issues that impacted them that night, particularly from a police operational point of view. As I said, we all felt let down. I am sure those matters will be addressed.

SCHOOLS — CAPITAL WORKS PROGRAM

604. Dr K. STRATTON to the Minister for Education:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's record \$1.5 billion public education capital works program that is delivering new and improved facilities across Western Australian schools. Can the minister outline to the house how the second stage of Bob Hawke College, which opened earlier this week, will allow students to reach their full potential?

Dr A.D. BUTI replied:

I thank the member for Nedlands for her outstanding question. Yesterday, the member for Nedlands joined me and the Premier at Bob Hawke College to officially open the second stage of Western Australia's first high-density public secondary school. The new facilities are really something to admire. They include state-of-the-art classrooms, a fully equipped theatre with the capacity to seat up to 350 people, dance and visual art studios, music and media rooms, a roof-top garden space and number of student common areas. Together with the completed stage 1 buildings, the new facilities complete the delivery of a truly world-class educational campus in Perth's inner suburbs. The opening of stage 2 is an important milestone both for the college and this government as it will allow the college to expand to meet its full scope over the next two years. The current year 10 students, who were the foundation students in 2020, once they pass through years 11 and 12 will become the first graduates of Bob Hawke College in 2025. Currently, 1 281 students through years 7 to 10 are enrolled in the college, and that will grow to cater for 2 000 students with the opening of the stage 2 facilities. I take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of my predecessor as the Minister for Education, Hon Sue Ellery, MLC, who oversaw the previous stages of this journey to deliver this world-class secondary campus. I also acknowledge the commitment of the member for Perth in advocating for this school.

Mr J.N. Carey: You forgot my invite.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I was too busy!

I also acknowledge the member for Nedlands' continued advocacy for education in her electorate and the college's outstanding principal, John Burke, who was tasked with bringing together new students, teachers, support staff, parents and other stakeholders to create a wholly new school community at Bob Hawke College. He is an outstanding principal and his philosophy on inclusive education is something that everyone should support. Based on the students and staff whom I, along with the Premier and member for Nedlands, met yesterday at the official opening of stage 2, it is truly a very impressive school community with an incredibly sophisticated way of looking at learning

and fantastic new facilities. I commend Principal Burke for his efforts. I also thank the architects at Hassel Studio and builder Dale Alcock for the construction of this outstanding facility. This is all part of our \$1.5 billion capital works program that the Cook government announced in the most recent budget a few months back. This is all part of us delivering and improving public education facilities across Western Australia.

I could not be prouder to stand here as the Minister for Education in the Cook Labor government that is directly investing in the future of our state by building world-class education infrastructure to meet the needs of our young children as they learn, grow and prosper.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — COERCIVE CONTROL

605. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I refer to the astounding reports of coercive control and threatening behaviour from perpetrators who continue their family and domestic violence and abuse while incarcerated. When will the government put in place legislation to criminalise coercive control to achieve the best outcomes for victim-survivors like Peta Robinson?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

We recently set up a taskforce to continue to advise us on what more we can do to eliminate family and domestic violence. That work will come on top of the \$200 million we have already invested since 2017. In addition to the great work by both the current and previous Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, we have brought into being a range of laws and policies to protect victims of family and domestic violence—and we will do more. We have already done more than the previous Liberal–National government did in its eight and a half years in office. But we hold much higher ambitions for the protection of victims of family and domestic violence. Through this taskforce, we will continue to be informed about what else we can do. Of course, the most important things we can do is to listen to not just the experts, advocates or those working on the frontline, but also the victims themselves. We will set up the advisory panel with those who have lived experience of family and domestic violence to make sure that we continue to listen to victims' stories and allow those stories to inform us on what more we can do in the prevention of family and domestic violence. I am very proud of the record to date. We will continue to do more and invest more, and we will continue to support this sector.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — COERCIVE CONTROL

606. Ms L. METTAM to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Given that the government's discussion paper on coercive control closed in July 2022 —

The SPEAKER: Sorry, member. There is no introduction to a supplementary question; you just ask the question.

Ms L. METTAM: Is this just another issue like the government's GPS monitoring trial that will never see the light of day or be implemented?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

I reject the premise. Our GPS tracking system—ankle bracelets, as they are commonly referred to—was an election commitment that we made in 2017. The opportunity, member, was for the previous Liberal–National government to put that trial in place. We did it. The Attorney General will receive a report shortly about the success of that trial and what else we need to put in place to learn from that trial and move forward. We have a government that has ambitions, aspirations and determination when it comes to the prevention of family and domestic violence.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, member!

Mr R.H. COOK: That stands in direct —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! Minister for Training, member for Burns Beach and Leader of the Liberal Party, that is the end of interjections. I would like the remainder of the Premier's answer to be heard in silence.

Mr R.H. COOK: As usual, members opposite come in with these falsehoods and misrepresentations of fact and basically run them out like fake news. If they say it often enough, maybe it will be true. It will never be true. Our record stands —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Treasurer! Order, please!

Mr R.H. COOK: We are proud of our record in the prevention of family and domestic violence. It stands in sharp contrast to the Liberal Party's disinterest when it was in government. Labor is always the party of government that will stand up for the victims of family and domestic violence. That is the reason we have invested more than \$200 million, which stands in sharp contrast to the former government's paltry efforts. That is the reason we are

the first government in history to have a Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. That stands in sharp contrast to the opposition's inaction. We are the first government to bring a raft of proposals and legislation into this place to support the victims of family and domestic violence.

Ms L. Mettam interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please.

Mr R.H. COOK: We are the first government to implement prevention and awareness programs, such as 16 Days in WA, which is about elevating this conversation and making sure we raise awareness. We were the first government to put in place the respectful relationships program. While we are on the subject of the respectful relationships program, I want to bring to the attention of the house the attitude of those opposite. Once again, the dark hand of "The Clan" reaches over, which speaks volumes, does it not? I have been gentle on the Leader of the Liberal Party today, but let us look at what the Liberal Party thought of respectful relationships when the program was brought in. In *The West Australian* of 17 May, when the Western Australian government announced its intention to fund this program, Hon Nick Goiran said —

We will not, however, support taxpayers' money being spent on brainwashing kids with political correctness.

That goes to the heart of what members of the Liberal Party believe.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Mr R.H. COOK: Madam Speaker —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please. We are talking about respectful relationships. I ask the Premier to continue, please.

Mr R.H. COOK: Hon Nick Goiran did not stop there. On 22 June in the Legislative Council, he said —

Another program, which is intended for years 8, 9 and 10, is called Building Respectful Relationships. I had a look at the Building Respectful Relationships program because it is an example of something that I would not want our new government to spend one cent on.

We know who really runs the Liberal Party; it is Hon Nick Goiran and his bunch of hoodlums in "The Clan". They are the ones who are calling the shots opposite. That is really what would happen if that lot ever got back into government. They see these programs around respectful relationships as brainwashing.

Ms L. Mettam: You just talk about them.

Mr R.H. COOK: No, member, we are implementing it. That was the problem the Liberal Party had; we are implementing these programs to continue to educate kids about respectful relationships, and making kids in high school understand the importance of respectful relationships and conducting themselves in an appropriate manner. Those are the things that are opposed by members on the Liberal Party's side of the political fence. They oppose them. Hon Nick Goiran, who we know runs the Liberal Party, has put that in bright lights under a full banner of attention to say that if the Liberal Party ever got a chance to get back into government, it would dismantle these important programs.

The SPEAKER: Before I give the call to the member for Bateman, just as I require short, sharp questions for supplementaries, I also require shorter answers to supplementaries. The Premier, in this circumstance, was interjected on so many times and provoked in so many ways that I allowed the answer to continue, but this is a reminder on supplementaries that questions need to be short and sharp, and answers need to be briefer than the answer to the first question.

WATER CORPORATION — WATERWISE INITIATIVES

607. **Ms K.E. GIDDENS to the Minister for Water:**

I refer to the Cook Labor government's commitment to relieving cost-of-living pressures facing Western Australian households.

- (1) Can the minister explain to the house how this government is helping households to save water and reduce the cost of their water bills?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this government's support compares with that of the former Liberal-National government?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

- (1)–(2) I am very pleased to be able to answer this question because, as with many other things that the Cook Labor government is doing, we have a good story to tell and we are proud of the work that is occurring. Members, 33 million litres of water is how much the Water Corporation's waterwise spring offers saved last year. There are many ways I could describe the amount of water that is saved, but one metric is that

it is 15 Olympic-sized swimming pools; it is a huge amount of water. I thank the member for Bateman for her question. I know that constituents in her electorate are rightly very proud of their gardens and take their gardening very seriously. We know this is important for people who value time in their gardens and in public places as well. We also need to get the message across that we need people to think about how they use water responsibly. We also know that climate change is having a dramatic effect on rainfall, particularly across the south of our state. We are committed to supporting families and households to reduce water use, which has a positive benefit on the climate as well as on household bills. This side of the chamber has heard me and other members on our side speak about the impact of climate change before because it is not something that this government shies away from.

Unlike the opposition, we believe in climate change. We believe in the science and we believe in responding. Labor has never shied away from the challenge of climate change, which is not something members on the other side of the chamber can say. That is not just part of the opposition's shameful past; it is also part of their present. Just last weekend, the federal National Party spent time debating a motion to abolish its commitment to achieving net zero emissions by 2050. It is ridiculous on so many issues—whether it is the National Party's social policy or climate policy. A party that purports to represent farmers and the agricultural industry should be taking climate change seriously. We know the public wants public policy based on science. We know that the community and industry needs certainty around this area of public policy. Labor, the Water Corporation, and the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation know that our water resources are precious and that protecting them is a priority. Our message is clear: everyone has a role to play in protecting Western Australia's water, now and in future generations. The evidence of the challenges with our rainfall patterns are very clear. I mentioned the declining rainfall in the south west of our state. In Western Australia, it has fallen by 20 per cent since the 1970s, leading to an 80 per cent reduction in dam inflows. When it comes to saving water, little changes make big, collective differences for the climate as well as for people's hip pockets.

It is now time to talk about the Water Corporation's spring waterwise offers. These are fantastic contributions that are available for households across Perth and the Peel region. People can apply for free sprinkler checks that are carried out by an endorsed waterwise irrigator. Up to 40 per cent of domestic water is used outdoors, so installing a weather-based irrigation controller is an easy way for households to save water and adapt to the impacts of climate change. The controllers detect rain and automatically adjust sprinklers to prevent overwatering and prevent people paying more than they need to. A trial of the controller at 60 Perth homes found average water use reduced by around 15 per cent annually, which is significant. The Water Corporation will provide up to \$300 towards the new weather-based irrigation controller, which includes setup and installation by a waterwise service provider. Last year, more than 3 500 households claimed this offer, with over 4 000 sprinklers replaced and over 320 leaks repaired. I am pleased to say that regional customers do not have long to wait either with a regional office set to be announced next month as part of our waterwise towns program. It is all part of our plan to transform Perth and Peel into a leading waterwise city by 2030. The Water Corporation's waterwise work extends across the state and it is making real change. A few weeks ago I joined the member for Victoria Park to check out one of the schools participating in our waterwise schools program in her electorate. This program is one of the longest running school education initiatives in Western Australia, with one in seven schools participating in the program last year. Over half the parents whose children participated in the program said their child had shared waterwise messages at home and 82 per cent said that their family was likely to make water-saving changes in the next six months. Those metrics are really impressive.

Finally, I reiterate that this government believes in the science of climate change and is responding; it is good for the climate, it is good for households and their connection to these important resources, and it is good for household bills. Of course, we know that the opposition's track record in being climate sceptics is real and continuing, and what members opposite charged households when in government. Under the Barnett government and the former Minister for Water who is sitting on the other side, water charges went up just under 96 per cent. In the same period under a Labor government, charges have gone up 20.9 per cent. Similarly, the government's water efficiency pricing model introduced in 2018–19 has resulted in residential water users now using 1.7 gigalitres less water, saving just under \$9 million in water charges for 2021–22. On all those metrics, we are doing well. It is a program and an outcome of which we are proud.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT AND REPEAL BILL 2023 —
TWO-BILL SPLIT

608. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

I refer to the Aboriginal Heritage Legislation Amendment and Repeal Bill 2023, the regulations that are yet to be released and the misleading statements by members of his government, including the member for Swan Hills, that the opposition is delaying progress of this bill. Will the government split the bill to repeal the failed 2021 act as soon as possible and progress the development of the amendments and regulations for the 1972 act separately to ensure that there are no unintended consequences for all stakeholders and industry?

Dr A.D. BUTI replied:

As members know, I read the bill into the house a few weeks ago. We intend to bring that bill back on for debate next week. As the member knows, as I think that she has contacted my office, the draft regulations will be released very shortly. In debate last week, the Premier said that members will get the regulations before we recommence debate on the bill. The member will get them very shortly and she will be offered a briefing.

In respect of this whole issue about members saying and not saying something, the Liberal Party's Hon Nick Goiran, the leader of "The Clan", said on 1 September that the Cook Labor government has "refused to bring on the repeal bill for even one minute of debate in Parliament's lower house". Members opposite have told us that they do not want to debate the bill until the regulations are ready. That is why we have held off on recommending debate on the bill because we promised members opposite —

Ms M.J. Davies: Where are the regulations?

Dr A.D. BUTI: This is really quite interesting.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please!

Dr A.D. BUTI: The member is misleading, because she knows; she rang my office.

Ms M.J. Davies: And got no answers. Where are they?

Dr A.D. BUTI: That is —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Central Wheatbelt, your side will likely have fewer questions at this rate because I will want to move on to the matter of public interest at three o'clock, so consider your interjections.

Dr A.D. BUTI: I do not want to say a certain word that is unparliamentary. It was either the member for Central Wheatbelt or the Leader of the Opposition, Shane Love, who contacted my office and said that it would be too late to have the briefing next week and was told that they would get a briefing sooner—most likely Friday. I think you were told that, Leader of the Opposition.

Anyway, members opposite will receive the regulations very shortly. They will have a chance to consult on them and we will recommence debate next week. They asked to have the regulations before debate recommenced, and they will have them.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE LEGISLATION AMENDMENT AND REPEAL BILL 2023 —
TWO-BILL SPLIT

609. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

I have a supplementary question. Does the minister think it is acceptable that we are now one week from debating the legislation and have been given no time line on when we will be briefed on the regulations?

The SPEAKER: Minister!

Ms M.J. DAVIES: The minister's office could not provide that advice.

The SPEAKER: Sit down!

Dr A.D. BUTI replied:

I think I just told the member that she is about to receive the regulations very, very shortly and she will be offered a briefing that will most likely be on this Friday.

SHARKS — HAZARD MITIGATION

610. Mrs L.M. O'MALLEY to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the Cook Labor government's world-leading shark hazard mitigation strategy backed by a \$17 million investment in safety measures.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the Bicton Baths swimming enclosure will keep local swimmers safe this summer?
- (2) Can the minister update the house on other strategies being implemented to keep the Western Australian community safe when enjoying the Swan River and Western Australia's coastal waters?

Mr D.T. PUNCH replied:

- (1)–(2) I certainly can, Madam Speaker, and I thank the member for the question. I am pleased to inform the house of ongoing improvements to strengthen the Cook government's comprehensive shark hazard mitigation strategy. I thank the member for Bicton, who is a strong advocate for her community and a committed supporter of the enclosure at Bicton Baths to help keep her community and other members of the Perth community safe, and also add to the amenity of the area. I also acknowledge Cameron Wrathall for his tireless advocacy as well.

The City of Melville is leading the project to install a shark barrier at the Bicton Baths and has been working closely with the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development and the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions—an excellent partnership leading to an excellent outcome. I am pleased to say that the project is on track and the barrier will be ready to be enjoyed this summer. It will be the first shark barrier to be installed in the river. I commend the City of Melville for taking up the Cook government’s offer to assist with the purchase and installation of a barrier that has been offered to all councils along the river. It will cost up to \$320 000 to build and install, and I am very pleased that a local company Global Marine Enclosures, which has previously supplied these enclosures, has been awarded the contract. The design of the barrier that has been supported by our government is different from the shark nets used on the east coast; it is very important to remember that. Our barriers are designed to minimise harm to marine life and prevent larger animals from getting into the enclosed swimming area.

We are also going to extend the highly successful shark tagging program to include bull sharks in the Swan and Canning Rivers. DPIRD has been undertaking tagging operations in the warmer summer months when bull sharks use the river for their breeding cycle. This complements existing work carried out by DBCA to tag juvenile bull sharks as part of its research program. Any shark caught and tagged will be reported to Water Police and published by the shark notification system.

We are also installing three new shark monitoring receivers in the river later this year to be connected to the shark monitoring network consisting of 37 receivers from Perth all the way to Esperance. That provides near real-time notification of tagged sharks. To make sure that the technology that supports these automated systems keeps people safe, our government has invested \$4.5 million to upgrade the state’s shark notification and response system to a more reliable cloud-based system.

These measures are based on science and are part of a comprehensive strategy, including ongoing white shark tagging with 178 sharks tagged; the \$200 personal shark deterrent rebate, a work-first scheme set up by our Labor government that has been claimed over 8 800 times; helicopters, drone, beach and jetski patrols have been provided through our partnership with Surf Life Saving WA; beach emergency number signs have been used more than 2 000 times when requests for assistance have been made to Western Australia police; and we have had over 134 000 downloads of the SharkSmart app as part of our “Switch on Your Sea Sense” campaign.

I have looked to see what our opposition’s policy is in these respects, and I did not find a lot of sense there. In fact, the only thing I could find from the shadow Minister for Fisheries was a transcript of a media discussion held very early on the morning of 29 July 2021. There was not a lot of anything in it to be honest, members. When he was asked whether there was a role for government to protect fishermen, spearfishermen, divers or anyone in the water for that matter, his response was —

... I think there is a role for government in this space that’s for sure and I think earlier ... or last year and the year before the Government trialled drum lines —

Of course, that was the year we took drum lines out because we found they were totally ineffective. The opposition’s policy framework seemed to be calling for drum lines to be spread right along the coast from the south to the north. There was no evidence behind it; it was just an idea on the run. In fact, in this interview, the most common phrases were, “I guess”, “I think”, “I guess” —

I guess the other thing to of course is ... whether we use the shark deterrent devices, now I’m not sure how effective they are —

Well, 8 800 people certainly do think they are effective —

I would suggest though that it’s not a bad idea to be using something that may help, anything you can do to try and stay safe.

That is the difference between our government and the members opposite. Our government is about evidence, science, structure, strategy and continuous learning and the members opposite are about “I guess”.

QATAR AIRWAYS — FLIGHTS

611. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I refer to the federal Labor government’s decision to block Qatar Airways from flying more frequent international routes and note the Premier’s comments that we finally have a Prime Minister that gets Western Australia.

- (1) What part of “getting” Western Australia does this decision to limit tourism and freight options demonstrate?
- (2) How many of the 14 Western Australian federal Labor MPs, who are supposed to be representing our state’s interests, have the government spoken to about this and what is their justification for this bizarre decision?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) The Prime Minister gets WA. That is why he has brought the federal cabinet to Western Australia twice in the two short years Labor has been in office. One of those times was in the Pilbara where he saw and

he showed other members of the cabinet the engine room of the nation's economy. The Prime Minister gets Western Australia. That is why he has backed WA through the Rewiring the Nation policy. With the Minister for Energy, we recently inked a \$3 billion deal to continue to improve our electricity networks and make sure that we have the capacity in our electricity networks for the energy transition.

This Prime Minister backs Western Australia. That is why he has come here on more than a dozen occasions since being elected to office. He has come back time and again, continuing to engage with our government and the Western Australian people and making sure that Western Australia has a key role to play in his government.

QATAR AIRWAYS — FLIGHTS

612. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. If the Prime Minister gets Western Australia, why do we need an embassy in Canberra?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

We do not have an embassy in Canberra. We have extra resources to make sure that Western Australian voices are heard because although we know —

Dr D.J. Honey interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Although we know that the Prime Minister gets Western Australia, and that Hon Madeleine King, Matt Keogh and Hon Patrick Gorman are great advocates for Western Australia, we know that eastern states businesses, government bureaucrats and other organisations do not have the same level of engagement with Western Australia as they do.

A South Australian minister can fly to Canberra and back in a day. We do not have that opportunity. We know that because of our distance from Canberra, it is difficult to get Western Australian voices heard. We know that because the Chamber of Commerce and Industry tells us this. We know that because the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia tells us this. We know that because local government representatives who often go over there to advocate for their local councils get this. We know this because everyone is saying to us that we need to continue to make sure that Western Australia is represented in Canberra and we need to elevate our voice. This is about a call to arms. This is about making sure that they continue to hear Western Australian voices. Mercifully, we have a Prime Minister who gets us and by continuing to take advantage of this opportunity, we can advocate.

If the member has a problem with the Chamber of Minerals and Energy's position on whether we have extra resources in Canberra or a problem with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry's position on having extra voices in Canberra, take it up with them. They have raised this issue with us. We have responded and we will have greater advocacy in Canberra because, for a change, we will be heard. We remember —

Several members interjected.

Mr R.H. COOK: Speaker, they keep interjecting and I am just inspired to keep going. Like all Western Australians, I go to Optus Stadium frequently and I think: What a great stadium this is? Isn't it terrific? Then I look at Tasmania developing its stadium and it gets over \$200 million injected into it because it engages with the federal government. What did Hon Colin Barnett do when he was Premier of the state? He refused to talk to Canberra. He refused to get any contribution towards that great project. That was as it has always been: he refused to engage with the commonwealth on Oakajee and across a range of big infrastructure projects.

We engage with the commonwealth. We are part of the national conversation because we are a government that has a vision for this state and we will continue to make sure that we advocate for Western Australians. We will be effective because we work with industry; we work with our stakeholders and we work with the community. When the opposition was in government, it continued to ignore them.

The SPEAKER: Members, that concludes question time.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — COERCIVE CONTROL

Question without Notice 605 — Supplementary Information

MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Premier) [2.55 pm]: I rise under standing order 82A to provide further information to a question from the member for Vasse. A review of the legislative responses to coercive control is being led by the Office of the Commissioner for Victims of Crime. The office undertook statewide consultation on coercive control last year seeking the views of victim-survivors, advocates, support organisations, the community legal sector, government agencies and the general public. More than 350 written submissions were reviewed. Separate to this work at the state level, the Standing Council of Attorneys-General has tasked a cross-jurisdictional working group with developing national principles to address coercive control in FDV. The Department of Justice is a member of the working group. A report on the statewide consultation undertaken by the Commissioner for Victims of Crime has been finalised and will be reviewed by the Attorney General in conjunction with the development of the national principles.

FAMILY AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE — GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE*Matter of Public Interest*

THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts) informed the Assembly that she was in receipt within the prescribed time of a letter from the Leader of the Liberal Party seeking to debate a matter of public interest.

[In compliance with standing orders, at least five members rose in their places.]

MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party) [2.56 pm]: I move —

That this house calls upon the WA Labor government to recognise its failure to keep Western Australians safe and its failure to adequately resource systems that deter perpetrators of domestic violence.

The opposition rises with some very real concern when speaking to this motion and what it represents. It has been very difficult to see the harrowing cases on television and in the newspapers over the last several months. As members of Parliament, we are all very aware of the scourge of domestic violence across our communities. In the past few months we have learnt of the tragic deaths of Tiffany Woodley, Georgia Lyall and Emmerich Lasakar. Each case is as tragic as the last and equally difficult to grasp. How is it that young women, in some cases mums, could be subjected to such violence and attacked in their home, a place in which they should be entitled to feel safe?

Just over a week ago, an emergency summit was called at the urgency of advocates in this space from the WA Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing. I am sure that those who know Alison Evans and those involved in this summit know that what was organised and put together certainly was an unprecedented step in terms of advocacy. They felt they had no option but to do that. It is good that we saw the Premier and Deputy Premier attend, along with a number of other government ministers. That certainly was an important step. We heard from victims, survivors and families who shared their harrowing stories. They were desperate to be heard and are desperate to get some help.

We heard at the summit the case of Lynn Cannon. Her murder became front and centre and it certainly rocked the Western Australian community. Ms Cannon was murdered in December by her jealous ex-husband after he lured her to his home to sign some paperwork. The mother of two was stabbed to death, leaving behind grieving sisters and loving sons. I asked a question about this case in Parliament today. Her killer has since been sentenced to life in prison with a non-parole period of 19 years. One of the hardest details to grapple with, obviously apart from the torment and tragedy of what occurred, is to understand why the 000 calls were not made more of a priority. That was the concern raised by Lynn's sister to me. I had the privilege of meeting Jacqui yesterday and her other sisters as well. Jacqui Darley raised this matter. It took police more than 60 minutes to respond to the 000 calls for help because her ordeal had been downgraded from a level 2 priority to a level 3 priority, as it was not deemed an imminent risk. I have seen a copy of the transcript of the 000 call of that fateful evening. What was made clear in the call by Lynn's other sister, Christine, and what was expressed in the 000 call, is that the perpetrator had already threatened Lynn with a weapon earlier that day and he was still clearly a risk. I will read an excerpt of that call from 7.30 that night. Christine states —

CH No one's heard from her from — since 3.30. Her phone's been, um, you know when you can see when they're last active? That's been taken off, she's not answering any calls or messages.

It goes on —

CH So I'm really concerned for her now. Because he rocked up with a weapon this morning.

CO1 ... What did he have in his hands?

CH A knife.

...

CO1 ... And so — and then she had to go to his house today?

CH To drop off forms ... yeah.

...

CH ... Even her sons haven't heard from her.

...

CH It's out of character for my sister.

The concern, and the reason that her family is calling for a change with Lynn's law, is that they cannot understand how this call was downgraded from category 2 to category 3. We know that the police are under-resourced. We have asked questions this place. The FDV unit has less now than last year and fewer police now than it had two years ago. This call was not responded to even within the priority 3 time. It still missed the hour for a priority 3 category, which raises real question about the resources that this government has given to respond to such priorities. The police commissioner met with Lynn's sisters and has accepted that she had been let down. He met with Jacqui. They appreciate that there were six units out that evening and that they were under incredible pressure, but they have real concerns about how this call could have been, or should have been, better prioritised.

They have some outstanding questions. They raised the question about why administrative paperwork on other callouts had been prioritised ahead of urgently addressing or responding to Lynn. They also asked very respectfully why officers were dedicated to the provision of a death certificate of an elderly person who had passed away in hospital and was prioritised ahead of her sister who was fighting for her life. Dealing with the death certificate allegedly occurred at a hospital between 6.30 pm and 10.30 pm while Lynn was fighting for her life. They even asked why, after this call was downgraded to a priority 3 category, it was still not responded to in time. Now they want the law changed to ensure that all 000 calls involving a weapon and threats to life are given priority 1 or 2 and for it to be named Lynn's law. I trust the government is giving that serious consideration. I asked the Premier a question about that in Parliament today.

The case of Georgia Lyall and early parole is another case in which a Western Australian woman was let down by the murder of Georgia Lyall, who was killed by an ex-partner after he had been released early from prison. This former bikie nominee was serving a seven-year sentence for abducting, beating and torturing another person over a 13-hour period, yet somehow the Western Australian Prisoners Review Board decided to let someone capable of such terrifying and horrific acts out two years early because he had completed some voluntary programs. I have spoken to people associated with this individual about other people whom he has terrorised, and they cannot believe or understand how on earth this individual could be deemed fit to be let out two years early. How on earth was a former bikie nominee who carried out such heinous and premeditated acts, and there were others, be deemed suitable for early release?

We heard today another re-announcement from the Cook Labor government about the gun reforms that have been talked about for 18 months. That would see anyone issued with a violence restraining order automatically barred from owning a gun in a major new addition to what was called the Cook Labor government's rewrite of the Firearms Act. That provision would attach to all violent thugs, according to the news reports and press release, who are convicted of a serious offence. It was reported that the police minister said the law is aimed at disarming people, including DV perpetrators who had shown that they were not fit have a firearms licence. The Labor government has talked about this, as I have stated, for 18 months, but it would not have made a difference for people like Luke Noormets, who shot Georgia Lyall, because he did not have a gun licence; he had an illegal firearm. The very real concern is why he was let out of jail and how on earth he was given such an early pass, given that he is such a monster. I question the sincerity of today's announcement. We have real questions about what the government has delivered in this space. We have heard much talk about what this government will do, but there are very real concerns about what is happening on the ground. That is why Alison Evans took such an extraordinary step and the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing called for the recent summit.

The WA Police Force receives calls for help every four minutes. On average, a woman is killed by an intimate partner every 10 days in Australia. The government has trialled initiatives such as the GPS tracking system for high-risk offenders who have breached family violence restraining orders, which may have made a difference in one or more of these cases. We are really keen to understand how this GPS trial worked and whether it was successful, given that it set out to achieve the very worthy goal of tracking our most violent offenders. If we can track cows, we should be able to track these heinous violent offenders when they breach their violence restraining orders. They are not my words; they are the words of many who operate in this space.

It is extraordinary that the government is none the wiser. I asked the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence questions in this place about the outcome of this important two-year trial, which was meant to track 100 high-risk offenders by GPS. It finished in August last year. The opposition is very keen to hear about the outcome of that trial and, if it was successful, why it is not continuing. We have been told that the report may be finished at the end of this year. The Premier indicated something different today. I hope we can get some clarity from the government when it responds to this MPI. The real questions are: Where is the urgency? Where is the priority? We are talking about some of the most violent offenders who have breached violence restraining orders. It was a very important trial. The fact that this government cannot explain the outcome of that trial is deeply disturbing and cold comfort to the families of victims and the broader community, which has been and continues to be rocked by the actions of these heinous offenders. For the Premier to suggest that the GPS tracking trial is somehow not part of the minister's area of responsibility is certainly a stretch.

I asked questions in this place today relating to coercive control legislation. We understand that the work was completed in July last year. The period for consultation, resulting in the discussion paper, has closed, and we are yet to see the outcome of that. Obviously it was very disturbing to be made aware of that vision of Peta Robinson, who was bashed and physically violated by her partner, but was then harassed and threatened when he was behind bars—when the perpetrator was in prison. That raises real questions about what this government is doing and the level to which it is taking these matters seriously. It was harrowing enough to see the CCTV vision on Channel Seven and what Peta Robinson had been through. The fact that ministers in this place saw that vision last year and the perpetrator is still harassing Peta from behind bars illustrates that this government has certainly dropped the ball when it comes to family and domestic violence. Today's announcement was a re-announcement and reflects the fact that this government is scrambling. It is very clear that it has a long way to go when it comes to keeping people safe from perpetrators.

Ms S.F. McGurk: How many times have you spoken on domestic violence in this place?

Ms L. METTAM: We are dealing with substantive issues here. You are a failed minister.

Several members interjected.

Ms L. METTAM: I will not respond to petty interjections. We hope that we will get some clarity when the government responds and that it will provide information on the outcome of the GPS trial and when we will see a review of the decision relating to the monster Noormets, and some answers relating to Lyn's law and a range of other matters in response to that very important summit. Other members would like to speak on this topic.

MS M. BEARD (North West Central) [3.14 pm]: I rise to support this motion. I acknowledge and I hear the arguments that the member for Vasse put forward. The recent summit was a very important step in the right direction, and I welcome that. We are facing a dire situation, but we have issues to address and a long pathway to go down before we get to real and positive outcomes to make an absolute change to people's behaviour. I acknowledge who did what eight years ago and who did not, but this is a really important issue that we need to work on collaboratively. We have to highlight some of the deficits and maybe take some of those on board. At the end of the day, we want positive outcomes. I will take a look at this issue from a regional perspective. One initiative that I have found to be a positive step forward was the 16 Days in WA campaign to stop violence against women. It was definitely another positive step forward.

The first ever Red Shoes Australia installation, which provided a visual representation of the women who have lost their lives to gender-based violence in Australia, was a stark reminder of the need for continued reform around this critical issue and the need for a multipronged approach towards domestic violence across communities and across the regions.

I believe that education is one of the catalysts for change. The Premier touched on that today, with the respectful relationships teaching support program. It highlights the importance of basically starting to educate people from the age of zero onwards. Education on this issue should not stop.

We also need to continue to bring this issue to the media. If people are reading about it and understand the issues, they will be highlighted as we travel forward. To change the culture will be significant. One of the things that springs to my mind is keeping it at the top of people's minds. When we think back to the Marlboro tobacco ads, smoking was cool. Then we saw the transition and the terrible ads showing people's lungs being squeezed. Over time I have noticed, even in my family, that none of my children smoke. It may be coincidental but I believe that that is a product of sticking at that anti-smoking campaign. When talking about campaigns, we have a long journey ahead of us. The example I used was run for over 40 years. I believe it had a significant impact.

I also believe that education needs to start early and it needs to continue. It is difficult to change depending on where each child is in their journey. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Andrea Musulin, the CEO of Carnarvon Family Support Services, a long-time dedicated advocate and champion of child protection and author of a book that was launched by the minister in Carnarvon last week called *Keeping Kids Safe in Carnarvon*. I am sure the minister can attest to the fact that it is a great initiative to help kids feel safe. It can also be applied to domestic violence. The book was one of Andrea's long-term goals, which has resulted in a valuable resource to help teach children about protective behaviours. I believe that education is the key to change. With decades of experience, I had conversations with Andrea as soon as she finished this book about her hope to develop another book specifically relating to domestic violence and aimed at children aged four to 10. That would be another resource that could be used in conjunction with this book. We need to keep looking at and reaching for initiatives like this. Andrea also oversees the women's refuge in Carnarvon. I do not know whether anybody has been there, but it is a fabulous facility and is very well run. It is full; it has no capacity. It is the only one in the Gascoyne, which highlights an enormous gap in the large region that I represent and the desperate need for facilities and services across the regions—safe sanctuaries for people involved in domestic violence.

The other thing that is in deficit is transitional housing. In small towns and small communities, when someone transitions out of a women's refuge, often the only place for them to go is back into the community. No transitional housing is available for those people to allow them to transition back to some form of normality. Sometimes, they need to return to their home, which starts the cycle again. The need for transitional housing is exacerbated in regional towns with small populations as the options are often limited. It is a sleeping issue throughout our region. I went to Tom Price some time ago and chatted to the police officers there. When asked what was on their radar and what were some of their big issues, they raised the issue of domestic violence. Those issues are occurring in that town in the very north of the state. Domestic violence was their top priority at that time; it was their top call-out. Women's refuges are at near capacity and there are additional issues, such as victims not being able to take all their children to safe houses or being reluctant to leave their pets. We have a way to go to work through this at a state level, particularly as we move further away from the metropolitan area.

The shortage of crisis accommodation in Western Australia was highlighted in the inquiry into the funding of homelessness services. The committee heard evidence about the shortage of crisis and transitional accommodation throughout the state. We know that we have an accommodation issue in this state for lots of reasons, but refuges and crisis accommodation centres are at capacity and turning women and children away. We need to try to alleviate that as a priority, if we are to stem the flow of tragedies.

Finding 19 states —

There is an urgent need for more crisis and transitional accommodation in Western Australia.

Coupled with that was the recommendation on the need for the WA government to “fund more 24/7 crisis services offering engagement and referral”. Referral is important. We need safe spaces. Children in a lot of towns in my electorate need to escape these situations. They need somewhere to go after hours—often, in the early hours of the morning. Safe spaces are a key part of this puzzle, as are some of the wraparound services that I have mentioned. We need to remember that domestic violence is not just an issue that women are facing. In my area, a large number of men are subjected to domestic violence. I think that is the greatest gap, particularly in regional areas. There is a drug and alcohol centre in Carnarvon. I rang it one Tuesday but it is not open on Tuesdays. These are some of the challenges that I have experienced. I believe we could slowly close that gap if resources and wraparound services were provided. Only one facility operates in the region for women and I do not know of any for men who suffer domestic violence. Night safe spaces are extremely important in regional areas to provide a place for at least children to escape to. Referral and follow-up services will be crucial in changing behaviour and addressing the cultural change that needs to happen.

In summary, we all know that domestic violence is very complex and that it will take a multipronged approach to make change. There is a raft of issues. Referral and wraparound services, and facilities to which people can escape so that they feel safe, are crucial.

MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition) [3.23 pm]: I will make a very brief contribution to this motion calling on the Western Australian Labor government to recognise its failure in keeping Western Australians safe and adequately resourcing systems that deter perpetrators of domestic violence. The proof of the pudding is in the eating. Today, the Premier was asked several questions about whether he recognised that the situation in 2017 was a crisis, as described by his predecessor, with 32 597 cases. The statistics have since gone through the roof; they have increased exponentially in recent times. All this is happening at a time when the government is awash with cash. Money is flowing into the coffers, yet a pittance is being spent on the prevention of this insidious crime that is perpetrated not just on women but in the main on women, as the member for North West Central pointed out.

I commend the member for Vasse for her advocacy in this matter. She outlined the cases that led to the summit being organised. The organisers brought people together because they could see that the government needed to be brought to account. The member for Vasse has been fearless in her advocacy of these issues in the chamber. It is disappointing that the government does not take the opportunity to outline how it is going to make a material difference.

Ms S.F. McGurk interjected.

Point of Order

Dr D.J. HONEY: The minister will have ample opportunity to respond. I cannot hear the Leader of the Opposition for the interjections from the minister.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Thank you, member for Cottesloe; I will not uphold the point of order. Leader of the House and Treasurer, if you could keep your conversation down a little. Treasurer and Leader of the House! Thank you; if you could just keep your conversation down a little. It is getting distracting, especially for Hansard. There is no point of order. The opposition has nearly finished and the government will have the opportunity to respond. Carry on, Leader of the Opposition.

Debate Resumed

Mr R.S. LOVE: I thank the Deputy Speaker for his protection.

The member for Vasse outlined not only some of the serious matters that were recently in the press, but also that there has been a multilayered failure by the government and some government agencies to ensure that domestic violence is taken seriously enough. We are in the seventh year of this Labor government. It is distressing that the standard response from the government when questioned about the efficacy of any of its programs is to denigrate the previous government. We are now in the seventh year of this government. How many more years will it take before it is able to make some sort of impact on the rising scourge of family and domestic violence in this state? How will this be turned around? So far, the government has not been able to demonstrate that any of its programs have had any effect on reducing the number of incidents or in providing some of the services that people need.

The member for North West Central spoke about some regional areas. There is a paucity of services in my electorate. Very little is available for people in small communities. Often, those communities also have a housing shortage and it is very difficult for people to seek help and find somewhere safe to live away from an abusive relationship. That issue is raised with me, as a member of Parliament, in many contexts in communities right across my electorate, and I am sure it is happening across many other areas. We need to take this much more seriously. We need the government to start putting programs in place that will make a difference, instead of making announcements about programs that might make a difference.

MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo — Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence) [3.28 pm]: I strongly oppose the motion and the arguments that we have heard so far this afternoon. However, I found the

contribution of the member for North West Central on this matter really refreshing. It was a positive contribution that was full of suggestions and an acknowledgement of the complex nature of family and domestic violence. I congratulate her on that. It was really great to be in Carnarvon last week to acknowledge some important work that is happening in the member's community that will make a difference. She was right in saying that education has a really important part to play in this very complex issue that has plagued governments for a long time.

If I can, at the end of my speech I will respond to the Leader of the Opposition's assertion, but I want to begin by saying that the member for North West Central's contribution was in stark contrast with that of the Leader of the Liberal Party, who said that the very important taskforce we announced today was spin. The taskforce is not spin. It is a direct response to a summit held on 31 August at which victim-survivors with lived experience and sector peak bodies asked for a taskforce. We have responded within seven working days, demonstrating the priority we continue to place on family and domestic violence, and today we have announced the establishment of a taskforce. Talking about sincerity, suggesting that that is spin is something the Leader of the Liberal Party should really think about. The Premier, the Deputy Premier, a number of cabinet colleagues and I attended the forum of 31 August, where we listened to the experiences of those victim-survivors with lived experience and also the peak bodies. At that summit came a clear message that there needs to be a more connected approach to dealing with what are complex issues. Out of that forum came a number of asks of government. The priority was to establish this taskforce. That is a key piece of work that this government will now do so we can listen to those with lived experience and the experts in the field to assess our significant investment over the last six years and how we can work together to improve it—not only the government's response, but also connecting better together with various community sector organisations that do great work throughout Western Australia.

I am very proud to announce that the taskforce will be co-chaired by Colleen Hayward, AM, a very, very highly regarded Noongar woman who brings great standing and experience to the role of co-chairing an important taskforce that will further guide and support the work that this government does. Through the taskforce we will also undertake to get guidance from the community sector on further investments and improvements we can make to support the important work done by the sector. It is important that we keep listening to it. Since the forum on 31 August, I have had a number of meetings with key leaders of the sector, including Alison and Donna from the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellness, Damian from Stopping Family Violence and others. I assure members that I am very confident that they think I am absolutely sincere in my determination to lead the government's continued response to family and domestic violence.

We have been in government for nearly seven years, and I am proud of the government's record so far on family and domestic violence. I know some on the opposite side do not want us to go back to a previous time, but the fact remains that until 2017 family and domestic violence was not a priority for any previous government. The sector, the experts and I know that family and domestic violence has not just popped up in the last year. The recent incidents that occurred in the few weeks that preceded the forum are absolutely tragic. Again, I want to extend my condolences to the families and loved ones of those women, and also highlight the extraordinary bravery of victim-survivors with lived experience in standing up and advocating. I think they are doing an incredibly important job. To suggest this problem has started now is disingenuous.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: Members!

Ms S.E. WINTON: I remember standing for the seat of Wanneroo in 2017. I remember the platform that the WA Labor government took to that election to make the prevention of family and domestic violence a priority. There was no alternative from the Liberal government. In 2017, the sector and the people who had been doing important work in the area of family and domestic violence for many, many years only saw one alternative that would make family and domestic violence a priority, and that is what we have done. Since coming into office we have invested over \$200 million into substantial reforms, whether they are legislative reforms to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account or significant investments in infrastructure. We are the first state government to be serious about primary prevention. All those things have lifted the profile of family and domestic violence so we are now all talking about it. So, yes, we all agree that incidents of family and domestic violence right now are too high, and it is unacceptable and has to change, but we will not apologise for continuing to bring family and domestic violence to the top of the conversation in our community and out into the open. If more women stand up and report, that is a good thing to do.

I turn to the investments we have made in nearly seven years. We have 43 refuges throughout the state, over half of them in regional areas. In this budget we have invested \$18.3 million to give an uplift to 26 refuges. We have 17 family and domestic violence and response teams, which is an interagency response that provides timely interventions to those who have made a police report. We are going ahead with our model of one-stop hubs, with over \$60 million being invested in them. They are a way that women can access the supports they need. Importantly, they also encourage a soft-entry approach so we can reach and support women before there are the tragic circumstances we have witnessed in the last couple of weeks. We have supported more counselling, advocacy and support services for adults and, importantly, for young people who experience family and domestic violence. We are focused on perpetrator interventions, including the residential Breathing Space program and men's behaviour change

interventions. We have outreach services, including Safe at Home and other programs that support victim-survivors in the community. Today, we announced an extension of that program into Fitzroy Crossing and Katanning. We do not want women to flee their homes; we want women to be able to stay at home with their children and be safe and to hold perpetrators to account. These are the kinds of programs that we know are working.

I come back to the Leader of the Opposition. I did not get his words directly, but he implied that we have failed over the last six years. By extension, the Leader of the Opposition is saying that somehow \$200 million worth of investment, all those programs, some of which I have highlighted today, all the champions and all the community services that work day in, day out to support women and children are failing. That is what the Leader of the Opposition is saying when he makes that case that the government's investment has been an abject failure and no woman or child in the last seven years has been supported by or benefited from the priority that this government has placed on the prevention of family and domestic violence.

In the last nine months that I have been the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence, it has been my great privilege to meet many staff from community service organisations, whether they work in refuges or primary prevention, support perpetrators or provide counselling to young people. They work day in, day out and feel deeply the tragic circumstances that we experienced in the last few weeks, as does every single person in the community and every single parliamentarian. I caution the Leader of the Liberal Party: this is not a time to score political points; rather, it is a time to come together and enter the debate in a constructive and positive way that values the people behind the government's \$200 million investment and the difference they have made in a positive way to hundreds and thousands of women in the last seven years. That is what she should be doing. Those people are on the front line making a difference day in, day out.

I finish by saying that the taskforce is no spin; it is a genuine commitment by the Cook government to reprioritise and strengthen the work it has done in the last seven years, to listen to the voices of the sector and ensure that all layers of government at the highest level work together to further strengthen system responses, and to provide further support to the extraordinary community services that need to join together to deal with what is a complex issue in our community.

The Premier is right: there is no quick-fix solution. It is a multifaceted problem in our community. There is no place for violence in our community. Women have the fundamental right to feel safe in their home. Women have the fundamental right to expect that their children also feel safe in their home. One death is one too many. It is tragic and it reinforces to all those working in the field and to government that we need to reaffirm our resolve to continue to place the prevention of family and domestic violence as a priority. I implore members opposite to think carefully about their responses because we have done an incredible job with our investment in the last six years. I look forward to working with the taskforce to further strengthen the government's response to further support people facing these challenging violent situations in their homes.

MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooba — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.43 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to this debate and to speak in opposition to the motion moved by the Leader of the Liberal Party. There is so much to say, but I know that other members want to have a go so I will keep my comments brief.

The Leader of the Opposition made the point that the proof of the pudding is in the eating. That is absolutely the case here when we compare the proof of the pudding on our side of politics and the work we have done in this policy space with what opposition members delivered when they were in government; it is incredibly stark. In their contributions, those in the corner made comments about how we should not be looking back on the former Liberal-National government's record. I understand why they are ashamed and embarrassed when we do that because the reality is that members opposite did nothing. When they were in government, they had an opportunity to put in place processes, programs and financing approaches that might have made a difference—but they did nothing. I am not surprised that they are reticent to have their track record compared with ours. But, of course, it is essential to do so in this debate. They come into the chamber with confected outrage and suggest that this government has not been delivering in the area of family and domestic violence when, of course, we have a multipronged and very successful strategy—I will come to that in a minute—that stands in stark contrast to the wasted years of the Barnett government when those opposite last had the opportunity to turn the dial on this very important issue. I say that because the position I held at that time required that I engage with the Barnett government in an effort to have it put in place fairly minor things that would have made a difference to people who were experiencing family and domestic violence. In response, all I got was a very curt letter suggesting that it was not interested in having a discussion with me about those issues. There was no attempt to engage or put in place programs that would have made a difference. Members opposite can object as much as they like, but it is impossible for them to hide from the fact that they did nothing when they were in government.

In case members think that that was just a particular characteristic of former Barnett government ministers, let us reflect on how the former federal Morrison-Abbott-Turnbull government dealt with this issue when it had an opportunity to do something in the family and domestic violence space. Which federal government implemented 10 days' family and domestic leave as a minimum standard for all workers?

Mr S.A. Millman: Ours.

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: That is right; it was the federal Albanese Labor government. For years, groups actively sought that measure from government, but there was no progress at all under the coalition government. There has been incredibly good progress with a Labor government in power. It is true in this matter as well.

This government has a deliberate program of trying to bring about change and it is having success in doing that. It has a three-pronged approach, including increasing community awareness with things like the 16 Days in WA program, which is now a widely accepted part of the fabric in WA. It has been incredibly successful in raising community awareness. We have a program to protect and support victim-survivors with things like the Naala Djookan Healing Centre in Mirrabooka. Those hubs are being rolled out around the state with soft entry points for people who might be experiencing domestic violence or have questions about their circumstances and need some support. Earlier this year, the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence told this house that Naala Djookan in Mirrabooka has assisted 1 200 people since it opened. It was the innovation of the former Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence to have hubs with many services and soft entry points, and, in Mirrabooka alone, 1 200 people have been assisted, of whom 629 sought help due to family and domestic violence.

We have also held perpetrators to account. We will hear more about that in contributions that will be made shortly. A whole range of innovative programs provide support. In her contribution, the minister referred to the \$200 million that the government has invested. Of course, it is significant to note that the Labor government introduced the first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence when it was elected in 2017. This Labor government has pursued a whole raft of initiatives that are having an impact in my community in Mirrabooka and right across the state. These initiatives stand in stark contrast to the inaction and wasted years of the former Liberal-National government. It galls me that members opposite come into the chamber with a motion that suggests that our government has not been performing in this area. They need to have a good hard look at themselves and, frankly, do better.

Amendment to Motion

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: I move —

That all words after “house” be deleted and the following be inserted —

supports the taskforce established today by the Cook Labor government to support victim-survivors and address family and domestic violence in Western Australia.

MR J.R. QUIGLEY (Butler — Attorney General) [3.50 pm]: I would like to speak to the amendment to the motion and, in doing so, fully endorse the comments of the previous speaker, the member for Mirrabooka. The member was quite right when she said there were seven and a half wasted years. I sat there on the opposition’s side of the chamber and I cannot recall any legislation brought forward into the chamber to abate this terrible thing that happens in Western Australia and in Australia of domestic violence, particularly domestic violence fatalities. I attended in the afternoon tea room, the Centenary Room, a presentation by the Ombudsman some years ago detailing deaths from domestic violence. I was horrified to learn that there had been 42 murders in Western Australia and, of them, 22 of them were domestic violence situations. That was in 2015–16. I want to speak directly to the member for Vasse. She said —

We have real questions about what the government has delivered in this space.

That is, the domestic violence space —

We have heard much talk about what this government will do, but there are very real concerns about what is happening on the ground.

Member, the proof is in the eating of the pudding. We have introduced a whole raft of bills, enactments and provisions to try to stem this dreadful tragedy of domestic violence, particularly deaths resulting from domestic violence. This includes the criminal offence of suffocation and strangulation, persistent family violence offences, aggravated penalties for offences involving family violence where there are criminal damage threats or deprivation of liberties, and sentencing declarations. Do not forget, member for Vasse, the serious family violence offender declaration. I know the member is only barely interested in this and more interested in what that fossil from Cottesloe has to whisper in her ear. Amendments were made to the Restraining Orders Act and the Evidence Act so that judges have to charge juries. I realise that the member for Vasse will not take in any of this because it will not be in her headline. Other amendments have been made as well, including an amendment to the Evidence Act following the conviction of Jody Gore for murder, so that judges will have to instruct juries at the request of the defence counsel, the prosecution or of their own motion to instruct juries on the ongoing effects of family violence.

The Ombudsman did not stop reporting on deaths from family violence in 2016–17. He kept on studying this tragedy. I realise that the member for Vasse’s intense talks with the member for Cottesloe during this speech would have distracted her from Ombudsman’s report of 2021–22, *Family and domestic violence fatality review*. I will table page 135 of the report so we have the years. A chart is produced, which shows a diminishing occurrence of murder from domestic violence. I will go back to when the Liberals were in government, in 2012–13. There were

20 domestic violence murders. In 2013–14, there were 15; in 2014–15, there were 16; and in 2015–16, there were 22 murders from domestic violence according to the Ombudsman’s report. The year after we came into government, there were 17. Then we started bringing in the legislation we have talked about. There has been a continuing decline. One murder is too many but as to the member for Vasse’s proposition that she has real questions about what the government has delivered in this space, I will come back to the legislative amendments presently. I want to table page 135 from the report, which shows 17 murders from domestic violence in our first year of office, 15 in our second, nine in 2021 and nine in 2022. We have well over halved the incidence of murder in domestic violence circumstances since we have been in government and the Liberal Party did nothing for eight years. For eight years, over the Leader of the Liberal Party’s term of government, up to 70 people—mainly women—were murdered in domestic violence settings, which could have been stemmed. The proof is in the pudding on page 135. I table that page.

[See paper [2220](#).]

Mr J.R. QUIGLEY: On page 135, it is nine followed by nine the next year. That is the answer to the member for Vasse’s question. We have real answers. They are not from the Attorney General, not from Labor but from the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations. He has given the member the answers and I have tabled the necessary page of his report. I urge the member to read the rest of the report. What have we done? Does the Leader of the Liberal Party not remember Damian Jones who was killed by the woman he had been abusing for 20 years, Jody Gore? It was on trial that we learnt she had been beaten, abused and suffered injuries over 20 years, yet the state of the law at the time was very narrow on the direction of a jury as to the effect of that. What did the former government do about murders in the DV setting or about this woman’s circumstance? She had been beaten for 20 years and eventually retaliated against her abuser by stabbing him in self-defence. She got life in jail for that. What did the former government do about it? Nothing—absolutely nothing! When we came to office and I was given the responsibility of being the Attorney General, for the first time ever in Western Australia, we wiped out the sentence and returned Jody to her country in Kununurra. Do not ask me questions about what Labor has done! We have taken real steps that are in the Ombudsman’s report. Have a look at the Ombudsman’s report. I encourage the member to read the whole report and she will see what we are doing. We will not give up! We will not give up until we reduce the number further and further. I acknowledge the member for North West Central, who said we are doing something for the regions, but may I say to the member that the sale of full-strength alcohol in the regions is a driver of domestic violence. There is no doubt about that. We have seen what June Oscar did by reducing the sale of full-strength alcohol in Fitzroy and Halls. There was a dramatic decline in domestic violence.

Division

Amendment put and a division taken, the Deputy Speaker casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (45)

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

Noes (5)

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

Amendment thus passed.

Motion, as Amended

The DEPUTY SPEAKER: The question is that the motion, as amended, be agreed to.

Question put and passed.

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

Second Reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie) [4.05 pm]: I would like to quickly conclude my remarks on this bill. I offer it my full support. I notice an array of initiatives by the Cook government to ensure we have the skill capacity in Western Australia to deliver on important construction projects, including the construction of multi-dwelling homes.

Those sorts of properties will benefit from this build-to-rent scheme and the land tax concession, and such initiatives as \$11 million for targeted visa subsidies that will temporarily change the state-sponsored visa scheme to allow easier access for skilled migrants to connect with job vacancies in WA. The WA skilled migration occupation list, under the state nomination migrant program, has been expanded to include 28 building and construction occupations. Those are all important initiatives. I also note a funded target of \$1.5 million for overseas marketing. We now have overseas offices, not only in the UK but also in Frankfurt in the European Union. I think that is important because I want to caution against using those construction methods that are used in the United Kingdom, following the recent scandal over reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete, or RAAC. It was found that some 600 schools in the United Kingdom that were constructed in the 1960s and 1970s at a time when there was a need to quickly construct buildings had used concrete that had air pockets in it. That attracted moisture and the metal reinforcing around the concrete panels corroded and rusted away. Those schools are collapsing, and the UK has suddenly realised it has to replace many buildings in those areas. The UK also had the Grenfell Towers disaster. I caution against using construction techniques deployed in the United Kingdom. I think it is important that we use this expanded network and this capacity to use better building techniques that are used elsewhere in the world, when it comes to building those sorts of buildings.

The detail of the legislation is before us and I see many benefits in having this addition to the array of housing options—this ability for people to choose to be renters for whatever reason. There will be a housing choice that will meet their needs and that is what this concession will help incentivise. It is a welcome initiative and I commend the bill to the house.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn) [4.09 pm]: It is a pleasure to speak on the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. I congratulate the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance on what I think is another bill. Is this your first bill?

Dr J. Krishnan: Yes.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: Congratulations on your first bill, then, Mr Parliamentary Secretary. It is a great occasion for a parliamentary secretary or indeed a minister to have carriage of their first bill through a chamber, and to have done so before even making it into cabinet is a testament to the great regard that members of the Labor benches in this chamber and the other place have for you. Therefore, congratulations on this bill and congratulations on it being a bill that contributes to solving what is one of the big challenges facing governments right around Australia at the moment, and that is the tough conditions that we are facing in the housing market.

There is no doubt that housing is a core Labor value. The Labor Party has always been the party that has believed in the dignity of ensuring that everybody—whatever the circumstances, whether they are a working person, pensioner or very wealthy person—has the opportunity to have a roof over their head and a place to call home. It is in the spirit of that legacy that the parliamentary secretary on behalf of the minister introduces this bill and we progress it through this chamber.

I want to pick up on the overarching point that the member for Thornlie made. To resolve the challenges that we are facing in the housing market at the moment, we need to have a broad range of approaches, we need to have different solutions and we need to try different methods. The government is doing that, and I am very proud that it is. I am sure that many members of this place have fielded constituents who are struggling to either find housing or complete a build on a house. Perhaps they have been in a rental or are staying with family for an extended period while they wait for a house to be finished. Maybe they have had difficulties because the rent has gone up. I was a renter up until about this time last year. My wife and I are very fortunate to be in a financial position to purchase a property, which we did last year, but one of the things that pushed us to finally make that decision was the incredible amount of money that our landlord wanted to put up our rent by. It had already gone up by 15 per cent or something over the course of our 12-month lease previously, and they wanted to put it up by another 20 per cent or something like that; it was an incredible amount. I do not necessarily blame that particular landlord. Obviously, interest rates have gone up, and if someone has a negatively geared investment property, they need to cover rent to pay the mortgage on that property, but it means that people are put in situations of housing stress, whether that is as a tenant, homebuilder or person who is sleeping rough or couch surfing and is looking for a home. We know that that is a challenge that our economy and society faces, and it is a challenge that this government is rising to in a variety of ways.

Early this year or late last year, a motion in private members' business condemned the state government for not using innovative solutions to address the housing issues that we are facing, but I remember remarking at the time when I spoke on that that it was such a strange argument for the opposition to prosecute because the thing that distinguishes this government from others are all the innovative solutions that it is trying and pursuing to attack the housing issues from lots of different angles. Compared with other jurisdictions, we have had success. We have already delivered 1 300 homes under our affordable public housing programs over the last year or so, and we have another 1 000 homes under contract to be constructed, which is favourable compared with some other jurisdictions. Members will find that some other jurisdictions, with much larger populations than Western Australia, under their housing schemes have delivered perhaps only half or less than half of what Western Australia has delivered. By

national standards, the Minister for Housing and this government are doing the heavy lifting and successful work in delivering housing. Of course we can always do more, and that is why it is very gratifying to see the Minister for Finance and the parliamentary secretary to the minister working across the cabinet table with the Minister for Housing to deliver innovative solutions.

One of those innovative solutions, obviously, is our proposal to encourage more build-to-rent developments in Western Australia. The way that we achieve that proposal, through this bill, is by providing a 50 per cent concession on land tax to eligible build-to-rent developments. Build-to-rent developments are clearly defined under this bill. They have to be a build that includes at least 40 self-contained dwellings, which must be able to be occupied before 30 June 2032. A condition on leasing those dwellings is: a default lease term of three years must be offered to a tenant. Of course, a tenant can choose to enter into a shorter lease period, but the default option that a tenant will be offered a lease period of at least three years. A build-to-rent development is a clearly defined category of housing option, which will expand the market for people who maybe do not want, or are not in a financial position, to buy their own home or perhaps they are here only temporarily for a couple of years due to work requirements. We will provide that kind of housing option for those people and they will be able to look at, what we hope will be in the future, build-to-rent developments, which will spring up as a result of not just this bill, but also the work the government is doing generally to ensure a greater supply of housing into our housing market.

I will touch on one of the other ways that the government is encouraging more housing supply, and that is through its targeted apartment rebate. I raise the provision of the targeted apartment rebate because, obviously, the build-to-rent concession will provide a concession to developers to build, no doubt, multi-dwelling buildings, likely to be apartments or groups of townhouses, which can be used for rentals. That concession will be complemented by the work that we are doing with the targeted apartment rebate to encourage the building of apartments. We know that we need more apartments in Western Australia. We need more density, particularly in the metropolitan area. In any major capital city around the world, apartments are either very common or, in many cities, the norm. They drive activation, hospitality businesses, cultural precincts and precincts where people can work and live and play in the same area without having to engage in those very long commutes that the member for Thornlie spoke about. Therefore, we know that we need more apartments, and built to rent is a good way forward to encourage the building of more apartments to be available for the rental market. The targeted apartment rebate is also a good way of encouraging apartment developments generally to get off the ground, because we know that once a development goes over two or three storeys, the costs associated with building dwellings increase considerably by virtue of structural and engineering requirements, insurance and other regulatory requirements. Apartments become more and more expensive to build once we build beyond those two or three storeys, and developers are less inclined to invest in those apartments because they are not confident that they will get the commercial return on their investment. Instead, they invest in the traditional model of housing in Western Australia, which is to seek more three by twos, even if they are on ever decreasing-sized blocks. At the moment, developers are incentivised to go with that kind of product because they can get a commercial return on it.

The targeted apartment rebate will provide a \$10 000 rebate to eligible and successful applicants for infrastructure services such as water and power. It will be \$10 000 rebate to the apartment developer for each unit in the apartment block to assist with connecting those vital infrastructure essential services. It is a really good program. The Minister for Housing and the Treasurer earlier this year announced some of the successful applicants. Quite bizarrely, the announcement of those successful applicants led to some criticism from the opposition benches, particularly I think from the member for Cottesloe. Two successful developments as part of the targeted apartment rebate were in McCabe Street, North Fremantle and Ogilvie Road, Mt Pleasant. These areas are more affluent than, for example, areas in the seat of Cockburn that I represent, but these places still need housing. I outline why.

The criticism made of the government was, essentially, that it should not spend taxpayers' money to encourage the development of apartments in more affluent areas where apartments will have a rental or sale value beyond the median buyer. The problem with that criticism is that it fails to appreciate that all sorts of housing options are needed in the market in order to solve the supply problem. I give an example that relates to those two developments. We know now that one of the biggest barriers to people downsizing is that they do not want to leave the community that they currently live in. People in their 60s or 70s who have lived in North Freo or Mt Pleasant for 30 years or 50 years may be at the point in their life that they are thinking about downsizing but still live in a really big four-by-two family home. Their children have left home; they have gone to university or wherever or have grown up with families of their own. The single biggest thing that discourages these people from downsizing is that they do not want to move out of the community they have been a part of for decades. That is completely understandable.

I know this from my experience with my mother. I grew up in Australind outside Bunbury. It had been the family home for 30 years. It was the family home where my mother raised my sister and me, and the home where Mum cared for my father while he was terminally ill. It is a place of great significance for my family. My sister and I had moved to Perth long ago, and when my father died, Mum was left in this enormous two-storey property. It had a pool, a giant shed and a giant patio area. It was probably a five-by-two or five-by-three property. The only person living in this really big property was my mother. It was unmanageable and costly for Mum. To some extent, I think it was a lonely existence for Mum as well, because she did not have those family supports around her all the time.

However, the choice for her to downsize was difficult, because the house was significant to her. If she downsized, she would probably have moved to Perth to be closer to her family, and that would have meant leaving behind her friends, her sister—my aunt, who still lives there—and her social supports and community networks in Australind. It was really something I think she struggled with for a number of years.

Then along came my niece—her first grandchild—which seemed to change the calculation for Mum. She suddenly was very interested in moving to Perth. There you have it! It still took Mum about 12 months after her first grandchild was born to take the plunge, but she eventually downsized to a smaller property just around the corner from me in Beeliar. It goes to that point that many people will not downsize because they want to remain in the neighbourhoods where they have lived their lives.

In North Fremantle and Mt Pleasant, where those two developments are, people have lived in those communities for decades. Those are both very well-established areas in which people have lived and been part of the community for a long time. We know that people occupy houses that are beyond what they currently need. Houses in those suburbs could be taken by families who, if they moved into that property, might then vacate a rental in another community and free up supply for someone who needs that housing. It is about making sure that our housing is utilised properly. We do not want it to be under-utilised. Building apartments in North Freo and Mt Pleasant will drive supply and provide options for people to downsize within their own community, and thus free up other types of housing with a knock-on effect that allows other people in our community to find appropriate housing.

I thought that criticism was misguided, and, frankly, that the Liberal Party was trying to start a class war over housing, which is ridiculous because the Liberal Party have never been the party that cares about ordinary people and their housing options. The Liberal Party should probably pick issues that it has some credibility on.

Mr S.A. Millman interjected.

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: There are not many of them, as the member for Mount Lawley avers to! The issues that the Liberal Party have credibility on are thin on the ground, but it should at least try—that certainly would not be at the top of my list if I was in the shoes of members opposite, not that I ever would be!

I put on record that the whole contribution to debate about the targeted apartment rebate was completely misguided and missed the point and the fact that the government and its ministers are driving a reform agenda in housing that tackles the issue from multiple angles.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: I will contrast the efforts of this government with the efforts of the previous government in housing, particularly as it relates to my electorate. My electorate, in many ways, is not the electorate that it was 20 years ago. For example, most people think that Spearwood is still in my electorate; it is not. The heart of Cockburn is no longer in the seat of Cockburn, because the electorate has changed. New suburbs have sprung up around Success and Hammond Park and areas like Lake Coogee and Muster have subdivisions. As a result of that, over the years my electorate has moved south and to the east, and a suburb like Spearwood is split between the electorates of the members for Willagee and Fremantle. The Cockburn electorate is now different. It is a younger electorate of new families, but it has a diverse range of housing options. This is because it has some established areas—for example, around Yangebup—but also a lot of new housing, such as in those developments I mentioned before. It also has quite a few apartment blocks built in the Cockburn Central and Success areas, and a lot of apartments are around the Cockburn Gateway shopping centre and Cockburn Central train station.

One legacy item from the previous government that this government has to contend with in that part of the electorate is the collapse of, and the debacle of the former government's investment in, Goldmaster. Behind the Cockburn Gateway shopping centre are a few apartment developments, one of which was the original Goldmaster development. Right in front of that is a large patch of sand. It is just an expanse of vacant land. It is a blight on an area that should be a housing hub because it is close to the shops and the train station on the Mandurah line. It is not that hub because that land was supposed to be developed by Goldmaster, but Goldmaster is in the process of being wound up by the state government because of how terribly it operated. Unfortunately, it was operated in a way that has left the state government, through what was once the Housing Authority, with enormous debts and a legacy of housing never developed into what it should have been.

In August 2010, the Barnett government invested \$18 million in Goldmaster to develop apartments in the Success–Cockburn Central precinct. Less than a year later, in June 2011, through the Housing Authority, the state government entered into a shareholder agreement including terms that the Housing Authority would take up ownership of shares in Goldmaster. In return, it invested money in Goldmaster and basically paid Goldmaster's bills. It took on the debts of Goldmaster, including an amount that Goldmaster was being chased for by the Australian Taxation Office. I just think it is extraordinary that the state government agreed to a shareholder agreement in which they paid a bill that was owed by a private company to the ATO. It is completely astounding that anybody would think that that is a good idea. Clearly, a business that is being chased by the ATO for money is not a business that is in any way a good commercial investment. On its face, it was completely nuts that anybody who looked at that thought that that was a good idea.

On top of that, the data at the time showed that Goldmaster was on track for a \$10.3 million loss over the next 12 months. That was the value of the investment that the state government made under the Barnett Liberal–National regime. In September 2012, just over a year later, an auditor warned that Goldmaster was unlikely to have enough money to continue operating over the next year. They essentially said that Goldmaster was on the verge of being insolvent. I will remind members that the government had already invested \$18 million into Goldmaster two years earlier. Two years later, Goldmaster had an estimated value of \$320 000 through to—does any member of the chamber want to guess what the other end of the range was?

Mr P. Lilburne: Was it \$7?

Mr S.A. Millman: Was it \$600 000?

Mr D.A.E. SCAIFE: The member for Carine was closer. The amount was \$0. The value of Goldmaster two years after the state government invested \$80 million for it to develop apartments and a year after it entered into a shareholder agreement was estimated to be between \$0 and \$319 000. That is just shocking.

I am waiting to hear the full account of what happened from the current Minister for Housing because I know that he has been scrutinising this closely and has said that he will be reporting on the matter when Goldmaster winds up. Inexplicably, after all that, the housing minister at the time under the Liberal–National government approved a further investment of \$19.35 million and a loan of up to \$42.3 million to Goldmaster. That is completely staggering. Of course, in many respects, when we look back it is not surprising, because what happened with Goldmaster was emblematic of the way that the Liberals and Nationals managed money in the last government. It was profligate and lacking in governance and any kind of accountability.

The other day I heard the opposition question the government about a business case for a policy. The opposition would not know a business case if it fell over one. There was no business case for the Goldmaster investments and there was no transparency or questions asked. In the recent report by the Corruption and Crime Commission, the commissioner was very clear in his statement that he did not consider that the minister had done anything wrong, and that instead it was public servants who had failed to provide the necessary details to the minister. However, there are questions in my mind about why the minister at the time did not ask more questions of the department. The minister was willing to sign off on an additional investment of \$19.35 million and a loan of up to \$42.3 million. I think that if I had been the minister, I would have wanted to ask questions about the company that was receiving the benefits of those state government investments.

That was a huge amount of money. As the member for Churchlands said earlier, that was just money down the drain. The state government will never get that money back. It was poured into a worthless company, so the asset it got in return for that money was effectively a worthless company. I think the government was left with something like an 87 per cent stake in Goldmaster. We are winding it up now and I will wait for that final report, but there is no chance of the government ever getting that money back. That was tens of millions of dollars that could have directly been purposed into programs that would have actually resulted in housing being built—whether that was affordable or public housing. That money could have been used to, effectively, pay for concessions like those that we will provide in this bill. Shame on the former Liberal–National government. That was a ghastly oversight that happened on its watch.

I was shocked that when the CCC report came out earlier this year, Hon Dr Steve Thomas—always one to chase a headline—got in with his comments in an article. His questions were along the lines of why it had taken so long for this issue to come to light. That is ridiculous for a number of reasons. It happened on the watch of the Liberal–National government, of the parties that Hon Dr Steve Thomas belongs to. Firstly, he should apologise on behalf of his former colleagues. Then he should ask of himself, “How did we let that happen? How do we do better and how do we contribute to government being better to stop that from happening again?” Instead, he tried to turn it around into a political attack on the government and ask why it took so long for this issue to come to light.

The second reason that comment is ridiculous is because five years after 2012, after this happened, it occurred again on the watch of the Barnett government. It was not kicked out until 2017, and this thing started going all pear-shaped in 2012–2013. What did the Liberal–National government do for the four or five years that it was in government to uncover this and deal with it? At this stage, as far as we know, it did nothing. No member of the opposition has been prepared to go out there and say otherwise. I thought that was a completely ridiculous contribution from Hon Dr Steve Thomas. I do not know him well, but I understand him to be a genuinely decent guy, according to people who do know him. However, I thought that was cheap and that Hon Dr Steve Thomas and his colleagues would be much better off just taking on the chin the absolute failure of Goldmaster and how it is the model of what not to do when in government.

Of course, in contrast to that, we luckily now have a government that is delivering and is modelling exactly what should be done when in government, which is to prepare business cases, ask tough questions, make sure the governance arrangements are right and to think hard and act slowly when it comes to driving innovative reform. This bill is another plank in the reform agenda that the government is driving. I congratulate the government on driving that agenda and look forward to, in the future, seeing some build-to-rent developments come to fruition. I am confident that this bill will play a part in making that happen. On that basis, I really encourage members to support this bill. It is a good bill that complements the other work that we are doing.

MRS.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley — Parliamentary Secretary) [4.39 pm]: I rise to also make a contribution to the second reading debate on this excellent piece of legislation, the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023, which has been brought to this chamber by the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Finance. It is fair to say that on our side of politics, we believe in government that responds to and respects democratic norms, we believe in government that respects the rule of law and we believe in government that puts appropriate emphasis on the efficient and effective functioning of a market economy. As a result of the way in which the then McGowan Labor government, and now the Cook Labor government, have managed our finances, we are in a situation in which we can bring forward legislation that will stimulate activity in the housing market by reducing the land tax burden on some property developers.

I was very pleased to see my predecessor, the former Liberal member for Mount Lawley Hon Michael Sutherland, a former Speaker of this chamber, at a community function on Sunday night. I was pleased to see Michael and his wife, Michelle, because it gave me an opportunity to remind him of comments he made immediately after the 2017 election when he blamed the Liberal Party election loss on the fact that the former Barnett Liberal government increased land tax over three consecutive legislative moves. Not once, not twice, but three times, the former Barnett Liberal government kicked the crap out of property investors and property owners by increasing land tax. Michael Sutherland, as the then member for Mount Lawley, knew that had had a significant deleterious impact on his votes and, in fact, led to the Liberal Party's loss of the seat of Mount Lawley. So, it gives me great pleasure to stand here today and say, as a member of a Labor government that puts an emphasis on responsible financial management, that thanks to the work of the current Treasurer, the former Premier when he was Treasurer, former Treasurer Ben Wyatt, and the studied fiscal responsibility and discipline that they exercised, we now have the capacity to introduce legislation that puts a cap on land tax when it comes to investing in build-to-rent.

Mr D.A.E. Scaife: I think it's fair to say there were other factors behind Michael Sutherland's loss—some of his own making!

Ms C.M. Tonkin interjected.

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: Yes! I thank both the member for Cockburn and the member for Churchlands!

Suffice it to say, members, I am very pleased to have been able to take up the role of the member for Mount Lawley; it was great to see Michael and Michelle on Sunday night, and great to see them doing well.

I want to talk about a couple of things. Firstly, I want to talk about market-oriented responses to the critical housing shortage we have in Western Australia. It is an issue that is not unique to Western Australia but, in fact, is confronting governments all over Australia. I refer to market-led responses like this legislation and what it will do, but also some of the government's investment in the social and affordable housing sector, which will also drive our government's concerted and coordinated response to addressing both the housing shortage we are confronted with and the prevalence of homelessness.

I really want to talk about good policy, and what formulates and drives good policy. I refer to an article from ABC news of 7 April 2023 by Dinah Lewis Boucher and Velvet Winter titled "It's touted as one solution to Australia's housing crisis, but what is build-to-rent? And can it live up to the hype?" It states —

Australia is in the grip of a housing crisis, hit by rising rents and falling vacancy rates.

Built-to-Rent is a form of rental housing relatively new to Australia.

A newly released Ernest & Young report, commissioned by the Property Council of Australia, says that support for build-to-rent housing could result in an additional 150,000 homes over the next 10 years.

However, some experts are concerned over the accessibility of build-to-rent properties for middle- and low-income earners.

What is build-to-rent?

Build-to-rent housing is when a property is held in single ownership and professionally managed. As an example, the developer builds it and instead of selling off the units individually, keeps the property to rent out.

The idea is, it provides tenants with the flexibility of renting with the security of home ownership, because the property is held for the long term.

There is then a comparison of how build-to-rent looks in similar jurisdictions abroad. The article continues —

'This type of housing is common in the UK and other European countries, as well as in North America,' ...

...

More than 6.3 million apartments have been developed in the United States ...

Over the last 30 years. The article continues —

In the UK, more than 150,000 have been built or are under construction since 2012.

But it is still relatively new in Australia.

Highlighting some of the issues in the housing market at the moment, the nation's vacancy rate in February was, according to CoreLogic's figures, a very tight one per cent. Meanwhile, rent values have increased by 24.1 per cent since September 2020, so we have very low vacancies and very steeply increasing rents. To put the rent increases into context, there was an increase of 24.1 per cent between September 2020 and April 2023, while through the whole decade of the 2010s, the average annual growth rate in rent was 2.1 per cent. That means an increase of 24.1 per cent over three years compared with an average rate of 2.1 per cent over the preceding decade. The article continues —

“The short-term challenges we have in Australia's housing market at the moment include very tight rental markets and sharp increases in rent values over the past couple of years that Australians really haven't been exposed to,” Eliza Owen, CoreLogic Australia's Head of Research said.

“The overarching or longer-term issue that we've had in Australia is the declining rate of home ownership,” she says.

Build-to-rent could provide thousands of extra homes, property council says

This is research that was commissioned by the Property Council. The article then talks about the commonwealth government's taxation settings. I will not trouble members further with the article insofar as the federal government's fiscal policy levers are concerned; suffice it to say that the argument mounted by the Property Council is that encouraging investment and market-led solutions is one way to drive activity in the sector, therefore increasing housing stock, addressing housing shortages, and hopefully putting downward pressure on rental vacancy rates.

Another point made in the article is that although build-to-rent is good for the middle of the market, it does not go to social and affordable housing; it is not as efficient in directing solutions to the social and affordable housing section of the market. That is why I want to commend the federal Albanese Labor government for its Housing Australia Future Fund. Just this week that legislation received the support of the Greens and the crossbench, and will now pass the commonwealth Parliament. This is a commitment by the federal Labor government to allocate \$10 billion to the Housing Australia Future Fund to build social and affordable housing in order to tackle homelessness. I welcome the Greens finally supporting this policy, because it means that they are joining with industry stakeholders like the Master Builders Association, the Property Council and community housing groups. It is diverse coalition of groups that all support the Albanese government's initiatives for tackling the social and affordable housing shortfall we currently have in Australia as a result of a decade of neglect at both federal and state levels.

I highlight that policy position because this state Labor government is tackling the issue from both directions. The government is investing in social and affordable housing supply at the lower end of the market, and also relying on tax breaks that will generate market-led solutions. This is not an ideological position; we are looking at diverse ways to address this issue.

That is great work by the Minister for Finance, but there has also been some great work by the Minister for Housing, who is tackling the issues of homelessness and social and affordable housing. I asked the Minister for Housing a question on this issue as recently as 9 August, about four weeks ago. I asked, in part —

I refer to the Cook Labor government's record \$2.6 billion investment in social housing and homelessness measures in Western Australia. Can the minister advise the house of the steps being taken by this government to bolster the delivery of 4 000 social homes across the state ...

The minister replied, in part —

We want to encourage builders to come forward, but particularly those who already have projects ready or have been approved that the state could adopt. That is what we are trying to do. We are trying to think outside the box.

Industry welcomes it. The community housing sector welcomes it. One person says no. As members can guess, they are a WA Liberal—Hon Steve Martin.

The minister quoted Hon Steve Martin as saying that the Liberal Party was out of ideas. He continued —

Therefore, I thought I would ... go through all the ideas that we —

The Labor government —

have done. We have invested \$2.6 billion for 4 000 homes. We are increasing flexibility with timber frame, modular and prefabs and spot purchasing. We have developed new procurement processes to make it easier for builders. We have made approvals for public and community housing quicker ... We are reviewing and converting government regional officer housing, unlocking lazy land and applying planning reforms to streamline housing supply. We are investing \$150 million in grants for community housing and a range of significant projects ...

That answer is about cutting red tape. It is about making it easier for people to invest in and develop housing and about stimulating the economic activity. I stopped and thought about that. We are stimulating the market, cutting red tape and reducing land tax. We are doing all the things that the Liberal Party claimed it would do when it was in government, but did not do. In fact, as I said before, the Liberal Party raised land tax three times when it was in

government. I am glad that the member for Cottesloe is in the chamber. The Liberal Party, led by the member for Cottesloe, with Councillor Brent Fleeton from the City of Perth cheering him on, is doing what it can to block this government's reform agenda and concerted efforts across both market-led and public-led proposals to tackle the issues of housing affordability and social housing, and the housing shortage generally. What we stand for is in stark contrast with what the Liberal Party stands for. It does not have a policy. Policies are coming from the federal Labor government, the Property Council of Australia, the Housing Industry Association and the Master Builders Association. The only entity that has no policy on how to tackle housing affordability and the housing shortage in Western Australia is the Liberal opposition. It is out of ideas; it has no ideas.

It is important that we put all the different policy proposals on the table. One thing this government has demonstrated over time is its preparedness to look at available levers to address critical issues confronting the community. Frankly, the benefits to the community in tackling housing affordability and the housing shortage will be significant. If we can wrestle with this problem and bring it back under control, the potential benefits will be significant. Closing the housing gap could have significant benefits for the Australian economy. It is estimated that increasing the supply of social and affordable housing would lower rental prices and have a limited impact on property prices. The impact of lower rents and prices on inflation would be marginal, with no meaningful change. Additional benefits to closing the housing gap include a reduction in homelessness, improved productivity, economic growth and better health outcomes. No-one could argue against those policy imperatives. That is to say nothing of the fact that if we can work towards multi-dwelling premises—medium-density development in our suburbs close to our public transport infrastructure and all the rest of it—it will have the added environmental benefit of reducing urban sprawl and retaining our urban fringe for more environmentally conscious pursuits. If we look at any Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development report, we will see that urban sprawl is a problem throughout the developed world and it is getting worse as we become even more reliant on cars and single-dwelling property developments.

In the context of the broader debate, it is great to see that we have market-led solutions and government solutions. One of the more remarkable policy propositions was recently advanced by the national secretary of the Construction, Forestry, Maritime, Mining and Energy Union at the National Press Club on 25 July this year. This policy proposition was articulated by the Australia Institute, the think tank in Sydney, and supported by Oxford Economics. It was a proposal to introduce a 40 per cent super profits tax. I will go through the basis for introducing the policy by referring to the executive summary of *The economic case for investing in social and affordable housing*. So that members are aware, this is not a state government tax; this would be in the realm of the federal government. The report outlines an estimated gap of 750 000 social and affordable dwellings in 2023. That is 190 000 social dwellings and 559 000 affordable dwellings. The total gap has grown by 114 000 dwellings since 2014 and is expected to grow by another 200 000 by 2041. The report states —

Unmet demand for social and affordable housing is estimated to have increased from 5.6% of total households in 2008 to 7.3% in 2023.

It also states —

Closing the housing gap requires an investment of \$511 billion ...

The total investment is based on 52,600 dwellings being built every year between 2023 and 2041.

The cost of construction is expected to increase over the forecast period adding to the required investment.

The required investment can be reduced by bringing forward construction activity to limit the increasing cost of construction, noting capacity constraints in the sector.

The report states —

Current government policies are not enough to close the housing gap.

Australia's state and territory governments have announced an estimated 30,000 new social dwellings earmarked for completion over the next five years.

The current Federal Government's proposed Housing Australia Future Fund aims to provide 20,000 social houses and 10,000 affordable houses.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr S.A. MILLMAN: There is clearly a challenge confronting policymakers at the commonwealth level. The Oxford Economics report went on to say —

There are many social and economic benefits of closing the housing gap. Importantly, increased supply of social and affordable dwellings will likely put downward pressure on rental growth which is estimated to moderate to 2.0% per annum ...

That is the growth that we have had over the last decade, so in the 2010s. That would bring it back to a historical level. The report also states —

... forecast median price growth of 4.0% per annum would be tempered slightly to 3.8% with the housing gap fully closed.

That means there would not be a significant gap in the growth in the value of properties. It continues —

With minimal impact on house prices and inflation, this is unlikely to hurt investment into the broader property sector.

In addition to property market impacts, research suggests that the provision of social and affordable housing can have additional benefits for the Australian economy. Safe and affordable housing plays an important role in reducing homelessness, improving productivity and economic growth, and driving better health and income equality outcomes.

Further, it states —

... a permanent well-designed general excess profit tax is efficient and does not discourage investment. Any super profits tax should be designed to be fiscally stable to ensure confidence in the tax system and limit market distortions, since discouraging investment would in turn reduce economic activity, wages, jobs and therefore the social welfare it was designed to promote.

This is not a radical proposal; it is a relatively conservative proposal that was thought through by the Australia Institute and Oxford Economics and articulated by a union that has an interest in this field, being the construction union, which is at the front line of building the houses that the community will need for the next three decades. National secretary Zach Smith was out there formulating a policy to throw into the debate. Both the Property Council and the Master Builders Association have been formulating policies as well. We have the Minister for Finance tackling this issue from a market-led perspective and the Minister for Housing increasing the supply of public housing. All across the spectrum, a diverse range of entities are participating in the policy discussion, all with interesting ideas that they are willing to put forward. They might not be the best ideas—none might be the silver bullet—but they are all part of the conversation. They recognise that the community requires policymakers to grapple with this issue. This is an important issue. It is something that comes up in numerous discussions. It is something that materially affects the wellbeing of our community.

One would think that with all those people participating in the policy discussion, the party that puts itself forward as the alternative government would have the capacity to come up with something—anything, really. It could come at it from a public housing perspective—no worries! It could come at it from an investment perspective, a market-led perspective, if the Liberal Party is the party of the free market, which clearly it is not, because all it does is increase red tape and constrain property rights. It could come up with something, for goodness sake. Ministers, unions, think tanks and business associations all contribute to the debate, and the only people who are absent from the field are members of the Liberal Party of Australia, and that is an indictment on their intellectual capacity and their capability to be the alternative government. Unless and until the Liberal Party can fix that, and come to the table with public policy it is prepared to articulate and defend, it will never be fit for government. That is why I am happy to be part of the Cook Labor government, and I am very happy to support this parliamentary secretary and the Minister for Finance for bringing forward this wonderful legislation. I have no hesitation in commending the legislation to the house.

MRS L.M. O'MALLEY (Bicton) [5.00 pm]: I rise to speak on the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. It is no secret that Western Australia's rental market is under pressure at the moment. As of March 2023, Perth's vacancy rate is sitting at around 0.5 per cent. This is significantly lower than Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane respectively, with the national vacancy rate at 1.1 per cent. With the unemployment level in WA at approximately 3.6 per cent, living here can offer many opportunities for those in the workforce. The aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic has seen the state's population grow, and it needs to be accommodated by adequate housing schemes. The Cook Labor government will ensure housing for renters well into the future by bolstering the capacity of WA's rental market. The Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023 seeks to develop the build-to-rent industry in Western Australia, and aims to increase the future supply of rental properties by reducing investment barriers. This amendment bill will help achieve that end for renters and those looking for housing throughout Western Australia. With similar legislation already in force or announced in other jurisdictions, this bill will strengthen the collective national approach and ensure Western Australia's rental housing supply for years to come.

The amendments before Parliament today deal with a pervasive issue amongst the current cost-of-living crisis, that being accessible and available housing for those in and seeking to enter the rental market. Western Australians, including those who live in the electorate of Bicton, should not have to face any barriers to afford a necessity such as suitable housing. These barriers are instilled through a system that does not account for the new build-to-rent development model. The current Land Tax Assessment Act is preventing build-to-rent developments from taking the initiative to begin projects. This bill will directly address these financial barriers by introducing a 50 per cent land tax exemption for land used to develop build-to-rent properties, applying this concession on land tax for the next 20 financial years, with a retrospective removal exemption scheme in place that will encourage the availability of build-to-rent properties for at least 15 years. As a whole, these amendments will substantially lower the amount of land tax payable on build-to-rent developments and bolster the capacity of WA's rental market. The Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023, which amends the Land Tax Assessment Act 2002, seeks to introduce a 50 per cent land tax concession for land used to develop build-to-rent properties.

Build-to-rent developments are housing developments constructed for the purpose of providing multiple dwellings for lease under residential tenancy agreements, rather than being sold. Announced as a concession, the amendment proposed a tax exemption for up to 50 per cent of the taxable value of the land. These amendments will apply to new build-to-rent developments from the 2023–24 land tax assessment year if they meet the eligibility requirements. The land must be owned by the same owner, group of owners or management entity, and the development must be constructed for the purpose of providing at least 40 new self-contained dwellings for lease under a residential tenancy agreement, which may be expanded through the building of additional dwellings after qualifying for exemption. The dwellings must be completed and made available to be lawfully occupied between 12 May 2022 and 30 June 2032. The dwellings must be available to rent for a term of three years, but residents may negotiate for shorter lease terms. The dwellings may not be restricted to certain classes of people unless it is for the purpose of ensuring public health and safety if the dwellings are social housing or if any prescribed circumstances are established. The land tax exemption will apply for up to 20 financial years. If a build-to-rent development ceases to qualify for exemption within the first 15 years, the owner is required to pay the land tax under concession. If the land is only partially used for the development of build-to-rent development, the exemption will apply only to that land being used for that development. This includes commercial activities unrelated to the residential accommodation. If a build-to-rent expansion contains fewer than 40 dwellings, it can still receive a separate exemption if all other requirements are met.

I would like to share some data on the current housing and living landscape in the electorate of Bicton, which could easily be applied across many communities in WA. The vacancy rate for the postcode 6157 is 0.3 per cent as of August 2023. It was 0.1 per cent in January 2023. In 2021, 47 per cent of 20 to 24-year-olds lived with parents in the family home versus 42 per cent in 2001. This is from the 2021 Australian Bureau of Statistics census. This has been on a steady increase since 1981. I have one of those young people still living at home with us. He is 21 years old and he will be 22 in January. We have not yet started the clock at which time he will start to live independently. I certainly speak for a great number of my peer group, people of a similar age with adult children still living at home. That is an absolute reflection of many of the challenges we are facing in supporting our young people to move into independent living.

With the introduction of these amendments, there will be benefits for my local community and all of the communities across WA. Going a bit further into the bill, the retrospective removal of exemption will encourage the availability of build-to-rent properties for at least 15 years; as such, the threat of concession repayment would encourage developers to comply with the eligibility requirements set out in this bill. The amendments aim to increase the future supply of rental properties throughout Western Australia due to lower land tax, which will encourage the commencement of new projects by developers.

With the electorate of Bicton being home to many young families, couples and students, these amendments will give local young adults, like my son, who are working or studying at TAFE or university more options for accommodation and further opportunities to leave home and gain further independence. Likewise, the electorate of Bicton is also home to an ageing population whom these amendments will also benefit by supporting greater diversity of housing and therefore more opportunities to age in place. There are many benefits to be found in maintaining geographical connection to community and place, as well feelings of safety, security and belonging.

I would like to take a moment to expand on the topic of ageing in place, which I am quite interested in and passionate about, as it connects to community and maintains connection to community. This information is from the Heart Foundation's Healthy Active by Design website. It states —

A range of affordable, flexible, well-designed and safe housing, that has a variety of options with excellent connectivity to social services and the broader community, supports increased levels of independence, enhanced walkability and Healthy Active Ageing.

... housing choice with universal design features in dense neighbourhoods provide better ageing environments. Additionally, such communities need less age-segregated, service-supported housing, such as nursing homes and assisted-living facilities.

It goes on to refer to housing diversity. It says —

Providing housing options is important to Healthy Active Ageing. Ageing in the 'right' place might mean the ability to live in the place with the closest fit with a person's needs and preferences, which may or may not be one's own home. Where older people need to relocate to more suitable accommodation, having diverse and innovative housing options within their existing community can enable people to remain socially connected. Creating communities of integration (physical and social), rather than segregation, is generally desirable and supports Healthy Active Ageing. However, in some instances, culturally specific housing for people as they age is required, and this should be provided to enable people to be better supported.

Housing developments which cater for all ages and take into account people's changing needs as they age, such as multi-age precincts and intergenerational cohousing, are seen as proactive solutions to ageing-in-place and in the community. Research suggests that future housing developments should be proactively designed to enable ageing-in-place through whole-of-life design that takes into account accessibility and visibility features.

On the delivery of affordable housing —

Housing affordability and security of tenure are critical for seniors' wellbeing. Likewise, housing assistance for low-income seniors in the community has a significant impact on their ageing outcomes. Where older people feel secure in their homes, they are more likely to engage with the community supporting Healthy Active Ageing outcomes.

That is a slightly different spin on the importance of these amendments for housing diversity as it relates in quite a big way to my electorate, which, as I mentioned, is an ageing population. Quite frankly, we all are, but I have a larger cohort of people over the age of 65 years. It is slightly over the state average.

By decreasing barriers to investment in the area and increasing the alarmingly low vacancy rate, limited supply and high demand can be balanced. With the requirement to offer three-year leases, build-to-rent developers can offer stable leases for longer periods and can encourage tenants to live in a neighbourhood for a lengthier period, thus building stronger long-term community relationships and investment in the surrounding community groups such as sporting clubs, schools and other community-focused organisations.

With the tightening of rental vacancy rates since the pandemic, smart and realistic action is needed to build Western Australia's rental market and increase housing supply. The Cook Labor government is committed to addressing housing supply for those in and seeking to enter the rental market throughout Bicton and beyond. The amendments put forward in this bill are practical and pragmatic reforms that will reduce barriers to investment and increase the future supply of rental properties on the Western Australian market. These reforms will assist in developing Western Australia's build-to-rent industry, which will benefit those seeking affordable rental accommodation not only in the electorate of Bicton but also throughout Western Australia. With similar build-to-rent tax concessions that already operate or have been announced in other jurisdictions, these amendments will ensure Western Australia is not left behind as others move forward. I also mention the fact that it is a really smart investment. For those who are looking to enter the investment market, there has never been a better time to get behind the collective approach to solving the housing issues that we face.

This bill and its amendments further support the community. It will encourage those living in rental accommodation to lay roots and build long-term relationships with others in and around their neighbourhoods—something I am very supportive of. For the reasons I have given, I emphatically support the amendments in this bill and the aims they seek to achieve, and I commend the bill to the house.

MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.14 pm]: I very proudly rise to speak to the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023 this evening. I commend the bill to the house. I congratulate my colleague the parliamentary secretary and member for Riverton for his second reading speech. There is no doubt that within my community of Southern River, which includes Canning Vale, Southern River, Gosnells and Huntingdale, there is housing and rental stress. Families are struggling with the cost of rental accommodation and the effects of the current state of the economy. I commend the government and I will run through in a moment a number of fantastic things that are being done to assist those struggling with the cost of rentals.

The main thing I emphasise at this stage is that this bill will assist. When more land and more housing is provided—this bill in particular will allow for build-to-rent projects—more private housing supply will lower the price of rentals. This will place positive pressure by making more housing supply available, which will assist families in my electorate. My area is rapidly growing. The member for Thornlie said before that there are still some very large areas of land. I inherited the member for Thornlie's electorate some years ago. The City of Gosnells CEO tells me that my electorate holds the largest private landholding in the metropolitan area—the Della Vedova land, which stretches the entire length of my electorate and is an operating farm. It has the potential for 10 000 homes as well as schools and shopping centres. That is what my electorate looked like 50 years ago. A condolence motion will be moved tomorrow for Judyth Watson. When she was the member representing this area, there were mainly very large sections of farming land. My house in Gosnells is a former orchard space. Over time, larger blocks have been subdivided and become smaller and smaller properties. The average size of a property is getting smaller, as a lot of people want to live within Perth. It is a beautiful place.

As every person in this chamber knows, the south east corridor of Perth is the most beautiful part of Western Australia and is where everyone wants to live. Having 1 000-square-metre blocks is not possible for every family any more. A number of different transit-oriented precincts are being developed with opportunities around them. But I loop back to the Della Vedova land. Large blocks of land will still potentially be available. I met Lucy Della Vedova the other day. I was doorknocking and she was outside on the property. She is still putting in the fence posts to make sure the cows still operating on their family property do not get out. I do not believe the family has any real intent to divide, subdivide or sell parts of their property any time soon, but I can guarantee that a number of people are very interested.

To draw members' attention to some further details in the bill, I come back to the tax concessions that exist for build-to-rent projects. For those who are playing along at home, when the government provides this as an incentive for people to invest in properties and make sure they are available for a set period to rent, it will assist families to

have access to a larger number of rental properties. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Finance and a number of other speakers went through some of the bill's details and the amendments, including tax concessions and eligibility requirements. I commend those to the house.

I will speak a little bit about some of the positive things that this government has done to assist families struggling with mortgage repayments and rental payments. As I have said, there has no doubt a large increase in the average cost of private rentals across all our communities, particularly in the south east corridor and my electorate. I am proud to be part of a government that will not take things for granted and will make sure we do the right things to assist families who are genuinely struggling with the rental crisis and mortgage stresses—something that was not seen a great deal by the previous government—which also couples with cost-of-living increases for milk, fuel and other things. I recall that the previous Liberal government, in its first term, significantly increased power prices and certainly did not provide cost-of-living relief. Under this government that I am proud to be a part of, I see bills like this that will allow us to assist people to go in a better direction. We have programs such as the \$400 energy credit. Every family within my electorate has received at least \$1 400 over the last couple of years. There were credits of \$600 and \$400, and this year we have a credit of \$400. For those people who have not yet realised it, the first \$200 credit arrived in their July Synergy bill. If they cannot find it in their bill, they should contact Synergy or call my office and we will help to find it. The second \$200 credit will land in people's October 2023 Synergy bill to provide relief. Again, if people receive a federal pension, the family tax benefit A or B, or the energy assistance payment, they will most likely receive, in two halves, an \$826 credit. I know we have been talking about significant increases in rent each week, but I hope that the energy credit provides some relief.

To those people who are not aware, the hardship utility grant scheme also provides a number of ways for the government to assist them. It requires people to contact their provider, and in my electorate that is Synergy. If a person's electricity bill reaches a certain threshold, or they are on a payment plan, or have expressed genuine bill distress, which I am pretty sure is the majority of Western Australia at this stage, HUGS is another fantastic scheme that helps alleviate the increase in the cost of living.

The WA Seniors Card rebate is available, and every Seniors Card holder in my electorate is eligible for a \$104 or \$156 payment, which would have arrived in their bank account in late July. The amount was increased in the budget this year by this government to acknowledge the rising cost of living and increasing pressure on families. The \$104 is for a single person and the \$156 is for a couple—that is, two WA Seniors Card holders in one home. If a person has a WA Seniors Card, they should check that they have also applied for the annual cost-of-living Seniors Card rebate. It needs to be applied for only once, and it will then be applied every year, but some families in my electorate missed out on the July payment this year because although they have a Seniors Card, they did not apply for the separate rebate. If anyone is unsure whether they have applied for the rebate, they can call and ask the WA Seniors Card team. If they are still unsure, they can email me at terry.healy@mp.wa.gov.au, and we can get them the forms to find out from the Seniors Card team whether they have applied for the rebate. The rebate for this year has been paid already and the deadline has passed, but that amount will be available next year and each year after that, and it will go straight into people's bank accounts as a cost-relief measure.

The Minister for Housing and Minister for Finance have put forward a number of very strong tenancy rights laws and rental reforms, which I commend. Once this bill is in operation, it will limit rent increases to once a year, which will assist families in my community and all communities. I think we have got the right balance between owners and people who are seeking to invest and become landlords who rent out their properties and those people who are seeking to go into the rental market. As I have said, the more private rental supply that we have, the better it is for overall costs. The proposed prohibition on rent bidding is positive, as is the funding boost for tenancy advocates. A number of groups assist people in the rental market with tenancy and financial support advice, and I commend them.

I give a quick shout-out to the CEO of the Gosnells Community Legal Centre, Sarah Patterson. She does an amazing job. I would like to commend her work as the CEO of that organisation, and I would like to commend her staff. I will take a moment to pass on my congratulations. For the last four years, Sarah Patterson has also been a Gosnells councillor. She still serves, and will retire in about a month as she has not nominated for an extension of her term. I would like to say that Sarah Patterson has been a fierce and proud advocate for the Gosnells community. Across the south east corridor, she has advocated in her capacity as CEO of a legal centre and in her capacity as a Gosnells councillor. She is a parent and a great person. I am very sad to hear that we will lose her as a Gosnells councillor; however, we will not lose her as CEO of the Gosnells Community Legal Centre. I am just placing on the record all our appreciation for her work.

I will move on to some other items in a moment, but I would like to speak about another way that this government has proactively provided assistance, and that is our free rapid antigen tests program. My mum sometimes jokes that people cannot eat a RAT—I am talking about the free nasal RATs for COVID. I commend the government for its investment in RATs. We have now given out 155 000 RATs from my electorate office over the last 15 months. The people at my office are probably watching at home now and I think we are almost running out of RATs, so we will have to go and pick up another 5 000 soon! My community is still using and accessing the free RATs. Otherwise, they would have to buy them from the chemist and RATs are still 10 bucks a pop, but we provide them as a government service to my community. For a family that has felt sick and then gone through COVID, being able

to get free RATs from my office—a brilliant initiative of this government—is an extra \$100 in their pocket. A family that picks up 20 free RATs saves \$200 to \$250. Although people cannot eat a RAT, the free RATs allow families to spend their funds on things they want to spend it on—sometimes that is rent and sometimes that is other groceries and things like that.

I come back to the overarching theme of my speech. An increase of housing supply and rental supply in the private rental market will assist my community; it will assist families to not necessarily have to face the staggering rental increases that we have seen, which will hopefully reduce soon.

The federal Housing Australia Future Fund Bill is progressing through the Canberra Parliament, and will be a very large investment in housing supply. It is disappointing that the bill is taking this long to progress through the Parliament, but it sounds like an agreement has been reached for the bill to pass through both houses of the federal Parliament, and I commend that. The Western Australian housing minister has always been a leading light in the investment. Well before COVID and well before the times that we are in, this government significantly invested in the social and state housing supply, and it is great to see more of those houses coming online and being made available for families in my electorate. Across the south east corridor, a lot of those housing rebuilds are appearing among the older state housing stock in Gosnells, and across my community, more families have access to state housing stock. I loop that to the federal announcement of \$10 billion to be applied nationally, which will see more social housing across the nation, but particularly here in Western Australia. There will be affordable homes for frontline workers, including police and nurses and cleaners; funding for the maintenance and improvement of housing across Indigenous communities; funding for crisis and transitional housing options for family and domestic violence; and I believe a significant allocation is made for veterans as well. I think there is a \$30 million housing fund for specialist services for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness. This means more families will be able to access housing.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr T.J. HEALY: Friends, I am going to talk about a couple of projects in my electorate that open up potential. Great projects are happening within my electorate that will increase the attractiveness for people to invest—namely, to buy houses to rent them out and to buy houses to live in themselves. The south east corridor, as I have said, and the member for Armadale will agree, is the best place in Western Australia to live. It has wonderful facilities and wonderful infrastructure. I will talk about a couple of things happening now, which, for those who are watching at home, if you are not already living within the south east corridor, I know will make you want to move there. This bill will make it easier.

I will speak briefly about the opportunity that exists because of the Western Australian government funding the Gosnells council to move forward with our Barrett Street design. I spoke briefly before about the rural aspect of my community. I still have operational farms, not only on the Della Vedova land, in the rural part of Southern River, which is a beautiful part of my electorate and my community. There is an area that was designated as Bush Forever many years ago. My electorate office is my old friend's house. I would visit them for weekend parties in the late 1990s when it was a very large farm. It is now my office and a high school and about 50 houses. When Bletchley Park estate and a number of the areas around Southern River were developed back in the 1990s in a previous era, a number of parts of my electorate were designated as Bush Forever. It is Bush Forever whether landowners agree or not. Those people like my friend's parents who sold their farm for residential houses had a large number of funds that came to them. It was different for areas that were Bush Forever.

This is where Barrett Street comes in. A number of houses on Barrett Street could not be sold for residential houses. The people who owned the land were made an offer by the state government that was less than they would have made if it were sold for private housing, and, until now, the majority of them have still not accepted the government offer to buy their land at that market value. Their holding out has meant that the council has not added the relevant infrastructure along that part of Barrett Street. There are beautiful houses, small blocks, wonderful parks and infrastructure and schools all around—then right in the middle is this section of Barrett Street. It is a beautiful piece of Bush Forever land, but there is this impasse. I tried to work with the council and suggested that all people who live in this area pay rates so let us build a footpath now. Instead, we have an unsealed road, no lights and no footpath and a number of families with young people must walk on the road to get to and from places within the electorate. There are speeding issues and dangers with people walking on the road when they should be on a footpath. There is also illegal dumping. Some people choose to dump illegally in those areas because they feel it does not get much attention. I have written to the City of Gosnells council over some time, and it is my view that the council should take the opportunity to invest using developer contributions and council reserves and put lighting and footpaths there. This would increase the amount of pedestrian traffic and allow pedestrians to move safely through the area, allow young people to walk on a footpath as opposed to a road when they walk to and from school and shops and allow more people to appreciate what is a beautiful piece of bush without having to park on dirty road reserves.

Without further ado, I commend the state government on the Main Roads regional group grant of \$30 000. The Gosnells council has not been able to move forward with its footpath plans for the last 20 years, and it is something I have advocated for with the Gosnells council CEO for some time—even since I was a Gosnells councillor. I am

very happy to announce that the Western Australian government is funding \$30 000 to the Gosnells council for the designs to build the footpath down Barrett Street. Again, for those who are playing along at home, the proposed footpath is a wonderful location between Balfour Street and Lakey Street along the full section of Barrett Street. I say thank you to all the families who raised this with me over the last several years. It is a great option. The council has been given funds from the MRRG grant. I am very proud to say that I support that. The council will now design that footpath. We then have to build it, but the first stage has always been getting that small piece moving forward, and I am very happy that we have done that.

For those who like details, I will be doorknocking throughout Southern River and will be happy to provide a copy of my Barrett Street footpath design plan. The map and the details can be found conveniently on the back. If I can assist with anything, please let me know. Of course, you can email me for any further details.

We speak about build to rent and building homes. I give a brief shout-out to three couples who have built amazing homes in my electorate. I give a special shout-out to Audrey and Alphonso Cozens in Huntingdale who built their home 50 years ago. We congratulate them on their fiftieth wedding anniversary as they were married on 12 May 1973 at St Patrick's Basilica in Fremantle. On behalf of everyone here at the Parliament of Western Australia, we say congratulations on building your home and making it such a wonderful part of the community.

I congratulate Janice and Bob Henderson from Huntingdale, who recently celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary. They built a home in their community of Huntingdale in my electorate. I congratulate them on their wedding anniversary; they were married at Saint Peter's Anglican Church in Victoria Park on 15 June 1963. We wish them all the best.

I finally congratulate Hank and Lyn Hoogland, who celebrated their sixtieth wedding anniversary on 5 September 2023. They are wonderful Canning Vale residents and again, on behalf of the Parliament of Western Australia, and on behalf of the Premier, we say congratulations and thank you.

I now speak about a number of projects increasing the value of property and infrastructure for families. We very recently had a big win. A boundary between my electorate and the member for Jandakot's, between the City of Gosnells and the City of Armadale, is Ranford Road. It is a beautiful road. I remember when Ranford Road was a two-lane unsealed road. It is now a four-lane road currently increasing to three lanes in terms of bus lanes. Those who know me well will know I often mention that further up the road, the Ranford Road Bridge is being built to an eight-lane capacity. I doorknocked a number of residents who have property boundaries that back onto Ranford Road. The shortcut through is that the council is proposing to increase the height of their fences, in most cases, by at least 30 centimetres, to at least 1.8 metres.

Many years ago, when Canning Vale was being developed, a rammed earth fence was built at a lower level at the back of the properties of the residents of West End Parade, Lincoln Place, Brookside Square and a number of other wonderful streets. Over time, more shops, families and houses were built within the area. The addition of a new bus lane—a state government–council project—is bringing traffic closer to their properties. I doorknocked every single house. I also want to commend those who wrote the petition. We have been able to work together with the council and it has put forward a proposal. I support the proposal and I have written to the Commissioner of Main Roads Western Australia because the proposal also talked about a project variation, which I am sure we can also achieve. The proposal states that for approximately \$100 000, each house will have a 30 centimetre boundary. It will depend where the house is along Ranford Road, but the total height will be at least 1.8 metres. That means that those families can have privacy and security, which is a key part of this bill.

I want to commend the council. It has a wonderful CEO and director. We are very blessed to have an amazing mayor and councillors in Gosnells. I appreciate that they listen to families. A number of families spoke about the fear of someone jumping over the fence from the other side and that people in vehicles, buses and trucks can already see over the fence line when driving along Ranford Road. It has not been a huge problem, but as road capacities and housing densities increase, and as vehicle lanes widen and get closer to their properties, it is becoming a big issue. It is always wonderful when tricky public policy problems have a solution and I am very happy to say that the Gosnells council has found that solution. I commend that to the house. I thank each of the residents for talking to me and I thank the council and its staff for bringing that to be.

I have spoken about the many young families who live in my electorate and the benefits of this bill. I would like to close by inviting all the families in my electorate and their friends and my colleagues within this chamber to another event that will raise the property values of my community—that is, the *Frozen* night that will happen at my electorate office on Monday, 13 November. We will have Elsa coming to my office. We have done this for four years in a row. It has assisted all the families who live in my electorate. We will have free face painting and Elsa will come. We had about 150 young people last year and had a Spiderman event in March as well. The event is on Monday, 13 November from 5.00 to 6.30 pm. All the families in my electorate know that it is a free event. Please google "Terry Healy *Frozen*." I think that will get all the RSVP details. Again, I would like to invite all the families to come, enjoy the benefits of this bill and of the free Elsa night. Come and meet Elsa, bring the kids, get dressed up and enjoy yourselves. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

MS E.L. HAMILTON (Joondalup) [5.43 pm]: That is quite a contribution to follow. I rise today to make a contribution to debate on the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. We know that housing supply is impacting our community in Western Australia and, in fact, this is a broader nationwide issue that governments are working to address. Rental property availability is at an all-time low, which is creating many challenges across the sector and the community. This piece of legislation embodies our state government's commitment to providing secure and affordable housing options for Western Australians and will enable growth of the build-to-rent sector.

This concept is a relatively new model of urban housing in Western Australia in which apartments and other dwellings will be developed to provide rental accommodation rather than being sold. This is an innovative housing model that has proven successful in various parts of the world. Similar build-to-rent land tax concessions operate in New South Wales and Victoria and have been announced in South Australia and Queensland. The model provides a number of benefits such as offering tenants the prospect of high quality long-term rental homes with the added benefit of stability and enhanced living standards. It will support renters to be better protected from changes in the property market, while opening up opportunities for new, innovative housing initiatives. It is focused on delivering diverse housing and high amenity where people want to live, can raise their families and invest in their future.

Our government is supporting these developments with a range of tax incentives that will make it more attractive to consider these types of housing projects. This tax concession for build-to-rent projects aims to reduce the barrier to investment and grow the build-to-rent industry across our state. This bill will amend the Land Tax Assessment Act 2002 to create a favourable environment for build-to-rent developments by introducing targeted land tax incentives. It will introduce a 50 per cent land tax concession for land used for a build-to-rent development. These incentives will encourage private sector investment. The concession was announced by the Cook government as part of the 2022–23 state budget and will apply to eligible new build-to-rent developments from the 2023–24 land tax assessment year. The concession for an eligible development will reduce the taxable value of the land by 50 per cent, substantially lowering the amount of land tax payable.

Over the coming decades, the Perth and Peel regions will experience significant growth as more people choose to live in WA and make the most of the opportunities our state has to offer. This means that we will need to deliver more new homes than ever to accommodate this growth. It is expected that we will need more than 800 000 new homes, but these homes cannot only be built on the ever-growing outer fringes, they must also be delivered in existing city centres and strategic locations within existing suburbs.

We know that Perth is already one of the longest cities in the world, stretching more than 150 kilometres along the coast from Two Rocks in the north to Mandurah in the south. It is not sustainable or suitable to continue to develop only on the urban fringes. A recent study by the New South Wales Productivity Commission has found that developing new greenfields estates in Western Sydney costs \$75 000 more per home compared with increased infill. While this report pertains to the New South Wales housing and construction sector, many of its findings would be near universal truths. The cost of new electricity, water, sewage and other utilities, along with the demand for new schools, public transport options and commercial developments means that to deliver a minimum level of amenity for new developments is not always the best option.

Instead, our government is committed to delivering high-quality housing close to where people work and want to live, and where existing amenities already exist. We cannot continue to build out, but must build up where it makes sense. That is why we have introduced this legislation: to encourage and support better use of our existing city centres to deliver more housing supply. Smart and targeted density where it makes sense will ensure WA meets the needs of current and future residents. It has the potential of creating vibrant new communities around station precincts and revitalise existing ones by breathing new life into ageing neighbourhoods through building on local character and values. This bill will bring a significant injection of capital to boost housing supply in WA, but it is not just about stimulating the economy, it is about ensuring that we are meeting the housing needs of our growing population, including families, young professionals, and seniors who deserve a stable and high-quality living environment.

The bill includes provisions to ensure that the benefits are accessible to a broad range of income levels. We are committed to striking a balance between incentivising investment and safeguarding affordability for residents. Properties often come with higher quality finishes and amenities compared with older, existing rental housing stock. This can include onsite management, communal spaces, and maintenance services. The build-to-rent reforms complement a range of other initiatives the Cook Labor government is implementing to increase housing supply and provide housing for the most vulnerable members of our community.

We are investing a record \$2.6 billion into social housing and homelessness measures, which will see the delivery of 4 000 social homes. Almost 1 300 of these homes have already been delivered and a further 1 000 are currently under contract or construction. We have sped up our delivery of social housing through a range of innovative reform programs, including the timber frame build program, the modular housing program, and continuing our highly successful spot purchasing program.

The housing diversity pipeline was launched to unlock lazy government land, and is being used in conjunction with the \$80 million infrastructure development fund to drive infill and apartment developments in key urban precincts, and workers accommodation in regional areas. The Cook Labor government continues to work with industry to cut red tape and deliver reforms to assist more Western Australians to get into the housing market. A range of tax reforms and incentives have already been implemented to boost housing and land supply, encourage urban infill and improve housing affordability across the state, including changes to the stamp duty rebate thresholds for off-the-plan apartments.

Joondalup is Perth's second CBD and a significant strategic city centre that is primed and ready to support increased and appropriate infill. I have raised this matter on a number of occasions in this place, and the fact that we need to ensure that we work towards and achieve good-quality density and infill in strategic locations in line with community expectations. From a state government point of view, we are well and truly committed to ensuring that Joondalup continues to be the home of a number of important developments that are delivering increases to housing supply close to existing infrastructure and amenities. It just makes sense.

Some of the developments being delivered with the support of our state government locally include the redevelopment of the former Joondalup basketball stadium site, Connect Joondalup, and the Ocean Reef marina development.

In 2020, just across the road from my electorate office, the demolition of the old Joondalup basketball stadium made way for a new mixed-use and multigenerational development for new homes, aged-care, childcare, leisure and medical facilities right in the heart of the Joondalup CBD. The development will help people to downsize without leaving their community, and support people to age in place. It is located near Joondalup Health Campus, Edith Cowan University in Joondalup, and directly across the road from Joondalup train station and Lakeside Shopping Centre. It is the very definition of an important infill development in a strategic location.

Our state government is also actively working on Connect Joondalup, another new mixed-use development in the Joondalup CBD. It is located across the road from the HBF Arena, near Joondalup Health Campus, directly adjacent to the North Metropolitan TAFE McLarty campus, and 900 metres walking distance from our Joondalup train station. We are committed to working through the process of unlocking that land, and I look forward to continuing to work with Minister Carey to make sure that we are looking at possibilities for this site.

One of the largest and most impressive developments, which is well underway, is our \$223 million landmark Ocean Reef marina development, which is set to be a thriving coastal hub, a world-class tourism destination, and most importantly, a wonderful location for our community to enjoy. I really like taking every opportunity to speak about this wonderful project. It is a fantastic development. We have recently seen the completion of the massive breakwaters, and the land-based works have commenced and are well underway. The first of these will be the new facilities for the Ocean Reef Sea Sport Club, Marine Rescue Whitfords, the Joondalup City RSL, the new public beach and Perth's first ocean pool. As works continue, we will also see the preparation of land to the north for the development of residential dwellings that will be incorporated into the marina. They will offer a range of diverse housing that I know my community is keen to hear about. We expect the first residential lots to be released next year.

This year, the City of Joondalup is celebrating its twenty-fifth anniversary. In that time, there have been few truly tall developments in our city centre, but the 17-storey ArtHouse Joondalup apartment building was completed in 2020. It is now Joondalup's tallest building and is really shaping our iconic skyline. This legislation will help more iconic city centre skylines spring up across Perth, including in Joondalup. In many areas there are height limits for development but, importantly, in Joondalup, there are no height limits. By setting the right climate as government, we continue to make sure that new housing and apartments are easy to deliver in existing strategic areas. This legislation will support a range of households, whether owner-occupied or renting, to get into and afford a high-quality home. It means that people can live or downsize in place around family, friends, healthcare and community. It provides the opportunity to live close to high-quality public and road transport options, the stunning coast in Joondalup, or close to Yellagonga Regional Park.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics data tells us that Joondalup has a 25 per cent component of locals under the age of 25 years old. A large number will be young people wanting to enter the housing market, or a student studying at Edith Cowan University. For this cohort, this legislation will make it easier to develop dedicated housing catering to the needs of international and domestic students. Our Cook government is using every lever to increase housing supply, provide more housing options for the WA community and improve housing affordability. The legislation will enable large-scale build-to-rent developments that will increase the availability of long-term rental housing in the state, particularly in areas where there is a shortage of affordable rental properties, delivering the possibility for greater choice and diversity to meet the needs of everyday Western Australians. Build-to-rent opportunities will assist in providing housing choice that will stabilise the rental market and enable more properties to come online to meet demand now and into the future.

As the member for Joondalup, I am proud that we are well positioned, as Perth's second CBD, to support this build-to-rent legislation. I welcome this investment and opportunity in our city centre. The bill is a testament to this government's dedication to the wellbeing of our state, and paves the way for a brighter future for all Western Australians. I commend the bill to the house.

MS M.J. HAMMAT (Mirrabooka — Parliamentary Secretary) [5.55 pm]: I rise to make a contribution to the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023 that is before the house this evening. As others were before me, I am also very excited to talk about this legislation. It is an important part of our work to ensure that we have housing diversity and supply for the people of Western Australia. It is incredibly important to do that, particularly for the people that I represent in my electorate of Mirrabooka.

This bill will ensure that there are tax concessions for build-to-rent projects, aiming to reduce the barrier to investment and grow build-to-rent developments as a feature of our state. It is not common in Western Australia, but it is common in other places. Around the world, the idea of large-scale build-to-rent developments is not unusual. Here, in Western Australia, there is not the same culture of embracing apartment living compared with other parts of Australia. This is a way to provide stimulus to achieve greater investment in build-to-rent developments. It meets a need in the market, one which I have identified very clearly in my electorate of Mirrabooka, where there is a larger number of people in rentals or seeking rentals. The ability to access a rental property and do so long term is incredibly important.

The bill will introduce a 50 per cent land tax concession for build-to-rent land use developments. It was introduced in the state budget, and it will apply to eligible new build-to-rent developments in the 2023–24 land tax assessment year. A list of criteria will have to be met before the concession can be accessed. Others before me have listed and identified those criteria, but I think it is important to have solid criteria so that properties will be built and developed for the purpose of renting. In my view, that is the critical piece to ensure that we increase the supply of rentals, and doing that in way that increases the density of housing generally. One criterion for the concession is that at least 40 self-contained dwellings in the development will be available for lease. It will create a higher density of housing and ensure that those properties will be available for residential purposes.

I will talk a little bit about the Mirrabooka electorate before I talk more broadly about the work that this government is doing around housing. I am very conscious every day of the issues and concerns faced by renters in my electorate. Other members in their contributions today talked about that. The rising costs of living and the general lack of supply—particularly of rental properties at the moment—are no doubt creating challenges for people right across the Perth area, and I definitely get that feedback from the people who I represent as well. A higher number of people in the Mirrabooka electorate rent compared with the greater Perth area. Based on the census data that I saw we have a total of 30 per cent rentals compared with about 25 per cent in the greater Perth area, and a large number of those are in social housing. Again, there is a greater proportion of people in social housing compared with the greater Perth area.

Private rental is the fastest growing category in my electorate compared with home ownership and other forms of rental. It is a substantial number and is increasing more quickly than any other form of home ownership or access to housing. Interestingly, houses are more likely to be on the smaller side. Around the greater Perth area, about 36 per cent of houses have three bedrooms and about 36 per cent have four bedrooms. In Mirrabooka, more than half are three-bedroom homes. I think that reflects on the history of the area—that larger blocks in places like Balga, Girrawheen and Koondoola have been subdivided and infill is taking place. We have seen an increase in density to what would generally be considered—I am no planning expert—medium-density housing.

This proposal will encourage higher-density housing. It is interesting to look around my electorate. We have land in the Mirrabooka town centre that has been sitting vacant for some time. I hope that these proposals will encourage the development of this kind of apartment-style living. I can see a number of blocks in the Mirrabooka town centre that would be ripe for that kind of development. Indeed, the demand for housing clearly exists in my electorate. That is a clear example of how these kinds of proposals are really valuable for stimulating the private sector to step in and build the housing that we need and to start to meet the housing shortage that exists in the community generally.

The government has been doing a number of things in housing, and I want to commend Minister Carey, in particular, for his leadership in the broad range of strategies and approaches that the government is taking to ensure that there is housing for people throughout the community. Everyone wants a place to call home and we are committed to doing everything possible to increase the supply of both social and affordable housing. We are investing a record \$2.6 billion into social housing and homelessness measures, which will deliver a total of 4 000 new social homes. We have already delivered 1 300 new social homes, with a further 1 000 homes under construction or under contract. We are using innovative reform programs to speed up the delivery of social housing, including timber frame builds, modular housing and the spot purchasing program. We have reduced interest rates for the Keystart loan program, to make it easier for people on low incomes to buy their own home, and we have increased income and asset limits for the bond assistance scheme, making it easier for people to get into their own rental property. I am proud to be part of a government that is delivering on housing to the people in our community who need it most, and this bill is another plank in the whole suite of measures that the minister is pursuing. It is really important for stimulating large-scale build-to-rent developments.

This legislation is about increasing the capacity of the rental market and providing more rental properties to meet future demand. Every time there is consideration of housing, one of the key factors is ensuring that we have a diversity

of housing supply. We are increasing housing supply, but also ensuring that there is diverse housing because clearly different people have different needs and different aspirations. This is another way of stimulating the market to ensure that we provide that diversity across the board, both in where people live and in the kind of housing they live in. Western Australia, in particular, is very attached to freestanding dwellings on relatively large blocks, but that does not suit everyone. As the population ages, of course, there is more and more demand for apartment-style living, where people do not have the concern of having to look after a large garden or any garden at all. Again, that is one of the issues that this legislation will help to address.

As the population ages, people often do not want to move out of their communities; they have deep attachments to the places in which they live. They have friends and social connections and are part of social groups; they might have family members nearby. They do not want to have to sell the family home and then move a long way away to access an apartment-style or smaller dwelling to live in. People want to stay in their communities where they have all those important social networks, but they often do not want to stay in a large family home. This legislation, again, encourages diversity of housing supply right across the market, recognising that, as our population ages, there is increasing demand for different styles of housing. For those reasons, this is a very good bill that clearly will address what we can see coming.

In the time left to me today I want to talk more broadly about issues around housing. It is an issue that has certainly been on my mind, as member for Mirrabooka, but it has also been a central concern for this government. As I said, we have been doing a range of things to boost housing supply to ensure that we have adequate supplies of social housing and to increase the accessibility of affordable housing so that people are able to access the homes they wish to live in. One of the things that is quite striking about Western Australia is that we have a sprawling metropolitan area. I think one of the members who spoke before me mentioned that the metropolitan area spans 150 kilometres up and down the coast. Typically, people live in single dwelling-style houses, and Western Australia has a substantially different housing profile from that of other states in terms of our love affair with single-style dwellings.

I am just trying to find the statistics—hopefully I will come across them shortly—but in WA about 75 per cent of the housing stock is that style of standalone house. I cannot find the figures but, from memory, in NSW it is about 55 per cent. They have a much smaller proportion of single dwellings and a higher proportion of apartments and medium-density housing. Of course, Sydney has plenty of urban sprawl as well. We have the luxury of space and so we have spread out, but that creates all sorts of other challenges for us as a community. Something that frequently comes up is that that large spread does not facilitate other forms of active transport. Our suburbs are spread out and people choose to get around, for the most part, in cars, so it becomes much more difficult to travel using other active transport means—walking, cycling and what have you. Stimulating an increase in the diversity of housing and increasing housing density will ensure that we are also doing some really great things that will make our suburbs and communities more livable. They will be easier to get around in forms of active transport. I know that one of the things the Minister for Transport is incredibly passionate about is ensuring that, as part of the development of our Metronet projects, we are doing work to have accommodation around the transport hubs that will be created by Metronet. That will ensure that we unlock the potential that comes from the Metronet transport investment by creating hubs around train stations for retail, housing and density around train lines.

Of course, that makes sense. When people visit cities around the world, it is very clear that that ability to live in medium-density housing and use active forms of transport is very important to ensure that people have places to live and a really good quality of life as well. That is positively associated with better health outcomes and better satisfaction overall.

Housing affordability is part of the consideration as well. Increasing housing density and unlocking build-to-rent programs will improve the livability of our communities, but it is clearly also about having a diversity of housing and making housing affordable. I refer to the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre's report *Housing affordability in Western Australia 2023*, published in May 2023. This very detailed piece of work looked at what housing affordability looks like in WA and how it compares with other states. The report found that although housing affordability has decreased in Western Australia in recent years as a result of both interest rate rises and rent increases, WA remains one of the most affordable cities to live in Australia. The analysis showed that the median dwelling value in greater Perth was just under \$573 000—a whopping \$453 000 less than greater Sydney! Only Darwin had a lower median housing value than Perth; all other capital cities were above Western Australia. There were similar results in regional WA, which is cheaper than everywhere but regional South Australia. Affordability is clearly not uniform across Australia, but in comparative terms, affordability remains very good in WA. We are ahead of other states. It is really important to remember that in the debate about access to housing.

Another key consideration of the report is the structure of dwellings. I refer to the statistics that I was trying to find earlier. The report states —

The housing stock in WA remains dominated by separate houses (75.5 per cent in Greater Perth ...

That means that 75 per cent of our housing is separate houses, as opposed to units or semidetached dwellings. Basically, there has been little change in dwelling structures over the last 10 years. Despite successive governments

having a focus on diversifying housing supply, it has not changed over the past 10 years. We have had a long-term attachment to single dwellings. This bill will go a long way towards ensuring that we are able to start making changes and stimulating more density in housing.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: I am conscious of the time; I do not want to dwell on this too long.

The other important thing about the BCEC housing affordability report was that it identified that policy settings to stimulate build-to-rent investments should be a priority. BCEC clearly understands the important role that this legislation will play in stimulating alternative kinds of building.

I have already spoken about our government's commitment to social housing, which is the other piece of the puzzle. We are doing a number of things in that space to ensure that we increase the supply of social housing for people who need it.

Ensuring that we have the right kinds of houses in the right places so that people are able to find the homes they need is a complex issue. It is not a simple equation. I again refer to some work done by the Bankwest Curtin Economics Centre—a report titled *Perth infill housing future* and released in 2017. This is a very detailed piece of work—in fact, it is a whole book—that looks at some of the things that are impacting on housing diversity, as well as how to stimulate infill to provide diversity. The report found that it is not as simple as people choosing a particular style of home. People generally consider both the affordability and location of homes. Not surprisingly, if we surveyed people on where they wanted to live, many would say that they would like to live near the CBD, but the price of housing close to the CBD is equally important. When making decisions about housing, people weigh up where they want to live—somewhere that is close to work, schools, family and amenities—versus where they can afford to live. This goes to the heart of the issue about creating more diversity. If we stimulate the development of more medium-density and high-density apartments, we will potentially give people the opportunity to live closer to the city in a more affordable apartment-style home rather than a standalone home. We need to understand that people take into account a whole range of considerations when thinking about where they want to live. My community of Mirrabooka is close to the CBD and has a large amount of land that could be easily and sensibly developed into high-density housing. It would be great to have a train line to go with it.

Mr D.J. Kelly: MAX light rail.

Ms M.J. HAMMAT: Yes, that is right—MAX light rail. It was long promised but never delivered—not by us, I hasten to add for the purposes of *Hansard*. We never promised to deliver that.

Mirrabooka is close to the city and has land available. This proposal to stimulate investment in build-to-rent apartments will be incredibly valuable, particularly for the people who live in my community. People want to find a home that is close to their work, family, schools for their children and what have you. Being able to access housing in the right location at the right price is key to being able to meet people's housing needs.

I will bring my contribution to an end. I really wanted to reflect that the key to satisfying the demand for housing is not about pulling just one lever; we need to pull a number of levers to meet the diversity of demand. The key for people to be able to find the home they want at a price they can afford in the location they need is really about ensuring that we have a diversity of housing, in terms of both where those houses are located and the style of those houses, and the kind of density that comes with it. That is true whether someone is experiencing rental stress, might be in social housing or is ageing and no longer wants to live in a freestanding home. We need to recognise that people will be looking to accommodate a wide range of circumstances in their housing choice. The best way the government can help is by ensuring that it pulls levers that will create a diversity of housing right across the metropolitan area. We understand that we can no longer continue to sprawl the city along the coastal strip by building standalone homes. The only way we can have a sustainable and quality community into the future is by ensuring that we develop different styles of housing in different areas to meet a wide range of community needs. Our government is committed to doing that.

I commend Minister Carey in particular for his work in meeting the need to provide additional social housing. I know that issue is on the minds of many of the people I represent in Mirrabooka. I know that he is doing everything he can to ensure that we meet that need and build homes as fast as we can, to ensure that people have a place to live. I want to commend the parliamentary secretary for his work in bringing this bill before us today. It is great to have the opportunity to talk about some of the things this government is doing in the housing space to meet the need for diverse housing, affordable housing and social housing. With that, I commend the bill to the house.

MR D.J. KELLY (Bassendean) [6.19 pm]: I am very pleased to speak in favour of the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023.

Other speakers have spoken about the importance of secure housing in the lives of most families. I often think about my recollections of growing up. We were a large family on a reasonably modest income, and I remember two things about my childhood that meant I really did not understand that the family did not earn a lot because I did not see us as particularly struggling. One thing was that my father had a secure job. He worked for the Fremantle Port

Authority in the customs office. My father was never unemployed, so the family always had a continuing income. The other thing was that we always had a roof over our heads. My father had been in the Second World War, and when he came back, he got access to a veterans' loan. We always had an income, and we always had a roof over our heads. For those reasons, I never really thought that we were in difficult financial circumstances. My mother would sometimes say, "If I ever win the lottery, I am going to buy you nothing but Kentucky Fried Chicken until it comes out of your eyeballs because I am sick of you asking us for it, and we just can't afford it." That memory is there, too, but thankfully we could not afford that rubbish. We did not have a lot of money, but we had a secure income and a secure house.

I really did not understand how difficult housing can be for people until I got my first job out of university in the electorate office of Dr Carmen Lawrence, who was first elected to Parliament in the electorate of Subiaco. I was one of her electorate staff. Her electorate of Subiaco included the apartments in Herdsman Parade, near Wembley. Most of the apartments were private, but some were government apartments. The thing that could change people's lives the most was getting access to a secure government house. Meeting people who were so traumatised by the fact that they did not have a secure roof over their heads was new to my life experience. I think a lot of people in Western Australia who have never experienced potential homelessness do not have an understanding of just how difficult life can be without a secure roof over someone's head. Of course, now I am an MP, I unfortunately see it much too often.

I am very happy to speak on this bill. The bill is one of the measures this government is taking to improve housing supply. It will mean a 50 per cent reduction in the amount of land tax that will be paid on land used for build-to-rent developments. Those developments are not really part of the current housing landscape in Western Australia. Most developments are built to be sold freehold, and the idea that we would try to encourage developers to build significant housing developments and then rent them out on a long-term basis is really quite new. The land tax reduction will apply to developments that have 40 or more dwellings, and the development must be completed between 2 May 2020 and 1 July 2032.

Importantly, dwellings must be offered for three-year residential leases. We are trying to encourage the notion that people can rent and have security. In other countries, people rent all their lives, but they have a secure roof over their heads. Here, renting is seen as an insecure form of housing, and that is partly because leases are so short, so the discount will apply only if the apartments or dwellings are offered for three-year rental leases. I note that there is an option for dwellings to be let for shorter periods at the request of the tenant. When this concession is put into place, I am sure that there will be some way of ensuring or monitoring that, when developers complete the homes and offer them to the market for three years—saying that they will accept shorter lease periods at the request of the tenants—the developers do not offer the leases to the tenants who are prepared to take them on the shortest possible basis. I can imagine that, at the moment, if five rental properties were put on the market and offered for three years, people could offer to take them for shorter periods and might see that as a way to get into the development. Tenants might offer to take it for a year, and the developer then takes everybody who is prepared to accept a lesser period. That would in some way defeat the purposes of the longer term rental option, but I am sure the minister and government have thought of that and will monitor how that plays out.

I note that this concession will exist for 20 years, which shows it is a long-term commitment by the government. It also mirrors land tax concessions in New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland that have either been put in place and are available or have been announced.

More broadly, as a government, we are committed to providing more housing options. Other speakers have talked about Perth's sprawl. It often looks like a city that goes from Bunbury to Geraldton. The city lacks options for people who do not want the traditional four-by-two house in a suburb. People want options to have smaller houses closer to transport.

When I was a bit younger, I spent three years living in London, and I was really quite amazed at the housing options in that city. When I got to London, I was lucky enough to stay with some friends of friends, as Australians often do. English people meet one Australian and then for years after that they have a steady stream of Australians knocking on their door. I lived with a guy called Graham who was the same age as me, in his early 30s, and lived in a flat owned by the council. It was a third-floor, three-bedroom flat. He and his two mates lived there, and it was fantastic. It was close to the centre of London and public transport. So many buses went outside their front door that they did not even need a bus timetable. I asked him for the bus timetable for the area and he said, "We don't have them. Just go and stand outside the front door, and there will be a bus." There were eight pubs within 100 metres and supermarkets nearby. It was the ideal living arrangement for a young person who did not want to have the burden of a huge mortgage.

A lot of people in Perth, young and old, would like these housing options close to transport and other amenities. The government was very keen to provide this. In my electorate, the Town of Bassendean is very keen to have these types of developments in the town. It has three train stations—Success Hill, Bassendean and Ashfield. They are all ideally suited to apartment dwellings. This is a little advertisement! There is a 3000-square-metre block of land directly across the road from Bassendean train station, next to Old Perth Road and the Bassendean Hotel, which has recently been refurbished. The land is currently a car park. The town is very keen for it to be developed as

apartments. It would be happy to consider proposals for six to eight storeys on that block. The trouble is that with the construction market the way it is, the town is struggling to find a developer willing to develop that block, even though it ticks all the boxes. That is the sort of project that will benefit from this bill, with a reduction in the land tax paid by the developer. I commend the government for bringing this bill forward. The housing minister in particular is fond of saying that he is looking to pull every lever that the government has to increase housing supply, and reducing land tax is one of the levers that the housing minister is using, in conjunction with the Treasurer.

There are other things we are doing. The flip side of building apartments for people to rent is reforms to make the life of renters more secure. I commend the government for the announcement it has made about tenancy reform. We have some of the most antiquated residential tenancy provisions, not only in Australia, but in the world, so tenants in Western Australia feel particularly hard done by. One of the reforms that the Minister for Finance has announced is to allow tenants to make reasonable modifications to apartments or houses they rent—for example, painting the inside of the house or putting pictures on the walls—that now all require the approval of the landlord, but will not under the reforms. Another reform is limiting rent increases to once a year and prohibiting rent bidding by which landlords actively seek to have tenants bid against each other. Unless landlords can show a compelling reason why not, tenants will be allowed tenants. There will be new and quick dispute resolution procedures for the Consumer Protection division. People currently need to go to the Magistrates Court. There will also be an easier process for tenants to access their bonds when they leave.

They are all really good reforms. Other things have been called for, such as the establishment of a minimum standards for energy efficiency or climate resilience in tenancies. They are not part of what has been announced, but I understand the government is still considering those reforms. It is a burden for tenants to live in houses that are draughty and have no insulation in a climate with extremes of weather, and I understand the arguments in favour of those reforms that are still being considered by the government. Likewise, there has been a request that we end no-cause evictions. The current announced reforms do not include that provision. The arguments for ending no-cause evictions are pretty straightforward. It is very difficult for tenants to feel secure and to exercise some of the other rights in the reforms already announced if there is a feeling that at the end of the lease, the landlord can simply evict the tenant without any requirement to show a just cause. The government has said it understands the reasoning behind the request, but the government does not want to implement that reform in the current market circumstances because it does not do anything that would be seen by developers as a disincentive to them building new homes. I certainly understand that argument, but I hope in due course when the market normalises, if you like, and some of the heat goes out, the government looks at that issue again to see what can be done to end no-cause evictions.

I really commend the government and the Minister for Housing in particular for the determination to see more homes built here in Western Australia. There is this reform, the reforms of tenancy legislation and the record investment in public housing at \$2.6 billion, which I understand will build a targeted 4 000 homes. As the Minister for Housing says, this government is pulling every lever it can to increase housing supply. I commend the government for its actions and for this bill.

MS C.M. TONKIN (Churchlands) [6.36 pm]: I rise in support of the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023. More than 800 000 new homes are needed to accommodate the expected growth of the population in Perth and Peel regions to 3.5 million over the next 30 years. That is a phenomenal trajectory of growth. The Cook government is particularly committed to boosting the supply of affordable housing in response to this need and is implementing a number of initiatives accordingly. This includes the concession on land tax for build-to-rent projects introduced in this bill. This concession aims to reduce the barrier to investment and grow the build-to-rent industry across our state. The member for Bassendean highlighted a piece of land that would make an ideal apartment development and indicated that this kind of incentive found in this bill may be useful in attracting a developer. Large-scale build-to-rent developments by which apartments and other dwellings are developed to provide rental accommodation rather than being sold are a relatively new model of urban housing in Western Australia. The model provides a number of benefits, in particular providing more stability for renters who are better protected from changes in the property market and opening up for new innovative housing initiatives.

What will this bill do? The Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023 will amend the Land Tax Assessment Act 2002 to introduce a 50 per cent land tax concession for land used for build-to-rent development. The concession was announced by the government as part of its 2022–23 state budget, and will apply to eligible new build-to-rent developments from the 2023–24 land tax assessment year. The concession for eligible development will reduce the taxable value of the land by 50 per cent, substantially lowering the amount of land tax payable.

What is the eligibility criteria? A number of criteria needs to be met to ensure that the benefits of the build-to-rent model can be realised. The land containing the development must be owned by the same owner or group of owners and managed by one management entity. The development must have been constructed or substantially renovated for the purpose of providing at least 40 self-contained dwellings for lease under a residential tenancy agreement. Forty self-contained dwellings is necessarily higher density. The dwellings in the development must be able to be occupied between 12 May 2022 and 30 June 2032. That gives us a few years to get some of these build-to-rent projects off the ground before our population hits 3.5 million. The dwellings must be available for rent for a term of at least three years, although residents can choose a shorter lease, which will provide for greater flexibility.

Importantly, social housing is recognised in the Land Tax Assessment Amendment (Build-to-Rent) Bill 2023, which will allow the development to be restricted for this specific purpose. Tax reform incentives like this can deliver a boost to housing supply, improving choice and building more livable communities in our state. This is a really useful initiative, but build-to-rent developments are much more common in Europe and North America than they are here. In fact, renting is much more common than housing ownership in many parts of the world. In Canada, where I have family, different terminology is used to identify build-to-rent higher density developments from housing that is built to buy. Rentals are called apartments and those that are individually or jointly owned are called condominiums. In the area of Orleans, a part of Ottawa where some of my family lives, I have noticed a large number of new apartment developments in which housing units are available to rent. The growth of these sorts of developments in Ottawa has been occurring over the last few years.

The ABC recently reported on the housing situation in Vienna, Austria, a city where I lived for three years when I was working for the International Atomic Energy Agency. About 60 per cent of Vienna's nearly two million residents live in some form of social housing, which is extraordinary. We see social housing as being at the margins. In Vienna, social housing is part of the way that the majority of people live. In fact, most of the housing in the city is apartments that are rented; it is a city of renters. Social housing in Vienna gives people access to low rents, secure tenure and quality accommodation. People must meet eligibility criteria to initially start renting social housing but they can remain in their apartment for the long term even if their circumstances change. A person who is on a low income when they go into social housing is allowed to stay in their accommodation even if their circumstances change; people can stay for the long term and gain the benefits of stability and quality housing that that delivers.

The extent of social housing in Vienna is a legacy of a city government that came to power after the Second World War. This government built Gemeindebauten, or large-scale public housing estates. The most famous of these is Karl Marx-Hof, which was named after the author of the Communist Manifesto. Completed in 1930, it is a one-kilometre structure that can house thousands of people. It remains one of the longest residential structures in the world and is quite something to behold. The building is in the district of Döbling. It spans four Straßenbahn stops and is built on land that was reclaimed from the Danube River. The building occupies only 18.5 per cent of the site on which it stands and is surrounded by play areas and gardens and includes many community amenities. Apartment living in Vienna is certainly the norm, and it is one of the factors that makes Vienna one of the world's most livable cities.

When I lived there, I rented a fourth-floor apartment in an area close to the city on Lerchenfelder Straße. Each morning, I walked along my long street through the old city and passed the Hofburg to Schwedenplatz to catch the U-Bahn across the Danube River to the Vienna International Centre, where I worked. There was no disadvantage to apartment living in Vienna and certainly no stigma for those living in social housing; it was normal. By contrast, here in Perth we have the vociferous public discourse that denigrates the building of higher density housing, including high-rise apartments, as infill developments. High-rise apartments have a smaller footprint than lower density unit complexes and therefore provide better opportunities for associated amenities, including deep planting landscaping. My colleague the member for Thornlie eloquently explained the pitfalls of contributing to Perth's urban sprawl by building cookie-cutter developments of single houses on vacant land in outer suburbs. Some, like the member for Cottesloe, suggested that high-rise apartments should be built anywhere other than in the western suburbs and certainly not on the coast around Cottesloe. I find those perspectives perplexing because developers do not buy apartments for which there is no demand. High-rise apartments are snapped up because that style of housing meets people's needs. They may want to downsize to stay in their community. A complaint I often hear from older people in my community is that there are limited opportunities for them to downsize and remain in the neighbourhood they know and love. Others may be attracted to an apartment as a more affordable alternative to a house. An affordable apartment is a great option for younger people to either rent or buy. There are investors who see higher density housing as a way of generating a return on investment. Incentives for investing in higher density housing is very necessary to address our current housing shortage but having a mix of housing options as infill, especially close to public transport, makes for much more livable cities, and it would certainly present more options for people who want to live in my electorate.

The land tax concession on build-to-rent projects is just one of a number of options that our government is implementing to improve the affordable housing supply. We are investing a record \$2.6 billion in social housing and addressing homelessness. Almost 1 300 dwellings have been delivered, with a further 1 000 under contract. We are limiting unsustainable urban sprawl by encouraging greater density and infill across existing suburbs. The housing density pipeline to unlock lazy land, in conjunction with the \$80 million infrastructure development fund, aims to drive infill and apartment developments in key urban precincts. We must increase housing density to meet the challenges of housing supply in the face of a growing population. Increasing housing density as infill in existing areas is good for the environment and good for us. Having lived in apartments in very densely populated cities around the world, I know and understand the benefits of that and the benefits to the environment. We cannot continue to increase urban sprawl. The concession on land tax for build-to-rent projects will provide yet another lever to achieve this end. I therefore commend this bill to the house.

House adjourned at 6.51 pm

Questions on notice

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

CORONAVIRUS — BORDER RESTRICTIONS — MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS**831. Dr D.J. Honey to the Minister for Health:**

I refer to the approval for medical practitioners to enter Western Australia during Covid restrictions, and I ask:

- (a) By month for the period February 2020 to December 2022, how many overseas medical practitioners and medical specialists were authorised by the Chief Medical Officer to enter Western Australia for work in hospitals and other medical roles;
- (b) By month for the period February 2020 to December 2022, how many interstate medical practitioners and medical specialists were authorised by the Chief Medical Officer to enter Western Australia for work in hospitals and other medical roles;
- (c) By month for the period February 2020 to December 2022, how many medical practitioners and medical specialists left Western Australian public hospitals; and
- (d) By month for the period February 2020 to December 2022, how many medical practitioners and medical specialists were employed in Western Australian public hospitals?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

- (a)–(b) The Chief Medical Officer did not play a role in the authorisation process. The Chief Health Officer provided advice to the State Emergency Coordinator, on request, on matters related to entry to Western Australia. International entry to Australia required Commonwealth Government approval. Interstate border exemptions were handled by the State Emergency Coordinator.

(c)–(d)

Month	Total Number of Medical Practitioners and Specialists Leaving WA Public Hospitals	Total Number of Medical Practitioners and Specialists Employed in WA Public Hospital System
Feb-2020	109	5,792
Mar-2020	69	5,571
Apr-2020	23	5,552
May-2020	31	5,556
Jun-2020	29	5,546
Jul-2020	44	5,564
Aug-2020	47	5,636
Sep-2020	20	5,600
Oct-2020	20	5,674
Nov-2020	28	5,710
Dec-2020	32	5,714
Jan-2021	256	6,148
Feb-2021	25	5,994
Mar-2021	30	6,007
Apr-2021	31	5,993
May-2021	44	5,999
Jun-2021	28	5,966
Jul-2021	52	5,983
Aug-2021	68	6,113
Sep-2021	16	6,062
Oct-2021	37	6,087
Nov-2021	33	6,082
Dec-2021	58	6,068

Jan-2022	315	6,740
Feb-2022	47	6,367
Mar-2022	35	6,368
Apr-2022	84	6,376
May-2022	54	6,328
Jun-2022	43	6,308
Jul-2022	49	6,337
Aug-2022	105	6,673
Sep-2022	28	6,574
Oct-2022	37	6,606
Nov-2022	32	6,594
Dec-2022	65	6,572

HEALTH — MEEKATHARRA HOSPITAL

832. Ms M. Beard to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the commitment to upgrade the Meekatharra Hospital, and I ask:

- (a) What is the current number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) staff employed at Meekatharra Hospital;
- (b) As at 1 July, how many of these positions are vacant;
- (c) Is there currently a full-time staff member at the Hospital responsible for maintenance;
- (d) If not, who provides this service and on what basis; and
- (e) What is the 2023–24 budget allocation by WA Country Health Service (WACHS) for maintenance at Meekatharra Hospital?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

- (a) As of 8 August 2023, 8.8 FTE.
- (b) 18.8 FTE.
- (c) No. Recruitment for this role remains ongoing.
- (d) The Murchison area is currently serviced by multiple maintenance staff from Geraldton with regular travel to the site. Coverage includes maintenance officers and local contractors as required.
- (e) The 2023–24 budget is yet to be finalised. The indicative maintenance budget for 2023–24 for Meekatharra Hospital is approximately \$160,000, excluding staff accommodation maintenance and repairs.

ABORIGINAL EXPENDITURE REVIEW

834. Mr R.S. Love to the Treasurer:

I refer to the Aboriginal Expenditure Review, and I ask:

- (a) Has a review been completed;
- (b) If yes to (a), please provide all reviews to date; and
- (c) If no to (a), when will the review be completed?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

- (a)–(c) The *2022–23 Aboriginal Expenditure Review* was published on 22 August 2023.

I table a copy of the Review and Appendix A. [See tabled paper no [2218](#).]

INSURANCE COMMISSION — WORKERS COMPENSATION

835. Mr R.S. Love to the Treasurer:

I refer to evidence given by the Insurance Commission of Western Australia in budget estimates on 23 May 2023 and the commitment to provide evidence via Questions on Notice, and I ask:

- (a) Please provide the figures collected by WorkCover regarding the comparison between premium workers compensation rates for government and other employees; and
- (b) Please provide the range of factors driving increased workers compensation rates?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

- (a) The table below provides a comparison of RiskCover and WorkCover workers' compensation premium rates over the last six years:

Premium Rates (%)	2018–19	2019–20	2020–21	2021–22	2022–23	2023–24
RiskCover	1.53	1.67	1.91	1.75	1.64	1.78
WorkCover WA	1.59	1.65	1.64	1.70	1.82	1.73

Independent actuaries assess the premiums for RiskCover and WorkCover WA. Actuaries for RiskCover set the workers' compensation premium rates for government employees while actuaries for WorkCover set the workers' compensation premium rates for other workers.

- (b) A range of factors have driven the increases in RiskCover's workers' compensation premium rates between 2018–19 and 2023–24:

The public sector workforce grew by 15%.

Total waggeroll of agencies insured by RiskCover increased by 26%.

Claim volumes and claim severity have increased.

GOLD CORPORATION — MODEL STATE COMMODITY CODE

837. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to evidence provided by the Minister on Gold Corp and the model state commodity code during Budget Estimates on 25 May 2023, and I ask:

- (a) How many accounts have been impacted by a potential breach of the US model state commodity code; and
 (b) What is the cost to Gold Corp of the engagement of US legal counsel for each month of the years June 2020 to July 2023?

Mr W.J. Johnston replied:

- (a) As of 8 August 2023, there are 1,305 customer accounts in operation that have been impacted by potential non-compliance with the Model State Commodity Code, as adopted into legislation by relevant States in the US since its issuance in 1985.
 (b) Costs for US-based legal counsel have been incurred in 2022 and 2023 and calculated on a quarterly basis. See attached table.

Sum of Amount			Grand Total
2022	(43,837)	(380,115)	(423,952)
Apr	(5,625)		(5,625)
Jun	(38,212)		(38,212)
Sep		(84,941)	(84,941)
Dec		(295,174)	(295,174)
2023		(332,900)	(332,900)
Jan		(8,948)	(8,948)
Feb		(36,282)	(36,282)
Apr		(26,000)	(26,000)
Jul		(261,671)	(261,671)
Grand Total	(43,837)	(713,015)	(756,852)

MINES AND PETROLEUM — TENEMENT RENTALS

838. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:

I refer to the increase in mining tenement rentals from 2023–24 onwards, and I ask:

- (a) What is the expected revenue to the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety from this increase in 2023–24, and over the forward estimates?

Mr W.J. Johnston replied:

- (a) \$11,100,000 of additional revenue is expected in 2023–24 and for each year of the forward estimates.

ST JOHN OF GOD MIDLAND PUBLIC HOSPITAL — ANNUAL REPORT

839. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Health:

I refer to the 2020–21 and 2021–22 Midland St John of God Public and Private Hospital Annual reports, and I ask:

- (a) How does the Minister account for the dramatic rise in the number of accredited Doctors from 240 in 2020–21 to 574 in 2021–22;
- (b) Comparison of the two reports reveals an increase of 248 in the number of caregivers at the Hospital between 2020–2021 and 2021–2022, can the Minister quantify how many of those additional caregivers were employed to work within the St John of God Public Hospital;
- (c) How does the Minister account for the 6 per cent drop in the number of public patient admission at the hospital between 2020–21 and 2021–22 despite the hospital’s location within one of the fastest growing growth corridors in the Perth Metropolitan area;
- (d) How does the Minister account for the 11.5 per cent drop in the number of public outpatients being seen at the hospital between 2020–21 and 2021–22 despite the hospital’s location within one of the fastest growing growth corridors in the Perth Metropolitan area;
- (e) How does the Minister account for the 3 per cent drop in the number of emergency presentations being seen at the hospital between 2020–21 and 2021–22 despite the hospital’s location within one of the fastest growing growth corridors in the Perth Metropolitan area; and
- (f) How does the Minister account for the 3.5 per cent drop in the number of mental health admissions to the hospital between 2020–21 and 2021–22 despite the hospital’s location within one of the fastest growing growth corridors in the Perth Metropolitan area?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

- (a) The St John of God Midland Public Hospital (SJGMPH) Annual Report for the financial year 2020–21 refers to the number of accredited doctors at the hospital. The term ‘accredited doctors’ refers to Medical Consultants, Visiting Medical Officers and Surgical Assistants who are accredited for private assisting. In comparison, the 2021–22 Annual Report lists all doctors at the hospital. SJGMPH reported that the number of accredited doctors at the hospital for the 2021–22 period was 230.
- (b) 213 caregivers.
- (c) Physical presentations and admissions at hospitals across the country were impacted by COVID-19. This is reflective of a national trend, particularly during WA’s peak community transmission periods, in which a range of restrictions upon both physical movement and service delivery were in place resulting in a decrease to patient admissions for the identified period.
- (d)–(e) The 2021–22 period was during WA’s peak community transmission for COVID-19. Due to widespread hospital avoidance associated with the pandemic, this resulted in a reduction in presentations.
- (f) There was a general downturn in admissions and presentations during 2021–22 due to COVID-19 transmission in the community, restrictions that were in place and a reluctance to attend the hospital. Emergency department admissions are also closely linked to mental health admissions: a decrease in one would generally impact the other.

TRANSPORT — SHIPPING AND SUPPLY CHAIN TASKFORCE

840. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister assisting the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Shipping and Supply Chain Taskforce and the March 2023 reporting timeline, and I ask:

- (a) Has the taskforce provided it’s report to government:
 - (i) If yes to (a), what are the main findings and recommendations;
 - (ii) when will the report be made publicly available; and
 - (iii) If no to (a), why not?

Mr D.R. Michael replied:

- (a) The Report is nearing completion.
 - (i)–(iii) The report will be released in due course.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES — ON-COUNTRY RESIDENTIAL FACILITY

841. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Regional Development:

I refer to Budget Paper 3, page 213, line-item Kimberley On-Country Residential Youth Facilities, and I ask:

- (a) Please detail the 2022–23 Estimated Actual spend of \$3 million; and
- (b) Please detail the \$5 million allocated funding for the 2023–24 budget year and expected program of works, including the remaining \$7.5 million in the budget outyears?

Mr D.T. Punch replied:

- (a) The actual spend for 2022–23 for that budget line was \$564,391. That includes \$328,611 related to planning and development activities for the proposed Kimberley On-Country Residential Youth Facility “Marlamanu”, and \$235,780 related to business plan developments for other proposed residential facilities in the Kimberley. The spend is less than budgeted primarily because the Marlamanu project remains subject to Cabinet approval before proceeding to contracting and implementation.
- (b) The detail of expenditure for 2023–24 and subsequent years will depend on a final Cabinet approval for the proposed facility and on contractual negotiations with the project proponent.

CHILD PROTECTION — FOSTER CARERS

843. 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 2022, 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:

Please refer to the answer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 844 of 2023.

CHILD PROTECTION — FOSTER CARERS

844. 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 2021, 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:

- (a)–(c) It is not possible to provide data retrospectively. Please also note, there is no provision in the *Working with Children (Screening) Act 2004* for an interim Working with Children Card.
- (d)–(e) Not applicable.

ST JOHN OF GOD MIDLAND PUBLIC HOSPITAL — HYDROTHERAPY

845. Ms L. Mettam to the Minister for Health:

I refer to hydrotherapy services at St John of God Midland Public Hospital, and I ask:

- (a) In each of the following years, how many treatment sessions in the hospital’s hydro therapy pool were available to public patients:
 - (i) 2020;
 - (ii) 2021;
 - (iii) 2022; and
 - (iv) To date in 2023;
- (b) In each of the following years, how many treatment sessions in the hospital’s hydro therapy pool were administered to public patients:
 - (i) 2020;
 - (ii) 2021;
 - (iii) 2022; and
 - (iv) 2023 to date.; and
- (c) What is the current wait time for public patients to access hydro therapy services at St John of God Midland Public Hospital?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

- (a) (i)–(iii) 8–10 sessions, 48–60 appointments per week
 - (iv) Currently offering 9 public sessions per week, 6 patients per session
- (b) Number of patients that attended hydrotherapy sessions (note this excludes patient cancellations and patients who did not attend their scheduled session)
 - (i) 2020 – 622
 - (ii) 2021 – 761
 - (iii) 2022 – 114
 - (iv) 2023 to date – 653

Also impacting numbers is that throughout 2020, 2021 and 2022, the hydrotherapy pool was closed at different times and durations as part of the Covid-19 emergency response. Essential maintenance at the commencement of 2022 also required temporary pool closure.

- (c) There is currently no waiting time to access the public hydrotherapy service at St John of God Midland Public Hospital if a patient is referred directly to the hydrotherapy service.

CORONAVIRUS — BORDER RESTRICTIONS — MEDICAL PRACTITIONERS

847. Dr D.J. Honey to the Minister for Health:

I refer to approval for medical practitioners to enter Western Australia during Covid restrictions by month for the period February 2020 to December 2022, and I ask:

- (a) How many overseas medical practitioners and medical specialists were authorised by the Chief Medical Officer to enter Western Australia for work in hospitals and other medical roles;
- (b) How many interstate medical practitioners and medical specialists were authorised by the Chief Medical Officer to enter Western Australia for work in hospitals and other medical roles;
- (c) How many medical practitioners and medical specialists left Western Australian public hospitals; and
- (d) How many medical practitioners and medical specialists were employed in Western Australian public hospitals?

Ms A. Sanderson replied:

Please refer to Legislative Assembly Question on Notice 831.

MAIN ROADS — LAND LEASES — ROAD SERVICE CENTRE

848. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Main Roads Amendment Bill 2023, and ask, Section 18D(1)(a) in which the Commissioner is provided the power to lease land to other persons to build and operate a road service centre:

- (a) Does the Minister for Transport oversee this process? What mechanisms are in place to ensure checks and balances; and
- (b) Section 18F stipulates that business arrangements will require Ministerial, and the Treasurer's approval:
 - (i) What is the formal process for these commercial arrangements; and
 - (ii) Does the Government have the proper resources, such as Full-Time Equivalents (FTE's), to accommodate these commercial business arrangements in a thorough and timely manner?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

The leasing of land is dealt with by the proposed Section 29(2)(a), to be read in conjunction with Section 22B(3) when in relation to a road service centre.

- (a) The recently-created Transport Portfolio Land and Property Services branch has a dedicated commercial team that will be responsible for, and oversee, the leasing of land.

The leasing of land for the purpose of a road service centre will follow processes that are being developed for this purpose.

- (b) (i) Policies, procedures or guidelines governing the entering into of business arrangements will be developed following the commencement of the amended Main Roads Act.
- (ii) Yes.

TRANSPERTH — TWO-WAY RADIO SYSTEM

849. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the current two-way radio system operating across the Transperth bus network, and I ask:

- (a) In what year was this system last upgraded; and
- (b) Are there any plans to upgrade this system within the 2023–24 budget year?

Ms R. Saffioti replied:

- (a) 2018.
- (b) No.

PERTH CASINO ROYAL COMMISSION

850. Mr R.S. Love to the Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the 2021 Perth Casino Royal Commission and I ask:

- (a) Since the tabling of the interim report in August 2021, how many times has the Minister for Racing and Gaming met with Crown Casino:
 - (i) Please provide the agenda of each meeting;
 - (ii) Please provide the attendees to each meeting; and
 - (iii) Please provide the minutes of each meeting; and
- (b) Will the Minister please provide an update on the implementation of the recommendations listed in the Perth Casino Royal Commission's Final Report?

Mr R.R. Whitby replied:

- (a) Two
 - (i) Not applicable
 - (ii) At the first meeting – John Van Der Weilen, Chairperson, Crown Perth, David Tsai, CEO, Crown Perth, Erin Gauntlett, A/Director General, DLGSC, Jennifer Shelton, Executive Director, Racing, Gaming and Liquor, DLGSC and from my office Travis Robinson; Tony Monaghan; Bodhi Hardinge
 At the second meeting – John Van Der Weilen, Chairperson, Crown Perth, David Tsai, CEO, Crown Perth, Ciarán Carruthers, CEO, Crown Resorts. And from my office Travis Robinson and Tony Monaghan.
 - (iii) Not applicable
- (b) The Casino Legislation Amendment (Burswood Casino) Bill 2022 received Royal Assent on 28 September 2022. This was the first legislative step towards addressing the issues raised in the Royal Commission's Final Report. The changes introduced include an increased maximum penalty of \$100 million for breaches of the *Casino Control Act 1984*, enhanced powers for the Gaming and Wagering Commission (GWC) to direct the Perth Casino, enhanced powers for the Minister to direct the GWC, and also provided for the appointment of an independent Chair of the GWC.

The Royal Commission Final Report made 59 recommendations.

The State Government supports 49 of the Royal Commission's recommendations, with eight supported in principle and one supported in part. One recommendation does not require a government position, as it is only relevant if the prohibition on poker machines is lifted.

Let me be clear, under the State Government, poker machines are not allowed and will not be allowed in Western Australia. Electronic gaming machines will not be allowed outside of the Perth Casino. There will be no weakening of this necessary ban.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT — DENMARK HERITAGE RAILWAY PRECINCT LEASE

851. Mr P.J. Rundle to the Minister for Lands:

I refer to the decision by the Shire of Denmark to cancel a Heritage precinct reserve lease to the Denmark Lions Club and to extend the reserve lease to the Kwoorabup Nature School over the same land, and I ask:

- (a) Can you confirm you are required to make a decision to support or otherwise the decision made by the Shire of Denmark;
- (b) Are you aware the site in question could be contaminated with dangerous products given it was formerly the site of a train terminal and ash pit;
- (c) Given you are required to make a decision on this site, will you be seeking advice from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation in respect to possible site contamination issues;
- (d) Will you also be seeking advice from the Department of Education in respect to the suitability of the site for a school, given the physical limits of the site, the likelihood of contamination risk to children and the apparent fire risk of the site;
- (e) Will you also be seeking advice from the Department of Planning with regards to the location of a vulnerable use (school) within a bushfire zone with a high fuel loading surrounding the site;

- (f) Who is responsible for managing the risk associated with potential contamination of what is a crown lease vested with the Shire of Denmark; and
- (g) What responsibility does the State Government have in ensuring sites identified as having the potential for contamination, are managed appropriately.?

Mr J.N. Carey replied:

- (a)–(f) The Shire of Denmark (Shire), as the management body, has full care, control and management of Reserve 30277 (Reserve), on which the Kwoorabup Nature School is located. It is the responsibility of the Shire as the management body of the Reserve to address contamination and planning issues on its managed reserves.

The Shire decides which entities it will lease the Reserve to. The Minister for Lands' role in providing approval under section 18 of the *Land Administration Act 1997* is to ensure such leases are consistent with the reserve purpose and management order conditions.

- (g) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation regulates contaminated sites under the *Contaminated Sites Act 2003 (Act)* and the *Contaminated Sites Regulations 2006*. The Shire as the management body for the reserve is responsible for managing the site and investigating any possible contamination and potential causes under the Act.

ENERGY — WIND FARMS

852. Mr P.J. Rundle to the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the increasing interest in wind farms being discussed in my electorate of Roe and I ask:

- (a) Is the WA Government setting aside funding for the manufacturing and installation of wind turbines in WA;
- (b) Is the WA Government subsidising any wind turbines or intending to subsidise future wind turbines in WA;
- (c) If so, how much is the WA Government subsidising each turbine and where are these turbines located;
- (d) What is the future plan for any subsidisation of wind farms for WA;
- (e) Can you please provide a situational plan for where future wind farms are planned for WA, particularly within the Southwest Interconnected System;
- (f) Considering where the wind farms are planned to be located, can you also provide a network plan for transmission lines which do not already exist, if there are plans to build new transmission lines; and
- (g) Can you provide the current regulations in relation to placement of wind turbines pursuant to existing dwellings and farm boundaries.?

Mr W.J. Johnston replied:

- (a) Please refer this question to the Minister for State Development.
- (b) No.
- (c) N/A.
- (d) There is no future plan for subsidisation of wind farms in WA.
- (e) There is no situational plan for future wind farms. Wind farms are developed on commercial terms, and information on projects under development is publicly available.
- (f) Future plans for network expansion are being determined as part of the scoping and planning work that came out of the SWIS Demand Assessment, launched in May this year.
- (g) Please refer this question to the Minister for Planning.

PREMIER AND CABINET — AIRCRAFT HAWKER JET — MAINTENANCE

853. Mr R.S. Love to the Premier:

I refer to Budget Paper 2, page 62, line-item Aircraft Hawker Jet 16-Year Mandatory Maintenance, and I ask:

- (a) Please detail the 2022–23 Estimated Actual spend of \$1.5 million?

Mr R.H. Cook replied:

- (a) Actual expenditure for 2022–23 for the Aircraft Hawker Jet 16-Year Mandatory Maintenance was \$819,932.25.

The Government aircraft have been in service since they were leased in 2006. In 2018, a decision was made to purchase the aircraft, as lease payments were costing more than the aircraft were worth. The decision to purchase the aircraft has an estimated saving to Government of \$3.2 million, compared to a continued lease.

