



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-FIRST PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2021

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Tuesday, 1 June 2021

Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (**Hon Alanna Clohesy**) took the chair at 2.00 pm, read prayers and acknowledged country.

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

Statement by Minister for Aboriginal Affairs

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Aboriginal Affairs) [2.03 pm]: I would like to update the house on an important week for all Western Australians, National Reconciliation Week 2021. National Reconciliation Week, which began last Thursday, is bounded by two significant dates: the successful 1967 referendum and the High Court Mabo decision. It also follows National Sorry Day on 26 May, a day of healing and reflection for all Australians.

Last Friday, I had the pleasure of attending the National Reconciliation Week breakfast, which was held at Optus Stadium with more than 1 300 reconciliation champions in attendance. This year's Reconciliation Week theme, "More than a word: Reconciliation takes action" is a call to action. It urges a more courageous reconciliation movement and the creation of more impactful actions. Last night, I launched the Reconciliation Week street banner project with the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries. This project raises awareness of Reconciliation Week and involves organisations sponsoring a banner for display during Reconciliation Week to demonstrate their commitment to Aboriginal people and culture, and the journey to reconciliation. Each year, the department selects Aboriginal artwork from the *Revealed Exhibition: New and Emerging WA Aboriginal Artists* to feature on the banner.

This year's work, *Gooniyandi Riwiya*, is by Teejay Worrigal, a Derby-born artist who was raised on Gooniyandi country and taught to paint by elders in his family. Later in the week, on Thursday at noon, Reconciliation WA will conclude National Reconciliation Week with its annual Walk for Reconciliation. The walk is a public demonstration of leadership, support and solidarity with the reconciliation movement. The Walk for Reconciliation coincides with Mabo Day, starting at the Western Australian Museum Boola Bardip, progressing through the cultural centre, over the Horseshoe Bridge and finishing at Yagan Square.

The reconciliation journey is something we all share. It is everyone's responsibility, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous. The purpose of this year's Reconciliation Week theme is to remind all Australians that to make positive and lasting change, we all have a role to play and now is the time to act. I challenge us all to make reconciliation more than just a word. If it is truly to be a movement, we have to take action and be bold. True action is in taking a genuine partnership approach to help deliver the next chapter in the history of reconciliation in Western Australia. As a government, we acknowledge our ongoing responsibility and commit to taking a leadership role in advancing reconciliation between our First Nations peoples and the wider Western Australian community.

PAPERS TABLED

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

MISUSE OF DRUGS AMENDMENT BILL 2021

Notice of Motion to Introduce

Notice of motion given by **Hon Dr Brian Walker**.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PROCEDURE AND PRIVILEGES

Standing Orders Review — Notice of Motion

Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House) gave notice that at the next sitting of the house she would move —

- (1) That the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges be required to undertake a review of the standing orders with a view to —
 - (a) modernising the procedures of the house; and
 - (b) reviewing and adopting best practice from other upper house chambers in Australian Parliaments, including the Australian Senate.
- (2) The committee make recommendations for new and amended standing orders.
- (3) The committee is to report to the house no later than 10 August 2021.
- (4) The committee is to provide an interim report on recommendations for speaking time limits by 22 June 2021.

AGRICULTURE — INDUSTRIES AND WORKERS*Notice of Motion*

Hon Shelley Payne gave notice that at the next sitting of the house she would move —

That this house acknowledges the contribution to the state of Western Australia by our agricultural industries and their workers, acknowledges the contributions of those who have built these industries and commends the McGowan government for its investment in their future.

FINES ENFORCEMENT — REFORM*Notice of Motion*

Hon Pierre Yang gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house notes the historic reform of Western Australia's fines enforcement regime during the last term of government and commends the McGowan government on the meaningful difference this reform has provided to those in our community who experience genuine hardship as a result of their inability to pay a fine. In particular, this house notes in relation to the reform —

- (a) the impact of the commencement of the work and development permit scheme;
- (b) the reduction in the number of individuals imprisoned as a result of fine defaulting;
- (c) the introduction of garnishee orders and their impact in recovering payment for outstanding fines; and
- (d) the prohibition of issuing licence suspension orders for individuals whose last known address is in a remote area, addressing the disproportionate impact of suspended licences on individuals living in remote areas without public transport infrastructure.

ROYALTY INCOME*Notice of Motion*

Hon Dr Steve Thomas gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house notes that the latest *Quarterly financial results report* shows that the government is on track to receive a record \$10.7 billion in royalty income this financial year and asks the state government how this windfall is being used to address —

- (a) the housing crisis in this state;
- (b) the homelessness crisis in this state;
- (c) the health crisis in this state, and
- (d) the mental health crisis in this state.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY*Motion*

Resumed from 27 May on the following motion moved by Hon Pierre Yang —

That the following address be presented to His Excellency the Honourable Kim Beazley, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor in and over the state of Western Australia and its dependencies in the Commonwealth of Australia —

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our most gracious sovereign and thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

The PRESIDENT: This is the honourable member's inaugural speech. I give the call to Hon Sandra Carr.

HON SANDRA CARR (Agricultural) [2.12 pm]: Thank you, President. I congratulate you on your election to the role of President and for the leadership that you promptly demonstrated in making the honorific of President gender neutral. I am heartened by such an immediate modernising action and look forward to working in this place under your leadership.

I also congratulate Hon Martin Aldridge on his election to the role of Deputy President and, additionally, look forward to learning from his experience and leadership.

I begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land upon which we stand, the proud Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. I thank them for allowing me to stand upon their land. I acknowledge the traditional leaders past, present and emerging, for they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and hopes of the traditional owners of this land.

I further acknowledge the election of the first Indigenous person to serve in this place, Hon Rosie Sahanna, and look forward to the knowledge, experience and insights that she will bring to inform and improve the work we do in here.

President, I rise here today and proudly bear the weight of responsibility that comes with representing the electorate of the Agricultural Region. It is without embarrassment or pretensions of humility that I confess I am exceptionally average, an identity in which I find both comfort and belonging: an average Western Australian-born, English-speaking woman elected from the extraordinarily unlikely position of third on the ticket—the Labor ticket, no less—for the Agricultural Region. I found myself in the perfect storm of circumstances of a landslide Labor victory due to the excellent leadership of Premier Mark McGowan and the WA Labor team. I am here on the back of the work of some outstanding people, many well known and more still who have worked tirelessly behind the scenes. I do not hesitate to acknowledge that this exceptionally average person is here teetering upon the shoulders of those giants. Given this and the great depth of knowledge, skill and experience around me both in this place and the other place, the temptation to surrender to imposter syndrome is significant. Yet I work to remind myself that governments should be at their core representative and the fact that I bring my mediocrity with me has fundamental value.

President, following your lead in having modernised the language of this place, I also would like to follow the leadership of some of my former students when they recently spoke publicly on climate change. These young people taught me, as young people so often do, that I should begin by advising that I identify by the pronouns she/her—in my case, pronouns that readily match with my presentation and, thus, afford me the luxury of not challenging the status quo. As such, I again find myself as one of the exceptionally average and, consequently, find myself with the responsibility and privilege that comes with falling within the majority. The responsibility falls upon us all to normalise being able to self-determine the pronouns by which one identifies and to demonstrate unqualified acceptance and the inclusion of those who do not sit within the comfortable majority.

Being part of a majority carries with it profound responsibility. The work that we do in this term of government, with the majority that we hold in both houses, presents some incredible opportunities and, along with it, significant responsibility. We are charged with setting the tone and opportunities for future generations, a mandate set for us by the voters of Western Australia. They have unequivocally placed their faith in us and from that faith we have opportunity to birth a future filled with renewed optimism for what is possible for Western Australia.

The evolution of life within the walls of this place is evident upon the walls of this building, upon which hangs an oil painting of the original Legislative Council—a group of white privileged men resplendent in finery that is reflective of our inherited Westminster system and the House of Lords, upon which our Legislative Council is based.

Today, I am surrounded by increasing diversity: women, men, the first Sudanese person to be elected to Parliament in Hon Ayor Makur Chuot, the first Indigenous Australian to be elected to the Legislative Council in Hon Rosie Sahanna, and the first Serbian-born person to be elected in Hon Klara Andric. We are a comprehensive collection of cultural backgrounds, values, beliefs, professions and life experiences, all accepted and equally valued. But for the work, determination and sacrifices of those who came before us—those who advocated and fought for rights, recognition, inclusion and change—many of us would not be in this place today. I take a moment to express my gratitude to those in this state, across the country and throughout the world who advocate for change and who fight for the rights of the disadvantaged, exploited, marginalised and ignored. I am inspired by their efforts and vow to continue to work for equity, fairness and rights for all.

It is appropriate at this point that I should take a moment to pay tribute to one such change maker, Edith Cowan. This year marks 100 years since the election of Edith Cowan as the very first woman to be elected to Parliament in Australia. Many of us here today owe a great debt of gratitude to her for having doggedly prised open the firmly shut door that seemed determined to remain closed to women. But for the strength, determination, passion and, indeed, gumption of Edith Cowan, many of us would not be here in this place.

This year we are privileged to witness a good many firsts for women in both this place and the other place. In the electorate that I represent, for the first time voters elected two Labor women in the Agricultural Region—my colleague Hon Shelley Payne and me. Edith Cowan was born in the Agricultural Region at Glengarry, near my home town of Geraldton. Her legacy in working for the rights and social welfare of women and children is admirable. She understood the fundamental importance of education as key to addressing social problems. She worked to improve conditions for families, the poor, the under-educated and the elderly. She promoted sex education in schools, migrant welfare, the development of infant health centres; fought against domestic violence and drunkenness; and spoke openly about venereal disease, prostitution, contraception, illegitimacy and sex crimes. She advocated for disadvantaged groups, public education and the rights of children born to single mothers, and helped found the Children's Protection Society, the creation of which paved way for the Children's Court.

Cowan also played a key role in the development of the King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. Thus, not only was she instrumental in creating the hospital in which my daughter Claudia was born, but she also pushed through the legislation that allowed women to be involved in the legal profession, the Women's Legal Status Act 1923, which paved the way for Claudia to be the lawyer that she is today.

I do not pretend to know what would be in the mind of Edith Cowan if she were to look upon the forty-first Parliament of Western Australia; yet I cannot help but imagine a momentary satisfied smile upon her lips before she turned her mind and attention to the cabinet and other matters related to social welfare, the smile replaced by a determined set to her brow and a renewed goal in mind.

It is the great many incredible women leaders who have come before us in politics, such as Edith Cowan, Joan Kirner, Carmen Lawrence, Julia Gillard—the sartorial choices I made today paying tribute to Julia Gillard—Penny Wong, Tania Plibersek, Sue Lyons and, internationally, women such as Jacinda Ardern and Kamala Harris, whose determined feet have stood fast and broken the hardened ground upon which women such as myself now dare to tread.

Here I pay tribute to the effectiveness of WA Labor’s Towards 50 initiative. To those who would discredit such initiatives, I direct you to the great body of research on unconscious bias. Gillard’s progressive work in the space of education and climate change were inspired, and her ongoing work in women’s leadership see her positive impact continue today. I will forever find strength in the words of her iconic misogyny speech as a show of the true strength of women as I carry out my service in this place, and I heed her advice to call out sexism early. I will not tolerate it for myself or others in any space—I will not.

President, in Kalgoorlie in 1971, I was born to young parents Anne and Warren Kennedy, both of whom had left school by the age of 15 to enter the workforce. I was unremarkably named Sandra after a blond woman who lived down the road, whom my mum admired. I was welcomed by an older sister by 18 months, Karen, who now enjoys the appropriation of her name to summarise a set of values and behaviours our current younger generation loves to ridicule. However, I must note here that our Karen is a dynamic, hardworking, kind and generous woman who has worked long and hard to build an incredibly successful small business. When I hear the name Karen, for me it conjures all good things and a profound sense of love and admiration.

As a small child I lived to tell the tales of accidentally drinking from a glass of kerosene having mistaken it for water and in another fever of stupidity inhaling a small plastic diamond, presuming it safe to drink as a faux sugar cube. Suffice to say, I am something of an accident of survival. In my early years, we made our way from Kalgoorlie to Geraldton where my dad went to play football for the Brigades Football Club. In their spare time, he and my mum inexplicably produced my baby brother, Todd, whom my sister and I dressed and fawned over like he was our own personal living doll, which I later balanced with cruel teasing or worse as we grew older.

My brother is an intelligent and kind-hearted soul who finds great reward in helping others. He is humble and at his most animated when he has emerged from a great surf or having helped teach our young West Aussies to surf. The joy with which he tells the story of helping a young autistic man to surf stays with me as representative of his kind, caring and compassionate heart. My hometown of Geraldton is the traditional land of the southern Yamatji people. Being a port town, my family home sat beneath the looming shadows and strange noises of the soaring wheat silos, and we considered the wharf upon which the silos sat an extension of our backyard, a place in which we played, swam in and fished in and stole onto foreign ships to meet the crews from exotic worlds as we tried to communicate in unknown languages, an innocence now stolen from our young people and community by the experience of the 9/11 terror attack causing the wharf to be closed off to the public.

I lived walking distance from the town’s centre, a hop and skip across hot sand to gemstone blue ocean and a slow, reluctant dawdle to the local public schools. Like so many Western Australians, I enjoyed the benefit of a public education, attending the oldest continually operating primary school in Western Australia, Geraldton Primary School, which was established in 1878. I have fond memories of playing elastics, dressing like they did in the olden days during the school centenary year in 1978 being labelled “Sandy” from *Grease* by my year 2 teacher and years of playing netball and basketball with my school mates.

I hold some not-so-fond memories too, most notably the terror of the angry roar of Mr Bob “the tyrant” Bryant, who was often booming *Great Balls of Fire* or *Hells Bells*. While I can accept he may have been a Jerry Lee Lewis fan, I find it too much of a stretch to imagine the woollen sweater, vest-wearing dictator was an AC/DC fan. These fits of rage inevitably resulted in someone being in consultation with “Dr Jarrah”, a ruler he so named as it was his corporal cure for our apparent wrongdoing. I note now the ruler was in fact made of pine, but can confirm that its sting was no less so, despite his poor skills in timber identification. I finally escaped the lash of Dr Jarrah to attend Geraldton Senior High School, a school attended by former Labor Premier Geoff Gallop. During my high school years and, indeed, many of the years that followed, I could never have imagined I would be following in his much-admired footsteps to the Western Australian Parliament.

High school proved something of a revelation for me as I had always believed myself to be an average student, drifting through my school years somewhat unremarkably happy to seamlessly blend in as a generally shy and uncertain child. Regardless, Geraldton Senior High School was a place in which I was blessed with excellent teachers, a credit to the public education system, who identified in me that which I could not identify in myself. They harangued and encouraged me; they berated me for my lackadaisical approach and for not fulfilling my potential. They alerted me to my intelligence. However, the siren song of the ocean remained strong and my high school years were largely spent prioritising time on the beach with friends, playing sport and enjoying the freedom of that clichéd notion of a simpler time. Even during my year 12 tertiary entrance exams, as they were known at that time, I felt none of the pressure I see suffered by students attempting Australian Tertiary Admission Rank today. For this reason, I am heartened to see the range of pathways that have more recently been established for students to attend university or to complete their further education ambitions. Throughout my schooling years, I was fortunate to be blissfully ignorant of the fiscal gap that separated many of us. My family were battlers and all about me were friends from

families of business owners, doctors, fishing families, farming families, teachers and other professionals. Yet somehow, I remained unaware and unbothered by the vast financial divide that separated many of us. That is part of the beauty of regional living. There is generally space for inclusion and pretensions or distinctions due to wealth are typically not appreciated. It was only in my early adult years, when my mum spoke of our financial struggles, that I began to truly appreciate the significance of the sacrifices my parents made for our family. This is most tellingly revealed in a simple story my mum shared of once splurging on a can of aerosol deodorant only to drop it and have the can burst and empty of its contents and her crying at the great waste they could ill afford.

My dad, who is one of 14 children of Maude and William—or Bill—Kennedy tells stories of the great poverty in which he grew up, feeling hungry, sharing verandah space that doubled as a bedroom and meowing like a cat at his dad's heels in the hope of being thrown extra table scraps when the meal had not been sufficient to fill his grumbling stomach.

My nana, Maude Kennedy, or “Midnight Maude” as she was affectionately known, was an incredible matriarch, a woman who stoically and miraculously held her family together when my pop's own unknown demons saw him spend his money on medicinal amber rather than on substantively supporting his 14 children. This responsibility eventually fell upon my dad's older brother, Reginald Kennedy, or “Red” as he is known to most, who worked in the mines and sent money home to support his brothers and sisters. My mum's family was also a large Kalgoorlie clan, Stella Isabella and Jack Turner had 10 children. My grandma, Stella, had a wicked sense of humour and suffered from acute depression, a condition for which I am told she had electric shock therapy. I also had my own memories of her hiding in a darkened room holding a single candle in silent terror whenever there was thunder or lightning. Those who have some understanding of mental health and intergenerational trauma will have no difficulty imagining the impact of this upon others in the family and generations to follow. Mental health being a subject I will return to later.

My granddad, Jack, was in the Army and worked as a cook, spending time in Northampton to defend our shores during the war, Northampton being a part of the agricultural region I now represent. He never knew his own father and it is for this reason I, and others, were always in awe of his capacity to be a great and caring dad and grandad. He was hit by a car as a young man and had to have his leg pinned together, which became infected. The same leg was injured again in a later accident. As a result, he had one leg much shorter than the other and it could not bend. He wore a boot with a thick sole of about seven centimetres to even his stance. He walked with a limp and had a bicycle with its single pedal, which he rode one-legged to work on the mines. It was a highlight for us grandchildren to get a ride on grandad's bike. He was a determined and dependable man, a loyal and staunch Labor man and, like one of his favourite songs, he remains unforgettable.

The stories my parents tell of their respective childhoods are overwhelmingly positive, but, needless to say, life was challenging for both my parents' large families. They were the classic Aussie battlers that formed part of our national identity. They both know struggle, and their lives are, as are those of many Australians, a triumph over adversity. But more than this, they are a triumph of growing up having to care for and support one another, to share the load, to look out for each other and to know the importance of family and true grit to ensure survival. Consequently, my parents are both caring and compassionate people. They look out for others and help others. Many is the time we had people in need and family members staying in our home, sometimes for a short time, but others for the better part of a year.

My parents coached our sporting teams, volunteered at our schools, volunteered in various groups and organisations and, to this day, remain deeply embedded in their community and the notion of service. They are my greatest supporters and always provide a soft place for me to land when life has been challenging. They love me without condition and I am so incredibly grateful for them both.

It was my dad who, some years ago, first planted the idea that I should enter politics and who also offered his unhesitating support when I sought his counsel when considering nominating as a candidate for the Agricultural Region. My mum, despite her initial hesitations, as I imagine protective mothers so often feel when one of their own enters politics, threw herself behind me by single-handedly manning the Chapman Valley polling booth on election day, braving her neighbours from the traditional Nationals' territory in support of her daughter. If that is not love, I do not know what is!

As part of the Kennedy family, it is a particular privilege for me to be delivering my inaugural speech during Reconciliation Week. This year's Reconciliation Week theme is “More than a word: Reconciliation takes action”, and I am pleased that I will be able to take action here today to formally amend the record of my own family history. I am deeply honoured to acknowledge and place on record here today that my family history dates back to our First Nations people. I am less proud, however, of our historic treatment and undervaluing of our traditional landowners, the impact of which is evident in so many ways in our society, one of which is in my own family history in which the fact that our blood runs with that of the traditional landowners was largely kept hidden, having been the subject, I am told, of an enforced silence.

Today I am very grateful to my uncle Mervin Kennedy, who has dedicated significant time, energy and passion into researching our family history to bring the fullness of our origins to our attention and having our Indigenous heritage

recognised by the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council. I am incredibly grateful to the South West Aboriginal Land and Sea Council in that after all this time and silence, it is willing to acknowledge and welcome us. If only other institutions in this country would exercise the same spirit of generosity towards our First Nations people.

My uncle relates our early Western Australian history thus. Great-grandfather William John Kennedy made his way to Western Australia, acquiring land in Cunderdin and Quairading and marrying into the Walker family, who were farmers in the Avon region. We come from the King and Kennedy families, who resided in Northam, Cunderdin and York. Great-grandfather King married Eliza Belle, nee Dickerson-Skelton. Her mother, Mary Brazely, was an Aboriginal woman who hailed from Gingin and the Moore River settlements, with links back to the famous tribal elder known as Wilbur. Much of this history is new to me and for this reason I feel an ever-increasing urgency to say that we must be vigilant in questioning and examining the negative biases that lurk within us. As is always the case when a group is marginalised, devalued or disadvantaged, we frequently unconsciously reinforce these in our behaviours, words and actions. It is important that we take pause to reflect and ask ourselves what words and beliefs do we have whispering in the back of our subconscious minds that have the unintended impact of reinforcing disadvantage. We must ask ourselves what conscious action can we take to address these biases. It is my most sincere hope that my action here today goes some small way to reconciling my family history with that which has been hidden and can more broadly be viewed as a positive gesture of reconciliation. Adopting the Uluru Statement from the Heart would be another such important act of reconciliation.

My journey to this place is a story of exploration, stops and starts, and life-changing mistakes. While in my late teens, I was the victim of sexual violence, and this naturally has had a significant impact upon my world view and my own mental health. It led me to make self-destructive choices, such as entering and remaining in relationships that were abusive, coercive and violent. It is important that I acknowledge these experiences, as again they represent the experiences of so many women, and they drive me to be part of the process that works to address these ongoing social problems. It is why I now sit on the board of Desert Blue Connect, an organisation providing a range of services to individuals and organisations in the midwest, including children's services, crisis accommodation, unplanned pregnancy support, family and domestic violence and sexual assault support, primary prevention and men's community intervention.

Following the trauma in my late teens, despite starting a range of courses and degrees, I found it difficult to settle, to feel safe and secure, and to build significant connections or relationships or, indeed, any sense of self-worth. I began and withdrew from a series of degrees, behaviour reflecting my inner turmoil—from a fine arts degree to sports science, then politics, philosophy and sociology and then three years of law, during which time I also married and had my daughter, followed by the subsequent end of my marriage and my return to my family in Geraldton as a sole parent. At that time, there were limited concessions for sole parents and external studies were yet to be commonplace, so despite my attempts at persuasion, I was not permitted to complete so much as a unit of my law degree externally. So I once again withdrew. Sometime after, I met my son's father and completed a Bachelor of Arts, followed by a Graduate Diploma in Education, and these important steps allowed me to redesign my life path and that of my children. Since becoming a teacher, I have taught in schools throughout Geraldton and travelled throughout the midwest, Gascoyne and wheatbelt areas, delivering drug and health education. I have held numerous leadership roles and positions, along with gaining a renewed sense of self and a vehement belief in the power of education to transform lives.

As one whose sense of self-worth was minimal throughout my younger and early parenting years, I found myself in a series of abusive relationships and experienced family and domestic violence. I still do not fully comprehend the complexity of my thinking that caused me to be in such a position, yet I can say with absolute certainty that those who find themselves in such predicaments need your absolute compassion, understanding and support. We simply must do more to help people in those situations and to educate our community to help enable helpful dialogues and primary prevention initiatives.

An estimated 300 000 Western Australians have experienced physical or sexual violence from a current or former partner—one in six women and one in 16 men. Collectively, they would fill Optus Stadium almost five times over, and I would be in one of those stadiums. One in four women have experienced emotional abuse caused by a current or former partner. That is twice the population of both Geraldton and Bunbury combined. In a group the size of an average primary school class, one in three children will have witnessed domestic violence, and Aboriginal women are 32 times more likely to be hospitalised for family violence-related assaults. On average, one woman is murdered by her current or former partner each week in Australia—a statistic I barely avoided becoming when a former partner threw a hammer at me in anger, narrowly missing me and hitting the wall beside my head.

I congratulate Minister Simone McGurk, as WA's first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence. Her significant work in the development of the *Path to safety: Western Australia's strategy to reduce family and domestic violence 2020–2030* represents a substantial paradigm shift from the approach of previous governments. One in every three women in Australia has experienced physical or sexual violence perpetrated by a man since the age of 15, and I have already discussed the impact on my own life experience, causing me to pinball through life, making poor choices. This reference to the experience of women is not to deny that men and those who identify as "they" are not victims of sexual and/or physical violence. The statistics show us that they are. However, it is to

say that those experiencing these social problems are overwhelmingly females and children, and it is to say that, as a society, we have a problem that we must collectively address. Entitlement, notions of proprietary rights and a culture that has historically made light of the suffering and value of women are both causal and accountable.

I will stop short of using the popularised term “toxic masculinity” as a means by which to denote the cultural norms that allow for such alarming rates of family and domestic violence, sexual violence and the general undervaluing of women in society. Words are powerful tools and they should be used thoughtfully and intentionally. It is my observation that the term “toxic masculinity” is prone to divide rather than assist. It generates a defensiveness from that half of the population that feels labelled and attacked by the nomenclature. It is my ardent belief that “toxic socialisation” is the better language, as it carries with it the notion of our collective responsibility to socialise all our young people to be respectful, empathetic and proactive in building attitudes that respect and protect the rights of all. I am, after all, the parent of young man, and my role is also to allow him to see his own value and worth while simultaneously seeing, respecting and supporting the same in others.

It was only upon extricating myself from the situations of family and domestic violence that I succumbed to panic attacks, anxiety and depression, and so began the long journey of addressing the mental health impacts upon not only myself, but also my children. Unfortunately, these experiences also place me in a far-too-common statistic. However, as is also often the case with our negative experiences, there were some helpful outcomes too. My life experience allowed me to teach from a place of compassion and trauma-informed practice long before this became a concept delivered in teacher professional development. It helped inform my pastoral care of students, allowing me to more readily recognise trauma and mental health struggles in students, and therefore be of assistance and support, and for this I am grateful.

As a sole parent, I have for much of the time been the sole provider for my children, at times juggling up to three jobs so that I could ensure my children were well provided for. My experience is not unusual. More than 80 per cent of sole parents in Australia are women. That being the case, women retire with less superannuation, are more likely to retire in poverty and, among older women, are increasingly likely to experience homelessness. Despite my life challenges, or perhaps because of them, I am proud of how I have consistently worked to do and be better. Most importantly, I am incredibly proud of my two children, who are my reason for always wanting to do better. I am here in this place in the hope that it will make them proud. My daughter, Claudia, who is now a lawyer, has worked as a lecturer and tutor at Curtin Law School, started the *Western Australian Student Law Review* to provide a platform for peer-reviewed student writing to be published, graduated on the Vice-Chancellor’s List, completed her honours year while working full time as a judge’s associate for Supreme Court Justice Vaughan, won numerous course awards throughout her degree, and has co-written a law book, all before turning 25. Claudia, I am consistently filled with awe at the amazing powerhouse of a woman that you are. You are wise, strong, and an amazing role model and advocate for other women and regional kids. I consistently burst with pride and “mum brags” at the woman you are.

My son, Jack, is currently completing year 12. After many tumultuous years in the school system, a system that was never really designed for a young man like him, he has shown true strength of character, and this year has managed to wallpaper our fridge with commendations for achievements in his courses. He works two jobs, has the savings mentality of a young Warren Buffett, and is a kind and caring young man with an entrepreneurial spirit that is inspiring and may well place me in a lovely nursing home in my twilight years, or so he tells me! He has been part of our family financial decision-making since his early teens. He chose our family home with me and purchased his own car, phone and computer at 16, and is always ready with a loving and comforting hug, words of support and words that make me laugh until I cry. Jack, I am so incredibly proud of who you are, how far you have come, and I watch with admiration and pride as you come into your own as the wonderful and hilarious young man you are.

Today, I come to this place as a teacher. The irony is not lost on me that having now left the profession, my life continues to be run by bells! Teaching is a profoundly rewarding profession, but I must confess that I did not choose to be a teacher. I chose to be a parent and then chose to study teaching as it seemed to me to be a career that would allow me to both work and be a parent, with the ability to keep the same school hours as my children, or so I thought. It is merely a very surprising and happy accident that I found myself in love with teaching. My teaching years have been some of the most rewarding and fulfilling years of my life. This is due, in most part, to the students—WA’s regional kids. Many years ago, before I was a teacher, I sat in a school assembly at a primary school my daughter was attending and listened to the speech of a retiring teacher in which she shared her teaching philosophy. It was this: she made it her duty to find something to love in every child who walked through her classroom door. This compassionate child-centred approach stayed with me, and I brought that ethos into my own teaching. Let me tell you, even when demonstrating their absolute worst, it is incredibly easy to find something to love in every student when you are actively seeking their best attributes or, as my old Geraldton Senior High School motto states: the seeker finds. I would urge every teacher to consider adopting this approach. It enriches your own experience and means that every student receives the very best you have to offer them. It is worth keeping in mind that for some students you may well be the only positive encounter that they experience on any given day.

I have a great love for teaching, but I cannot deny that being an educator is also challenging. The pressures, expectations and workload are great, and the appreciation can be limited. Accountability and administrative measures have

increased the workload of teachers, who will tell you that they often find themselves juggling these requirements with the quality and content of their teaching. Make no mistake, teachers care about students and the quality of education they deliver to your children. We care about your kids. We lose sleep over your children. We shed tears over them. We fight for them behind closed doors to ensure they are given a fair go. As my 17-year-old son recently pointed out, traditionally, the education system was designed to meet the workforce needs of industrialisation. Today's world is a far different place and many of the jobs and needs of the world of today and tomorrow have significantly changed or are yet to be fully realised or imagined. Education should and must reflect these changes, and for this reason it is pleasing to be part of a government that recognises this and is investing \$136 million in new science, technology, engineering and mathematics classrooms and resources to prepare students for the jobs of the future. Moreover, education is more than a mere mechanism for churning out a workforce. Quality education will help create our deep thinkers, carers, innovators, creators, lateral thinkers and problem-solvers. There is an opportunity to apply best practice research to improve education, just as we do with science-based developments in areas such as vaccinations.

Investment in education will reward us manyfold and must be at the core of what we do. We know that with education comes better health, improved life expectancy, reduced experiences of violence, higher salaries and greater levels of home ownership, just to name a few positive outcomes. Innovation and research require traditional skills, along with exploration, creativity and minds that have been encouraged to remain playful, inquisitive and unafraid of failure, because they have been taught to view failure as a learning experience and a step closer to success. I invoke all those charged with planning our curriculum and education models to consider how best to achieve this end to ensure kids have lively, explorative and engaging learning experiences.

The proliferation of the use of digital devices amongst our young people has seen the emergence of a concerning issue: the pornification of our young people's lives. The ready access to all manner of internet pornography and pornographic images, the large body of which is harmful or unrepresentative of human love, intimacy and respect for relationships, is highly concerning. Young people simply do not have the cognitive capacity or life experience to adequately process the images to which they are being exposed. Schools have an important role to play here in educating our young people about respectful relationships, healthy body image, healthy human intimacy and the vitally important concept of consent—indeed, enthusiastic consent. Thus, I am pleased that this government has made an election commitment to expand the WA Respectful Relationships Teaching Support program to address these matters.

The McGowan Labor government has also invested significantly in public education infrastructure and classroom resources across the state. It is heartening to see the investments in our schools, the additional support for students in classrooms, the commitment to quality education in regions, and the development of the centre for excellence in the explicit teaching of literacy. Additionally, the McGowan government is delivering a \$104 million boost to student support and wellbeing and providing 100 additional psychologists in WA schools over the next four years. Such welcome initiatives will provide more assistance to the significant number of students presenting with mental health issues, supporting those experiencing anxiety, depression or disengagement from school.

On the issue of mental health, I again represent the average. One in five Western Australians experience mental health issues in any given year. For this reason, I am a vocal advocate for normalising conversations around mental health as an effective way to encourage people to understand this health challenge as a normal human experience and as an important driver to encourage people to seek appropriate support. I offer my respect and great thanks to the member for Cockburn, David Scaife, for his frank and open account of his experiences of his own mental health challenges in his inaugural speech in the other place, and to the member for Mining and Pastoral Region Hon Peter Foster for speaking of his struggles with anxiety in his inaugural speech in here last week. It is particularly important for men, who are so often conditioned to value stoicism over vulnerability and openness, to normalise conversations around mental health.

Over the years, my own brother's long undiagnosed mental health condition, which led to his self-medicating, a suicide attempt and a number of mental health crises, has highlighted for my family the gaps in our mental health services, particularly in regional areas. The more remotely one lives, the more problematic this becomes. The trauma of attempting to access timely assistance at the peak of my brother's most recent episode remains with me. The inability to access immediate support left my family helpless and feeling that my brother's death would likely come before assistance. I am relieved to share here today that he was finally able to access the support of mental health professionals and, along with his own willingness to participate in his recovery, is now part of a support system that has him well and truly on the path to recovery. However, the scars of the experience run through our family. Again, the importance of reflection upon experience is vital if we are to operate in a space of better prevention and early treatment that intervenes before crisis strikes.

Additionally, I would like to briefly touch on the problem we have with the criminalisation of mental health and the consequential high rates of imprisonment of those self-medicating due to mental health struggles and trauma. Here I would like to pay my respects to the family of a Yamatji woman, who for cultural reasons I will refer to as JC, who was shot dead in Geraldton after her family called the police. They were seeking assistance in transferring

her to hospital, as she was—as her family described—“experiencing difficulty” after being released from prison. This tragic outcome points to an urgent need to examine this problem and how we might best adopt a significant paradigm shift to support those in our community who are suffering and those who are self-medicating. We must be unafraid to rethink our approach and to challenge some of the long-held ideas that persist despite defying reason or common sense.

Here I acknowledge the important work of the Minister for Health, Roger Cook, and then Minister for Police, Michelle Roberts, for developing a range of initiatives that focus on prevention, early intervention, treatment, support and law enforcement. Their work has resulted in initiatives such as the 18-month pilot of active recovery teams in 10 metropolitan and regional locations that bridge the gap between clinical mental services inside hospitals and community-based organisations that provide care outside of hospitals. An additional positive development is the creation of step-up, step-down mental health services throughout the state, providing early, outside-hospital support for those experiencing mental health challenges. Providing alternatives to emergency departments for people with mental health and alcohol and other drug issues is vital. I note it is a key priority area identified in the McGowan government’s sustainable health review and state priorities. I also note that the Mental Health Commission is looking into gaps in alcohol and other drug crisis intervention. I look forward to its recommendations and the important work that I am confident the Minister for Mental Health, Hon Stephen Dawson, will contribute in this space.

For over a year now the world has endured the challenge and the tragedy that is the COVID pandemic. It has taken lives; separated families, lovers and friends; placed our frontline workers under insufferable stress; stretched health services to well beyond their limits; seen the loss of jobs and homes; and caused much pain, suffering, instability and uncertainty. It is important that we recognise the outstanding work of the Australian unions and the Australian Labor Party in protecting our most vulnerable and securing the provision of JobKeeper and JobSeeker payments to both assist the people of our workforce to endure the impact of COVID and to support the Australian economy. To direct the credit for those initiatives to anyone else, or for anyone else to attempt to accept the credit for those initiatives, would be akin to attempting to pass off the homework of another as your own. The Australian Services Union, along with other Australian unions, campaigned relentlessly for a wage subsidy for workers to ensure members’ jobs were protected during the global pandemic. Prior to this, Prime Minister Morrison refused to consider a wage subsidy. However, the determination and unrelenting efforts of the unions won out, and that victory is reflected in an economy that has stood up well against the impact of the COVID pandemic.

Here, in Western Australia, I would like to thank our Premier Mark McGowan for his incredible management of our state. It is by no mistake that he has been informally awarded a light-hearted title that is paternal in nature! His steadfast, sensible, consistent and very human approach to keeping WA safe and strong has achieved just that. The proof is in the rich, healthy, robust state we remain, and the fact we remain the engine room of our nation. Here I also extend my gratitude to health minister Roger Cook for his continued outstanding management of the COVID pandemic that has been measured, science-based, and attentive and responsive to expert health advice.

A concept that is valued among the education fraternity is transferable knowledge—the capacity to pick up knowledge and experience gained in one area and apply it to another. It is my sincere hope that the experience and knowledge of COVID is transferable in this way. Those who were locked out, those who found or now find themselves essentially stateless for an indeterminate period, those being kept apart from loved ones, have discovered a heightened empathy for our refugees and asylum seekers suffering under the cruel practice of offshore processing and indefinite detention. The dehumanising cruelty of these federal policies must end, and I call upon the federal government to cease this needlessly cruel practice.

My deep concern for our long history of disregard for the natural environment again places me amongst the average. According to the recent Australia Speaks data, the majority of Australians today are concerned about climate change. Our collective inaction on global warming places a significant responsibility upon us all here today to be dynamically proactive and innovative in our solutions and the efforts we must take to deal with the natural disasters and many challenges resulting from that inaction. The strategic end is surely imminent for stranded assets such as oil and thermal coal, and we must be prepared to take the extreme structural pivot required to bring about this change. Investment in wind and solar, bioenergy and the hydrogen market must take precedence. We must remain alert to opportunities in the clean energy market and invest in research and development, and be a state of innovation and early uptake in terms of infrastructure to provide for the production and utilisation of clean energy and downstream processing.

As one about to celebrate the great privilege of achieving a half century later this month, I again join the average—and can confess to feeling a bit average at times, too! Just over 40 per cent of the people I represent in the Agricultural Region are aged 50 or over. I can say, with the great certainty that comes with age, that from all of life’s challenges, tragedies and disasters, we must learn, change and adapt if there are to be any ensuing positives from the experience. If we do not do these things, history repeats upon us and we suffer the heartburn of that which has already been suffered.

As a regional member of this Parliament, I am pleased to note the McGowan Labor government has provided a masterclass on how to spend effectively in regional Western Australia, having spent more money in the regions than any previous government in our state’s history. This is unsurprising given the Labor Party itself was born of

workers from the bush, the regions and the country—everyday workers seeking better wages and conditions. We are the original regional party. It is in our origin story and it is in our fundamentally egalitarian values that grew out of our bush heritage. It is thick and fast in our values that place people and a fair go at the centre of all we do. The Western Australian state division of the Australian Labor Party was formed at a trade union congress in Coolgardie—just down the road from my birthplace in Kalgoorlie—in 1899. In our regions today, there is increasing diversity, improvements in education, the growth of industries and a greater acceptance of progressive social values, and this is reflected in the recent election result in which regional voters have shown their support in unprecedented numbers. The experience of COVID and rapidly rising house prices and housing shortages has people again looking towards regional living. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us that traditional models of work can be adapted and that working remotely is possible, and indeed can prove favourable. It is important that we are mindful of creating opportunity in the form of key infrastructure to allow people to live regionally and to do so knowing they can readily access key services. It is also worth contemplating the value of regional locations as a second seat of government to improve outcomes for regional communities.

As the prospect of electoral reform is being explored, I am mindful that many of us here are regional members and bring the value, knowledge and experience of regional living. It is essential that there is an appropriate mechanism to advocate for the necessary human services—such as disabilities, mental health, drug and alcohol, and family violence services—for rural, regional and remote communities. A community services mechanism could operate in a similar vein to regional development commissions, which advocate for the economic development needs of regional communities.

A significant part of our Agricultural Region, which is more than 40 000 square kilometres, was impacted by cyclone Seroja. It devastated communities, families, businesses and individuals. Work remains to be done to assist these people to restore their lives, homes, infrastructure and livelihoods. It has been a great privilege to witness the various groups, individuals and volunteers collaborating to help our neighbours in need. However, there were also roadblocks to the manner in which we could support and check in on those people who were impacted. Most notably, the failure of telecommunications left people vulnerable and unable to communicate, or access help and support. This has highlighted an issue that remains problematic. Telecommunication towers, absent of generators to allow them to continue to function beyond their short backup battery life in the event of power loss, shut us off from each other. From my own home in Geraldton, I relied on contact from a friend in Cunderdin for information and updates on the impact of the cyclone. Poor telecommunications and connectivity are an ongoing issue across our regions. The federal government must exercise its federal responsibility for this. It is an issue that I am determined to pursue during my time here in this place.

Mobile coverage and internet connectivity should and must be provided as a reliable and uninterrupted service, as a matter of both the safety and wellbeing of regional communities and as a commercial imperative, allowing all to compete irrespective of geography. I am doggedly determined to see our government work with the federal government to resolve this matter for our rural, regional and remote communities. It will unlock opportunities in the use of technology for business, health and wellbeing, education, and in attracting and retaining populations.

Export markets are also an important part of our agricultural sector. While any form of economic coercion must be strongly resisted, I am pleased to note Premier Mark McGowan's stance on building positive relationships with trading partners such as China. Diversification in trading partners is an additionally important measure to ensure the ongoing stability and success of our trading sector. The success of our agriculture and food sector is intrinsically linked to overseas markets. Agriculture is Western Australia's second largest export industry. We export approximately 80 per cent of our agricultural produce. Over the past decade, around 70 per cent of that trade supplied Asian markets, with China, Vietnam and Indonesia being some of our largest markets. Our agrifood market is ideally positioned to supply produce that is both sustainably and ethically produced.

Our state is one of the most disease and pest-free agricultural production areas in the world, a status we must vigilantly protect via strict quarantine requirements, just as we have worked vigilantly to keep our state free of COVID via hard border and quarantine measures. Along with innovation, research and development, this will ensure our market remains a significant part of our own food supply chain and continues to be a substantive contributor to the Australian economy that it is today.

Our primary producers are numbered among the best in the world and this is an identity worth recognition and celebration. If Western Australia is the engine room of Australia, WA's agriculture and food sector is both one of the engine rooms of our state and the lifeblood of our rural and regional communities. We must focus our attention upon creating and training a steady and consistent supply of workers for this sector, and attracting people to live and work in these communities if we are to continue to help keep the engine well running and well serviced.

The best time for us to take action on climate change and global warming was over 40 years ago; the next best time is now. Our sluggish approach to taking action has resulted in the need for us to act more expediently and innovatively than ever before. There is no more time to smirk rather than set targets, or to pander to players who have ignored science and continued to invest heavily in unsustainable practices and stranded assets, wilfully placing profits over people and planet.

It has been 10 years since Julia Gillard became Prime Minister of Australia. One of her government's major achievements was the introduction of the carbon pricing mechanism. Companies that were subject to the scheme saw their emissions drop by seven per cent. Today, we are fortunate to have the forward-thinking efforts of the Minister for Hydrogen Industry, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. Western Australia, a state typically locked in a boom-or-bust cycle, is well placed to become the land of the endless boom if we, as we have begun to do in recent years, harness our abundant natural and renewable resources and work from the front foot to be global leaders in the clean, green energy market. The investment we place in innovation and research will reward us manyfold and allow us to position ourselves as global leaders, and suppliers of the clean energy market. It is well past time for the lump of coal to leave the building!

As countries look to progressively decrease their emissions, the future trade in energy is increasingly likely to include trade in low or zero emissions energy. Western Australia has significant renewable resources, a well-established track record of exporting energy, and longstanding trading relationships with key energy importers. I am pleased to note that Oakajee, north of Geraldton in the Agricultural Region, is one such identified potential location for hydrogen production and export. Western Australia is well positioned to become a significant exporter of low or zero emissions energy. We are on the cusp of playing an important role in global decarbonisation efforts. It is indeed an exciting time to be representing the Agricultural Region and the people of Western Australia. I look forward to playing my part in building a future that our children can look towards with optimism.

As is customary, I would like to conclude by offering my thanks to the many hands that have carried me to this place. To begin, I would like to note that participating in the election campaign was an incredibly rewarding experience, due to not only the resulting victory but also the amazing opportunity to work alongside like-minded people who were all working towards a common goal that they genuinely believed in. It has been a great honour and a highlight of my life to date.

My thanks, first and foremost, to Premier Mark McGowan and the WA Labor team. Thank you to the incredible campaign team of Tim Picton, Ellie Whiteaker and David Cann. My gratitude and thanks to the voters of the Agricultural Region, many of whom voted Labor for the first time. We will not let you down. I also owe much gratitude to Hon Darren West. But for his work in building the Geraldton branch, and his time, effort and friendship, I would never have found the confidence to put my name forward as a candidate. Thank you for your faith in me and for elevating my belief in what I thought was possible. That is an incredible gift, and I am very grateful.

Thanks also to the candidates for each electorate in the Agricultural Region: Brad Willis in Roe, Michelle Nelson in Central Wheatbelt, Barni Norton in Moore, and the new member for Geraldton, the first woman to represent the seat of Geraldton, Lara Dalton. It was a great privilege to work alongside each of you. I credit my being here today to the hard work you have done in each of your respective electorates. In Geraldton, I would also like to thank retiring member Laurie Graham, the ultimate gentleman of WA politics. Laurie, thank you for all you have done for our region, for the kindness you have shown me and for the abundance of advice. I hope my own service does your legacy justice. Thanks to Margie Robinson for your work during the campaign, your friendship and for being your incredibly capable, intelligent and knowledgeable self. I would most certainly be wandering in the wilderness without you. There is also an incredible team working behind the scenes in Donna Plummer, Jodi Ingram, Judy Riggs and Geoff Cannon. These people are the quiet heroes behind our public success. Thanks to each of you. Thank also to Adam Dusty, the hardest working doorknocker and most knowledgeable political mind to land west side in Geraldton in a long time. Thank you for your hard work and mateship.

To my family: you have supported me, cared for me, attended events, handed out how-to-vote cards, believed in me, and now share in this honour with me today as the first member of our family to be a member of Parliament. Mum and Dad, I love you both dearly. I thank you for the countless ways you have shown me love and support. To my daughter, Claudia, thank you for your support, for the ever-wise advice and for flying in from Perth to Geraldton on the day to man the Dongara booth with me. To my son, Jack, thank you for encouraging me to go for it, for hammering up signs and for all the hugs and words of encouragement; I love you, mate. To my sister, Karen, for being my greatest supporter and best friend, I never want to contemplate where I would be were it not for you. To my brother-in-law, Mark Rowe—what a guy. He voted Labor for the first time ever, completely threw his support behind me and even drove to Nationals territory in Northampton to man the polling booth solo there. I owe you gratitude for that and so much more. To my brother, Todd, for always believing in me more than I ever believed in myself, and for being the best and funniest brother I could have ever wished for growing up. To my dear friend Rochelle and her husband, Noddy, thank you for your constant support, friendship and wise counsel; I love you both dearly. To my friends from work and life who offered words and messages of support, thank you; your every gesture has meant the world to me. To Ivan Debaughy and the "I Team", as they are known—Louis and Elsie in Dongara—thank you for leading the charge there. We won Dongara! Finally, thank you to the Geraldton branch of WA Labor and the many, many volunteers who contributed along the way.

It is appropriate that I should end here in this space of thanks and gratitude, thus I conclude by thanking you, President, and my colleagues for indulging me this time. This very average regional Western Australian woman promises to roll up her sleeves and work exceptionally hard for the Agricultural Region and the people of Western Australia.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT: Thank you, honourable member, and congratulations. I wish you all the very best for your work in this place.

HON DR BRAD PETTITT (South Metropolitan) [3.11 pm]: Thank you, President. May I begin by also congratulating you on your election to the role. I would also like to congratulate all my colleagues here today on their recent election to this chamber.

I would like to begin my inaugural speech by acknowledging the Whadjuk people as the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, and recognise that their culture, heritage and beliefs are still important today. Now, during National Reconciliation Week, it feels even more appropriate to acknowledge this, as it highlights an issue that is fundamental to our state's and, indeed, our nation's future. As WA moves towards 2029, 200 years since the establishment of the Swan River Colony, we have a unique opportunity to speed up our journey of reconciliation. Just this week, Reconciliation WA chief executive officer Jody Nunn said —

... as a State with our wealth, prosperity and opportunity—we should be the global leader in Indigenous cultural, heritage and practice ... “As we approach the bicentenary of the State in 2029, we've got a huge opportunity to say we're going to have a new future.”

This is something that I am personally acutely aware of, because my ancestors arrived in WA in 1829 on one of the first ships. William Bashford arrived on 12 October 1829 on a ship called the *Caroline*. Soon after, he was gifted some land on the Derbarl Yerrigan, what we now call the Swan River, up in the Swan Valley, which, of course as we know now, was wrongly assumed to be unoccupied. In the shadow of the Mabo decision, the myth of terra nullius has now been done away with and we, as a community, are now ready to take much bigger steps towards reconciliation. Fundamental steps should include truth telling and, ultimately, a treaty and a voice to Parliament. On this note, I would especially like to acknowledge Hon Rosie Sahanna on her election as the first Aboriginal person in this chamber. It is very, very significant.

My sense is that in recent years the reconciliation space has moved forward in a way that is deeply encouraging. Ideas that were once deeply radical and in fact controversial, such as dual naming, renaming places or finding a more inclusive date to celebrate our nationhood, are now increasingly part of mainstream conversation. I want to give my thanks to the very inspiring Western Australian First Nations leaders, whom I have had the honour of travelling alongside. In fact, as Richard Walley said this week, whom I have many times walked behind and learnt from, I hope that here in this place we can do our part in the forty-first Parliament to move WA along on this important journey towards reconciliation.

As I mentioned, my family have a long connection to this state, going back to 1829 on my mum's side. They were a pioneering family in the Swan Valley, where they lived for several generations until my grandfather Colin Hooper and his wife, Mary, who is with us here today, took the whole family, including my mother, Janet, to establish a wheat farm out east of Naremben. I cannot help but be amazed by the courage that it must have taken to take the whole family out bush, when there was no electricity in the wheatbelt, let alone telephones. Going to live in a Nissen hut that originally had a dirt floor and kerosene lanterns, and was miles from anywhere, was certainly very brave, but I also know that it was deeply rewarding. My mum's side of the family, more than 60 years later, are still working on that family farm and other farms around the Naremben area.

Less is known about my late father's side of the family, but I do know that dad moved to WA from Sydney as a boy and settled in Bicton. My grandfather William Pettitt was a customs officer at Fremantle port. My dad, Bill Pettitt, went to school in Freo, first at Fremantle Boys' School and then John Curtin Senior High School. As it happens, my mum finished her schooling at John Curtin in Freo as well. But that was not where they were to meet; that was some years later when dad, a sales representative, crashed his car and was looked after by my mum, who was a nurse at Fremantle Hospital. By the time I was born in the early 1970s, my parents had relocated to Roleystone in the Perth hills, where most of my childhood was spent. I have very good memories of that place, playing in jarrah bushland and being part of a tight-knit community that was extremely caring. I went to Roleystone Primary School and then Roleystone District High School before we all had to bus down the hill to what, at the time, was the biggest school in the state, Kelmscott Senior High School. As it happened, two other members of this Parliament, ministers Tony Buti and Rita Saffioti, also went to Kelmscott high—not bad for a public school in a largely lower socio-economic area.

After high school I took a year off and went travelling around Australia, mostly hitchhiking in a way we would not be allowed to do today, working on building sites and even hitching on a tug boat up the east coast before returning to WA and moving to Fremantle. I fell in love with Freo. I love its built heritage, its layers of history, its working port, its wonderful arts and music scene, and even its football team—most of the time. Freo is a place that I have largely called home ever since. On my return I also went to study at Murdoch University and was fortunate enough to have been taught by some of the best minds in this state, including Professor Peter Newman, Dr Patsy Hallen, Dr Ian Barns, the late Dr Ian Cook and even Hon Dr Sally Talbot, who now sits in this chamber. After completing my degree and then my doctorate I moved to Cambodia to work with Oxfam, an organisation that I previously sat on the board of and whose work I still greatly respect. In Cambodia, I learnt a lot and worked on a range of fisheries

and forestry projects, but I also had that sense not only of how extremely lucky we are here, but also that we are living in a natural environment that is changing. It was there that the impacts of climate change, and the impacts it is having on the world's poorest people, first became evident to me.

From Cambodia I moved to Canberra and worked with the Australian government international aid program, which was then called AusAID and is now part of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, before again moving back to WA and to Murdoch University to lecture in sustainable development, eventually taking on the role of dean of the School of Sustainability. I really loved teaching and research, and I love the role that universities can play in teaching us to think critically about key issues, but I was also deeply interested in how these ideas, and their well-researched theories, could be put into practice.

My time as a councillor and as mayor at the City of Fremantle was a wonderful opportunity to do just that—to demonstrate what the implementation of sustainable development can look like. I think it would be fair to say that there was no better place than Freo to do this. The Freo community is pretty unique. It is very passionate, very progressive and it demands local government think globally while acting locally. The leadership that Freo has shown on a range of issues was possible only due to the extraordinary support of this wonderful community, including the council and the City of Fremantle staff. I want to thank them for their support along the way on what was a very rewarding journey together.

Local government has already been the subject of a fair bit of discussion in this house. I agree with many of my colleagues that local government is about more than just roads, rates and rubbish. In fact, I think the strength of local government is that it can be connected to, and meet the needs and wishes of, its local community. In this house I hope we can continue to support and not squash the innovation and leadership that can come out of the local government sector when it is working well. I was lucky enough to have served on the Fremantle council for 16 years as an elected member—almost 12 of those as mayor. I am incredibly grateful that my community trusted me in this role for so long, a role that taught me a lot. It taught me that you can do things differently and get good outcomes. It taught me the importance of being pragmatic and not letting the perfect be the enemy of the good. It taught me the value of working across the usual political divides and it taught me the value of collaboration and working as a team. As a result of this and my very good fortune of being surrounded by many great and competent people is that my hometown of Freo is now going through a decade of change perhaps not seen since the days of the America's Cup.

When I became mayor more than a decade ago, I was scared that Freo was turning into what we call a dormitory suburb—a place where people go to sleep and not do much else. We knew that our focus had to be on economic development, bringing back investment that actually would make sure Freo was a place where people could live, work and play all in one place. Although the results of this are still being revealed, the approach we took has worked. We are seeing more than \$1 billion of new, private sector investment come into Fremantle. Importantly, that means we have now doubled Fremantle's residential CBD population and created thousands of new jobs in the centre of Fremantle and lots of great new places for people to recreate in. I highlight this because some might say that is not what they would expect a Green mayor or a Green-leaning council to be focused on but the evidence shows that economic development and community building can and, in fact, must go hand in hand, and that is exactly what we did. Let me explain this a bit more. Sustainable cities are compact cities, the cities in which you can live, work and play all within a short distance of each other. I love the term the "15-minute city", as some experts have called it. They are compact, mixed-use cities with more density, more jobs and a greater diversity of dwellings. This kind of city, of course, is a more sustainable city.

The CEO at the City of Fremantle used to always tell the council as we were debating these issues about density: "Just remember, every dwelling that we build here in central Freo is one less that we are required to build on Perth's urban fringe." That is really important because what we are doing at the moment is actually bulldozing our way, as we sprawl, through an internationally recognised biodiversity hotspot—one of about only 30 in the world. We are putting most of our new housing on the urban fringe and, unfortunately, most of that housing is car-dependent and not part of a 15-minute city. It is a city in which you have to travel a long way to get anywhere. As a result, I read recently that Perth has just become the longest city in the world. I am not sure that that is something we should be proud of. I think, actually, that needs to change for both the good of our people and the planet. A 15-minute city, in addition to slowing urban sprawl, means that people can have access to the things they need. It means they can choose to drive less to get to work, school or shops and gives people a real choice about how they get around, be it public transport, walking or cycling. It also means that you can actually have people coming together, creating community. This was the other part of what we are trying to do: retain our diverse and inclusive community. At the heart of that was making sure we had the affordable housing to do it.

Some of the things I am proudest of are projects like SHAC, which stands for sustainable housing for artists and creatives, along with Gen Y housing in White Gum Valley, Nightingale Fremantle and the Bannister Street partnership. They show that we can make smart, innovative and affordable housing, even in an area with really high property values like Freo. We even did things that are now normal, like "Granny flats without grannies", which started in Fremantle. Now, of course it is a statewide initiative. The Fremantle alternative housing model is also

being trialled, showing smart ways of doing infill and getting more people living in our centres. Importantly, economic development like this also has social and cultural benefits. It has meant that people of varying incomes and demographics are able to be part of the Freo community. It also means that we are able to provide more spaces for artists to work and live, making our community richer and more vibrant. The picture that I hope members take away from this is that a progressive, what some might have called Green-leaning council, was also one that had a strong economic development focus in addition to the cultural and environmental issues that we were often better known for. This is because a sustainable future, one that I am passionate about, also has a triple-bottom-line approach: economic, social and environmental. It is this triple-bottom-line, pragmatic outcome-focused approach that I think we used with great success in Freo that I hope I can also bring to this Parliament. I hope I will be able to contribute to better decisions and outcomes at a state level.

I stepped down as mayor—I must say, a job that I loved to the very end—and ran for this seat because I did not want what we were doing in Fremantle to be the exception. I wanted it to be the new normal across the whole state. I remember not that long ago when the City of Fremantle banned single-use plastic bags—twice! Under the previous government, this very house twice voted to overturn that ban. I want to acknowledge the work of Minister Dawson on this issue. It is now a mainstream, uncontroversial, statewide ban with huge benefits but I think members can see that local government can lead the way on some of these conversations. I hope that this house can support more of this kind of innovation on issues that matter.

There is perhaps no bigger or more substantive issue facing us right now than climate change. The global transition towards decarbonising our societies and our economies over the next decade is going to be—in fact, it must be—at a scale we have never seen before. We must act urgently if we have any chance of a safe climate for our grandkids and kids. By the end of this decade, we will likely be living in a world that has undergone a major transition, and hopefully a state that has, too. This transition is a huge opportunity for our state and, with the right leadership, we can do it in a way that benefits everyone. If we get it right, by the end of this decade, we will have a reliable and affordable energy grid running predominantly on renewable energy. Western Australia will have stopped investing in new oil, gas and coal projects and transitioned workers to secure clean energy jobs. We will be a major exporter of green hydrogen and lithium, and other rare earths and components that are essential for the clean energy transition and created thousands of new jobs in these areas. We will have permanently and fully banned logging in our native forest areas and instead have expanded our forest plantation industry and invested in regenerative forestry as a major carbon sink. New electric vehicles will outsell those running on petrol and diesel. We will have greatly increased the number of people getting about by riding, walking and catching public transport by investing in the right infrastructure to make leaving the car at home a viable alternative. We will have become a more compact city, with less sprawl and enlivened urban centres with more residents and jobs at their core.

All these are great ideas and they are all ideas that are supported by the Greens, but they are not exclusively Greens ideas. All these ideas are the recommendations of global experts in energy, public health, urban planning and climate. They are all based on the best evidence available. Whether it be the Royal Society, or the US National Academy of Sciences, whether it be NASA or the CSIRO, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change or the Medical Consortium on Climate and Health or the International Energy Agency or the Planning Institute of Australia, they are all saying one thing: we must get to zero emissions as soon as possible and this decade is the critical decade to do it. Listening to the best experts and making decisions on the best evidence has served this state extremely well over the last 15 months when it comes to COVID. I think we can all agree on that. Now, the challenge is that evidence-based decision-making must better inform us on issues like climate whereby science and the best public health experts should guide the necessary and significant changes we must make. Western Australia is already feeling the impacts of climate change. Experts tell us that the average temperature has already risen by about one degree. Perth and the south west's climate is drying. Rainfall has decreased by 20 per cent since the 1970s and flow into our dams has dropped by about 80 per cent. The fire risk has significantly increased across the state and the rising sea level is causing erosion at some of our favourite beaches.

Emissions reduction is going to be a big challenge for WA. We are one of the worst performing states in one of the worst performing countries when it comes to emissions reduction. Our level of carbon pollution per capita is nearly double the average that other developed nations are emitting and more than four times the world average. As the world rapidly transitions to making, first, a 50 per cent reduction by 2030, which is the new emerging global consensus, and, second, net zero by 2050, it means that WA will have more work to do than most. But the good news is that we also have more opportunity than most. We live in one of the sunniest and windiest places on earth, an ideal place for the renewables revolution. This energy revolution is essential for the WA economy, but it is only one part of the net-zero challenge before us. We must decarbonise all of our economy, from housing and transport to energy and agriculture, and the experts tell us that this is the very decade in which we must do it. I am talking about this decade, because pretty much every political commentator has suggested that it is highly likely that the Australian Labor Party will be in government for not just the next four years, but the next eight. That is significant because if we think about it, it means that it will take us through to 2029—almost the end of the decade—and we will actually start to think about the long term. This unprecedented election result, which I think we all agree it was, means that we can think big and plan for the necessary transition that is before us and work across the aisle to

make sure that the transition is sustainable and just, and one that does not leave anyone behind. I am looking forward to working with each of you to achieve this in a constructive, collaborative and pragmatic way, on not only climate and carbon reduction, but also planning, housing, homelessness and mental health, and the many other areas that desperately need our attention.

I would like to finish by thanking those who have supported me to be in this chamber today. They are many and I am extremely grateful to them. First, I would like to thank the Greens party. People have asked me why I chose to join the Greens, perhaps thinking that it might have been a relatively recent decision. I have actually been a member of the Greens for about a quarter of a century. One of the key reasons for that—it has probably come through in this speech—is that I have a sense that the Greens is the only party that has grasped the scale of the changes that we as a society will need to make for this planet if we are going to leave one that is better for our children. Progressive but necessary reform is something that the Greens are proud to lead on, even though, as my colleague Alison Xamon recently reflected in her valedictory speech, it is often five, 10 or 15 years later that the majority end up adopting our position. I am very proud that the Greens membership and much of the voting public have placed their trust in me to be their voice in this Parliament. It is a huge responsibility but one that I am committed to doing everything that I can to further.

I thank those members and supporters who doorknocked, phone-banked, leafleted, stood on stalls and staffed polling booths. Those people gave up their time and energy because they have put their hope and trust in the Greens to create the change that they passionately believe in. Rest assured, I have listened and I will do everything that I can to represent you.

Thanks to the Greens WA staff who put in a huge effort in the statewide campaign. I particularly want to thank those who were a part of the South Metropolitan Region team, who volunteered and worked so very, very hard, had my back and looked out for and supported each other. Special thanks to former MLC Lynn MacLaren; Daniel Garlett, who joined me on the South Metro upper house ticket; and to the amazing lower house crew, Liberty Cramer, Mark Brogan, Gerard Siero, Lauren Rickert, Felicity Townsend, Simone Collins, Breanna Morgan, Heather Lonsdale, Jesse Smith, Simon Blackburn, River Clarke, Robert Delves, Jody Freeman, Adam Abdul Razak and Annie Hill Otness. All 15 of those people and the team behind them are the only reason that I get to be in this place.

Of course, there are dozens of other amazing volunteers who helped in an amazing variety of ways. I apologise that I cannot name everyone, but I did want to name a few: Trish Cowcher, Juanita Doorey, Aaron Camm, Verity Ives, Tim Young, Troy Treeby, Jarrod Tan, Alex Wallace, Ryan Spencer, Josef Hubert, Chris Johansen, Bill Hare, Ursula Fuentes, Abbey Monk, Chloe Durant, Ross McCallum, Phil Jenkins, Mark Taylor, Christine Lindsey, Angel Reimers, Traci Gamblin, Rob and Nic Briggs, John and Jan Little, Roy Lewisson, Brian Smith, Giz Watson, Sarah English, Elizabeth Po, and Adrian Glamorgan. Thanks to all of you. I especially want to thank Rachel Pemberton for being so reliable during the campaign and holding the team together.

Finally, I want to thank all those who voted for the Greens in the South Metro Region and express my gratitude to those who keep fighting for what is right and necessary, whether it be the students marching in our streets or the Extinction Rebellion grandparents who have been quietly protesting each day outside this Parliament. My only disappointment is that I will not be working with former MLCs Alison, Tim and Diane. I was hoping to share this chamber with them. I want to thank each of them and Robin Chapple for the extraordinary work that they have done in this place over recent years. I hope that I can continue their impressive legacy and that of other Greens MLCs who have served in this house. I especially want to thank Alison Xamon for encouraging me to put up my hand in this place, and for her support during and since the election.

On a personal level, I want to thank my mum, Jan Little; John Little; and my sisters, Janelle and Renee, for their encouragement and support along the way. I also want to thank my extended family, including those who are here today, nan, Gail, Sheryl, Pat, Spencer, Greta and Kerrie. Thanks to all of you. It is wonderful to know I have the support of my broader family.

Finally, I want to thank my little family, who mean everything to me. Emma, thanks for your amazing support throughout this journey. Thanks, too, for your tolerance of a partner whose choice of profession means that I am often not there in the evenings and on the weekends, leaving you to carry the disproportionately heavy load. I honestly could not have done it without you.

Finally, I want to thank our little daughter, Aoife. She is a very cheeky little girl and I hope that I can do her proud in this place. It is because of her—in fact, all our children and grandchildren—that I am so passionate about what we must achieve. I just hope that I can make some changes that will leave her a world that is just a little bit better, cleaner, safer and greener.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Dr Brad Pettitt, congratulations on your first speech. I wish you well throughout your term. Members, before I give the call to Hon Neil Thomson, I remind members that this is the member's first speech.

HON NEIL THOMSON (Mining and Pastoral) [3.38 pm]: I begin by acknowledging the traditional owners of the land on which we meet, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, and their elders, past and present. I also acknowledge the Aboriginal people of different nations across Western Australia, many of whom I have worked with and have developed close friendships with.

Like others in this house, I am a migrant, arriving from New Zealand 37 years ago. I am a proud Australian, living the affirmation I took when I became a citizen in the late 1980s. I was born in the small town of Ōpōtiki, New Zealand, which is located on the North Island's east coast where I lived until my family moved to the regional city of Gisborne. Those early days involved plenty of fishing and camping and, as I matured, a love for the mountains. Winter was especially important. However, I spent too many of my university years skiing on the slopes of Mount Ruapehu and with friends hiking the high peaks of the Ruahine and Tararua Ranges.

It seemed normal that after I finalised my study at Massey University of New Zealand, armed with a Bachelor of Agricultural Science, I would work for a period as a shepherd, with working dogs in tow, on Mount Earnslaw station in New Zealand's Southern Alps. If you have watched the cinematic version of *Lord of the Rings*, then you will be familiar with Earnslaw station and the location of my shepherd's quarters. These were later to become the site of the Wizards Tower and the Orc's lair—with additional computer generated imagery. To this day, I struggle to imagine the Tolkien series as they should be, rather than thinking of the settings I have walked and each peak I have climbed.

I was part of a family of five children. My dad was a country police officer who worked in inquiries and youth aid. My mum was an artist and businessperson, owning and managing florist shops when she was young, using those landscape paintings to further subsidise household expenses. I am grateful for her artistic talent. Some of which has brushed off on me a little. Some of my earliest memories include travelling with dad in his personal car—there were no patrol cars in Ōpōtiki in those days—when he did his inquiries. We visited Maori families along the rugged east coast of New Zealand where I was plied with copious amounts of tea and biscuits as dad listened intently to Maori concerns.

My dad passed in February last year. He was deeply committed to his faith, as is my mother, with the theme of redemption always being at the forefront of their way of being. This theme also guides me. Dad's parents were Finnish migrants to New Zealand in the early part of the twentieth century and to this day we continue to have contact with our family in Finland. Hanging on the wall in my mother's house is a painting depicting a scene of a snow-covered forest in Finland, a gift in gratitude for the many food parcels my grandmother sent from New Zealand during World War II and afterwards during the recovery. I am told that the painting is on the very canvas that wrapped the food parcel—such a potent symbol of how resilient people can repurpose hardship into art and create a symbol of family bonds.

As we have heard in this place, through inaugural speeches, family narratives are important. It is our history. It is our truth. Mine is no different. Even my name "Thomson" is a relatively recent invention. My grandparents adopted it in order to fit into New Zealand society—Granddad's surname being Koskinen. To me it epitomises the era, the opportunity and the desire to fit into something new, as was the story of thousands across the globe. The story of migration continues with, we hope, greater acceptance of diversity.

As families have their stories, so too do nations, the importance of which resonates with our First Nations people as they find their voice in their truth telling. As we listen and engage, we come closer to healing and understanding, especially in this the week dedicated to reconciliation. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge my friend Dr Robert Isaacs, who lives with his wife, Teresa, a few blocks away from where my wife, Debra, and I live in Broome. He lives and breathes the story of reconciliation, faith, perseverance and acceptance. I first met Robert through my role as executive director for the Aboriginal Lands Trust; he was the chair. Robert would always jokingly address me as the honourable Neil Thomson. Robert, I do not know what you knew, but your prediction has been realised. Like Robert, my father identified his natural family later in life. Unlike Robert, my father was adopted as a child and it was not until he was in his 50s that he learnt the details of his biological family, both pakeha and Maori across New Zealand. As dad grew older, he found tremendous comfort in engaging with both sides of his massively enlarged family, with numerous brothers and sisters he did not know he had earlier in life. It was his Maori brothers who said to him that there is no such thing as a half-brother in Maori culture, and they embraced him as one of their own. Debra and I have adopted this approach to our blended family. We have eight children between us and it is rapidly growing with the next generation—a family I am very proud of. We love them all and do our best to be there for them no matter what the circumstance.

My mother's story comes through colonial Australia with a history of hardworking Irish and English ancestors. In fact, my great-great-grandfather, Walter Bailey, arrived in Fremantle in 1851. He went on to build roads in and around Perth. It seems a fitting acknowledgement to my ancestors that my first job in Western Australia in 1985 was in road construction, operating a front-end loader and bulldozer on the Newman–Port Hedland Highway just south of Munjina Gorge.

It was in 1988 that I began my career in the Western Australian public service based here in Perth. We bought our first home, our second and our third as our family expanded, settling in the brand new suburb of Ellenbrook in 1998

where I became involved in many community-based activities, supporting my kids as they grew up. In the early days, there was nowhere in Ellenbrook to get music lessons or be involved in art. Along with a few locals, I joined the effort to establish a music academy and painters group. I acknowledge the many hardworking pioneers of Ellenbrook, including former Ellenbrook RSL president Brian Dillon; Councillor Patty Williams Jones, an inspiration to thousands of young people; and former Labor member Jaye Radisich, who, sadly, passed away in 2012. I also acknowledge the developers of Ellenbrook, LWP Group Pty Ltd, which was exemplary in supporting community groups. To this day, it continues to support the Ellenbrook Cultural Foundation, an organisation that I was a founding member of.

I am proud to have three adult daughters, the youngest being a commercial skipper off the Kimberley coast, another who is a social worker and mother of two wonderful boys, and the third a full-time mother of four beautiful and high-achieving children. My two sons work in the mining and exploration sector in the Mining and Pastoral Region. Debra's three sons came into my life as adults. They now work in the defence industries and the oil and gas sectors and the bond with them rounds out our very large family. Debra and I acknowledge and appreciate the devotion of those who have co-parented with us and recognise the challenges for all parents who juggle co-parenting responsibilities.

Over the last four years, my wife, Debra, and I have operated an economics consultancy based in Broome. We work across the Kimberley on projects delivering for Aboriginal corporations, local governments, state agencies and the private sector. We have met some incredible people in that role, people who fight tirelessly for the economic prosperity of our region: people like Shirley Brown from the remote community of Mulan, former ALT board members like Preston Thomas from Karnpa in the Ngaanyatjarra Lands, Patrick Green from Fitzroy Crossing and Jamie Elliot from the East Kimberley. I enjoy working with them on so many projects but most of all, I am the beneficiary of their friendship.

I have seen the frustration of Aboriginal clients who have battled red tape and the challenges of engaging with our bureaucracy as they try to achieve their aspirations for a stronger community. Land is central to the culture of Aboriginal people. Our land tenure arrangements and our bureaucracy are often too impermeable to enable the economic activity, home ownership, prosperity, and cultural security we need to deliver for both Aboriginal people and the broader community. This needs to change. I have had the opportunity to develop business cases and advocate for funding for road infrastructure and important social projects through our role with local government. I cannot say strongly enough that it is unacceptable that, for many thousands of people who live in the remotest parts of our state, regular periods of isolation and constant danger on our dirt roads is a feature of their lives. We are yet to make sufficient investment to ensure infrastructure is safe and resilient—all year. This is a priority issue for me. It is vital that we see our regions prosper, our kids educated and provide pathways into fulfilling work and a meaningful life.

Opportunities in the resources sector, the defence industries, tourism and services sectors provide opportunities for the next generation and I trust will continue to do so into the future. I have a vested interest in the future of this state and this country, as my family has their future deeply etched into its fortunes. The challenges we face with increasing societal dysfunction, rising crime and antisocial behaviour need to be addressed by the state. We can so easily become desensitised to the ongoing crime and wanton destruction in our communities, but this has a corrosive effect on the trust people have with each other and the confidence we bring to our society. Drug addiction, petrol sniffing and alcoholism are just the tip of the iceberg of dysfunction. The despair of neglect, domestic violence and child abuse can be addressed only when there is a grassroots approach, coupled with a strong response to law enforcement and justice.

There need to be positive pathways to recovery, focused on education and learning to respect each other. I appreciate the opportunities that both education and training provide, as they are a gateway to a better life. Without education, my life would have been less interesting, less satisfying and less prosperous. I have listened to the representatives of business in our regional chambers of commerce as they despair at the shortage of job-ready young people, but, on the other hand, I have also experienced firsthand the challenges of young people trying to break into the workforce at the end of their training or schooling. We need to find more creative solutions to enable the connection between education and training and work to be strengthened and optimised.

Although tertiary qualified, my first role in the public sector was as a level 1 field officer in 1988, undertaking field trials on behalf of the Department of Agriculture. We are fortunate to have some of the finest researchers and academics across the field of agriculture and other sciences. Our world-class botanical diversity is still to be understood in the development of new fodders, foods, nutraceuticals and medicines, and it is particularly important if we are to develop northern Australia and expand our existing pastoral farming system and our nascent irrigated agricultural sector.

Our natural world is becoming an increasingly important focus, as we tackle the challenges of climate change, oceanic pollution and the pressures on our natural habitats. We must continue to invest strongly in R&D and take advantage of our natural resources in a responsible way, including investing in our people to enhance their expertise. It was a commitment by the then Department of Agriculture to excellence and research that provided me with the opportunity to complete studies at the University of Western Australia, gaining a master's degree in science (agriculture), majoring in agricultural economics.

In 1997, I was transferred to the Department of Treasury, which ultimately led efforts in competition policy and micro-economic reform. It was the federal Labor government under Paul Keating that introduced competition reforms, which were progressed by the Liberal Howard–Costello partnership. This economic reform played a key role in creating our unprecedented prosperity, with the longest stretch of continuous economic growth of any Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development country prior to the COVID pandemic.

I am committed to promoting a market economy, coupled with sensible laws and processes that enable fairness, accountability and predictability. Creating this environment enables businesses to make investment decisions with the confidence that their risk assessments are predictable, and they are likely to be rewarded for their hard work and investment. For that reason, we should attempt, to the greatest degree possible, to ensure that our laws are properly defined and can be managed efficiently. If we do not have incentive in our society, we have failure. The strength of the Liberal Party is that we have fought to maintain incentive, contextualised within a fair and progressive tax system that involves a reasonable redistribution where it is needed. The system must be sufficiently beneficial to promote one of the most basic instincts of the human condition, which is to get up every morning and go and do a solid day's work and to put capital on the line, whether it is human capital in the form of physical effort, intellectual endeavour or artistic creativity, or to risk financial assets—investing to gain reward.

The unprecedented growth in Australia is no more felt than in the Pilbara, where we see huge opportunities. These opportunities come with community pressures. I acknowledge the incredible work of the Barnett–Grylls partnership, which transformed towns like Karratha and Port Hedland through the royalties for regions program. But there is still so much more to do in building our key regional centres, starting with ensuring that there is adequate housing and services to promote a vibrant residential community. The ongoing challenges of the interface of industry and our residential areas in towns such as Port Hedland also need to be addressed and done so fairly. Although FIFO has been essential in our state, there is no substitute for long-term residential populations in our towns. These generate strong small business sectors that support our volunteers, who are so vital for our communities. I see the impact of FIFO firsthand on my home town of Broome, where business owners are disproportionately represented in the army of volunteers in sporting clubs, marine rescue services, volunteer fire brigades and the State Emergency Service.

With its huge resources wealth, Western Australia is well positioned for the future, but we must diversify our economy if we are to withstand the potential global shocks from emerging international belligerence, the evolving pandemic and environmental threats. Even the risks associated with emerging technologies are tangible and should be considered carefully to ensure that a fair and equitable society is maintained into the future. We are also well positioned as a future energy superpower, with ample sunlight and massive potential oil and gas reserves that will enable our transition to the new energy economy over the coming decades. Our iron ore industry will need to diversify with the production of green steel, with sustainable energy an obvious opportunity. Legislatures around the world will increasingly grapple with the full impact of these emergent technologies on our social and environmental wellbeing. We must promote technology but understand its impact. It should be managed and understood.

This is also true for our social media. Although the issue was short-lived, the enormous power of Facebook was on display in its deeply disturbing action that saw many of our community services' pages shut down and our then state opposition leader's page cut off just weeks before the state election.

As assistant director general for the then Department of Planning, I was responsible for the information technology effort and observed with some disappointment the inefficiency of our data procedural management systems. I am an advocate for greater transparency and permeability in decision-making processes, and technology can be a key to achieving this. As shadow Minister for Planning, I will be advocating for greater community participation in land use planning decision-making processes. To this end, I am a great supporter of the role of local government. I have 26 local governments in my region and, in my experience, they have always punched above their weight. I have experienced incredibly positive examples in local government in my region and seen how they rise to the challenge when there is a gap, including through the COVID pandemic.

At the state level, we can achieve so much in partnership with both our local authorities and the commonwealth government. But it is in this place that we review laws, and I will always reflect on whether those laws are the right instruments to deal with the problems that we have or whether there are less-restrictive alternatives that can achieve the same outcome. This approach was enshrined in clause 5(9) of the Competition Principles Agreement, which was adopted as part of the competition reforms that I referred to earlier. Clause 5(9) is an incredibly effective tool. It is elegant and I will paraphrase it for the purposes of broader application here today. Firstly, in the review laws, you should always clarify the objectives of those laws. You should identify how those laws either restrict or empower, and analyse the likely effect of those laws on individuals, groups and the economy generally. You should assess and balance the costs and benefits of those laws, whether cultural, social or economic. You should also consider alternative means for achieving the same result, including non-legislative approaches. The discipline of this assessment should be applied before assigning bills into law, taking seriously the role we have collectively in this house of review.

In closing, I would like to acknowledge some key people who have influenced my life. I had the pleasure to serve as Hon John Day's chief of staff after the win of the Barnett government in 2008. I hope I can follow John's meticulous approach as the shadow Minister for Planning. Dr David Morrison was my mentor and boss in the

Department of Agriculture and the Department of Treasury, and I worked with him on and off for nearly two decades. Hon Eric Ripper was Treasurer while I was assistant director of the microeconomic reform unit in Treasury. Eric was a great supporter and a model politician—someone who always read his briefings and provided feedback to the public service. I would like to give special thanks to Susan Chown, the immediate past president of the Durack division of the Liberal Party, without whom I would not be here today. I thank Hon Bill Marmion and his wife, Katelyn, who supported me in my endeavours well before I entered Parliament. I thank Hon Melissa Price, MP, whom I have worked with closely in my role as president of the Durack division of the Liberal Party. Melissa makes an incredible contribution to regional Western Australia. Senator Dean Smith works tirelessly as the patron senator to Durack and is always willing to do a road trip in the bush to meet people in small communities, towns and our regional cities.

I acknowledge Councillor Geoff Haerewa, shire president of the Shire of Derby–West Kimberley and also a former Liberal candidate for the Kimberley. At the last election, Geoff had the largest positive swing in his primary vote of any Liberal candidate. Without his efforts, I would not be here today. I also acknowledge former member for Kalgoorlie Kyran O’Donnell. Again, without his dedicated work, I would not be here as a member for Mining and Pastoral Region. I also thank Alys McKeough who ran as the Liberal candidate for North West Central. She fought adversity during the campaign, including floods, as she promoted the Liberal vision. I acknowledge the relentless Camilo Blanco of Port Headland, who is passionate about his region, and stood as the Liberal candidate for the Pilbara in the last election. I acknowledge David Serafini from Derby and Jan Ford from Port Hedland who made the long trip to be here. Thank you for your support. To those who are watching this video feed—friends, colleagues and family around the state, the nation and the globe—thank you.

The Liberal Party is a grassroots organisation. It is run by volunteers across this state. They are good people from a range of backgrounds, including small business, volunteer groups, religious and non-religious, Indigenous and non-Indigenous—men and women all with different perspectives but with a common purpose as outlined in the objects of the party. Finally, I want to acknowledge my wife, Debra. Her love and devotion, I hope I can match. We are a team in life.

In closing, I would like to make reference to my mum, Joyce Thomson, in Zealand. She is in her twilight years and we converse regularly by phone. She continues to be that link to my past and family across the sea. Recently, when I told mum of the final count in the Mining and Pastoral region—which took some time as members would know—she was quick to provide some unsolicited advice: “Don’t be like those other politicians, Neil. Be honest and don’t exaggerate!” Then, as an afterthought, she said, “And most of all, love everybody.” Now that seems pretty straightforward; doesn’t it? I spoke to her a few days ago and she reminded me in her telling-off tone to remember what she said and not to forget that word. I asked, “What word, Mum?” “Honourable”, she said. “It’s a good word and you shouldn’t forget it!” Yes, Mum. I won’t forget.

[Applause.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Hon Neil Thomson, congratulations on delivering your first speech. Welcome to the Legislative Council and all the best.

Debate adjourned until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by **Hon Colin de Grussa**.

[Continued on page 980.]

TREASURER’S ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BILL 2021

Second Reading

Resumed from 13 May.

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition) [4.04 pm]: I thank the Deputy President for the opportunity to make a few comments on the Treasurer’s Advance Authorisation Bill 2021. For the interest of those members who have not experienced one of these bills before, there are a number of ways that we fund the operations of government. First, obviously, is the annual budget statement, which is known as an appropriation bill. That comes out once a year, usually in May, but in an election year, or if there is some dire circumstance like last year, perhaps in September and occasionally in October. There is then the opportunity to catch that up and extend it. If it is still the financial year in which the government wants to expend those moneys, it introduces a Treasurer’s advance authorisation bill, which, when passed by Parliament, allows the government to spend money in the same financial year. Members should realise that all government expenditure should be appropriated and passed by Parliament, and so there needs to be a bill of some form to expend money. If that is in the current financial year, it is done by way of a Treasurer’s advance authorisation bill. If the government has an issue in the next financial year and needs to extend that, it is what is called a supply bill. I suspect a government supply bill will come forward in the June sittings, minister.

The other thing that happens not infrequently is that the government had an opportunity to spend money but needs to account for that well after the fact. If the government has spent money in a previous financial year and then suddenly realises it needs an act of Parliament and a piece of legislation to authorise that spending, then we do

the catch-up supplementary appropriation bills. A few of those are always sitting on the notice paper, and have traditionally done so for a long period of time. I forget how many, but the minister will probably have to reintroduce a good half a dozen bills that were sitting around previously —

Hon Stephen Dawson: A few short months ago.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Absolutely.

Because supplementary appropriation bills are an opportunity to talk about lots of things around government expenditure, oppositions generally love them and governments generally do not. These bills tend to sit on the notice paper and do not progress or get argued out. Eventually, if a government does not have anything else to put in place, we find that the supplementary appropriation bills see the light of day. But it is only really when the government has nothing else going on.

Hon Darren West: We love financial advice from the WA Liberals.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The member should listen because he might learn something. Hopefully, if the member stays there, he will learn a few tricks. I did make a commitment to try to not take too long, minister, but every interjection probably adds an hour to this speech.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I will ensure that you won't get unruly interjections from my colleagues.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Come on, we will see how we go.

Those are the ways that the government can get appropriation bills through the house—that is, expenditure in the appropriate financial year, forward and progress; a supplementary appropriation bill for additional revenue for expenditure in previous years; seeking a Treasurer's advance to put additional funding into the current financial year; and seeking a supply bill to put effectively additional funding in the next financial year.

Interestingly, the Financial Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, when we get to it, will probably change some of this process. I have been looking forward to that bill for some time. It went through the Legislative Assembly in the last Parliament but, I might say, was one of the many bills—I think it was forty something bills—that fell off the notice paper.

Hon Tjorn Sibma: I have a question to that effect today, and we will find out.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: We will find out how many bills were still on the notice paper at that particular point. I hope —

Hon Stephen Dawson interjected.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: We are here to help, minister.

Hopefully, we will find out how many bills dropped off the notice paper. They were not necessarily bills that the Legislative Council held up. We do hear that from the government.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Because the Legislative Council never holds up legislation.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Not in this place. The government in this place has generally been pretty honest about the fact we were overrun with bills. I forget how many the government prioritised in the end. Was it 12 or 13 bills that we agreed to get through? In fact, we offered to sit late if the government wanted additional time. There were plenty of bills and we assisted the government with its agenda. Admittedly, a lot of bills were deemed urgent COVID bills. In my view, the opposition was immensely helpful during debate on those bills. It probably helped that the minister, who is now the Minister for Mental Health—that will take a bit of getting used to!—generally handled lots of those bills, particularly the finance ones. He has always done his very best to treat the opposition, the Parliament and the public of Western Australia with some respect.

Hon Kyle McGinn interjected.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Is the member trying to get to number one on the ticket? Let us not go there for a minute!

Unfortunately, that has not always been the case. I might just outline a rather unsavoury event. I know that if this minister had been in charge of the process, we would have had a very different outcome and a different operation. I attended the briefing in the Nationals WA party room, where the Treasury officials came to present both the Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill 2021 and the Supply Bill 2021. My advice to Treasury and the representative of the Treasurer's office at that point was that obviously we understand that with Treasurer's advance bills, oppositions love to ask a great number of questions; the government does not necessarily want to answer them, but that is part of the process that we go through. It is actually why, when we get to the Financial Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, the opposition, in being supportive of that process, will reduce the level of examination that it is capable of; it will reduce the number of times that opposition members stand up and question the government. In the name of efficiency, we are determined to try to do the best we can. I explained that to the officials. I also said that the best way forward, and the way to ease the passage of this bill from an opposition perspective, is for the government to simply provide as much information as it possibly can on the items on which it proposes to spend that additional money. I thought that was a reasonable proposition. I think the department took that on board.

We then progressed to the Supply Bill. I was forced to point out that the Supply Bill had an error in its explanatory memorandum. It was an error that was not horrendously complicated—it simply put \$15 billion of expenditure into the wrong financial year. It was reasonably simple. It was no doubt an oversight, but it was obviously an error. Pointing out that error apparently drove the government to the point that it refused to provide the information that it said it would provide on the Treasurer’s advance bill; that is, on where this money would be expended. I thought that was an incredibly petulant action. I have no doubt that that would never have occurred under the previous Treasurer, Ben Wyatt. I have no doubt that it would not have occurred had the Minister for Mental Health been the Treasurer. I was intrigued to listen to Hon Neil Thomson when he described Eric Ripper. Was Eric Ripper a Treasurer?

Hon Tjorn Sibma: Yes.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Did Hon Neil Thomson work under Eric?

Hon Tjorn Sibma: Yes, he did.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I am sure Eric Ripper himself would never have made —

Hon Stephen Dawson: Hon Eric Ripper.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Hon Eric Ripper would never have responded in such a petulant manner as to try to take away the information that an opposition would otherwise need in order to examine this bill. I have great respect for Hon Eric Ripper, as I do for Ben Wyatt and the minister opposite. By the way, is Ben Wyatt still “honourable”?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Yes.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Yes, he is too.

I have no doubt that it would have been a very simple exercise for one of those members and that they would have simply seen the obvious error, corrected it, shrugged their shoulders and said, “Well, those things happen.”

There has been a lot of commentary about the Premier taking on the role of Treasurer. To be honest with the Minister for Mental Health, it was just too good a free hit that the Treasurer; Premier made such an error in his first piece of economic legislation in his first week back at Parliament. The government should have expected to wear that one on the chin. I thought it was an incredibly petulant act for him to say, “Because you’ve spoken to people about this, we’re not going to provide that information.” It is disappointing that that was the standard presented.

As a turnaround from that, let me say that the information was ultimately provided during the debate in the Legislative Assembly. The information was put together by the department. It eventually became obvious that the information we had requested but had been denied had to be provided, because it made no logical sense not to do so. We will be going through that in a little detail. Minister, I flag that it is my intent to go into Committee of the Whole House because it is a little complicated. Personally, I do not intend to spend an enormous amount of time in committee, but it is my intent to ask a few detailed questions about where that expenditure is likely to go.

The Treasurer’s Advance Authorisation Bill 2021 asks for an extension of money in the current financial year—the 2020–21 financial year. It is an increase of \$750 million on the currently approved extension limit. Members should be aware that at any point the government can exceed its budget at the state budget level. Under the current legislation, the appropriation can be exceeded by three per cent. That allows some leeway in terms of end-of-financial-year expenditure. That three per cent would have been calculated, based on the previous year, at \$689 million—three per cent of the 2019–20 financial year.

The government maintains it has a requirement for additional funds of \$750 million, which will take the sum to \$1.439 billion. It is not unusual to get Treasurer’s advance authorisation bills. We passed one last year, primarily based on the need for additional expenditure during the COVID pandemic. The opposition supported that bill and it passed in a timely manner. I note the opposition will be supporting this bill passing in a timely manner as well. It is not only the Labor Party that has Treasurer’s advance authorisation bills. There were a significant number of advance authorisation bills under the previous government; my memory is that this occurred particularly when Troy Buswell was the Treasurer. It is not an unusual situation that additional moneys are required. What is different under the current set of financial circumstances is the economic position in which this state finds itself.

In a little while, we will go into a bit more detail about what the money is likely to be spent on. The first point I would like to make is that this government finds itself in the incredible situation of having an enormous amount of money coming in in revenue—a level of revenue that I have sometimes described as an embarrassment of riches. There is absolutely no doubt that this state is seeing wealth being generated at an unprecedented level, particularly in what we call the fiscal economy. The fiscal economy is that of government. This government has an embarrassment of riches in terms of its revenue. It is astounding to think about the amount of money that is coming in that this state has to deal with. It comes from a number of areas. For those members who are interested, the Minister for Mental Health tabled today the *Quarterly financial results report*. That is a very useful document. It comes out effectively three times a year, because the fourth one is the *Annual report on state finances*. That report comes out roughly two months, sometimes three months, after the end of the financial year and provides an absolute

level of the expenditure, revenue et cetera of the state government. The other three quarterly reports are released a couple of months after the end of their particular quarter. Today, the Minister for Mental Health tabled the report for the first quarter of this year—that is, for the third quarter of the current financial year, being January to March 2021.

It is worth looking at this embarrassment of riches that the state government is receiving. I want to look at a couple of areas. There has been an increase of over \$2 billion in royalty income over the nine-month period of the financial year to date. The report states —

- higher royalty income (up \$2,103 million), largely due to the combined impact of:
 - a higher benchmark iron ore price which averaged \$US139.4 per tonne in the nine months to 31 March 2021 ...

For members who are new, they missed the joy of the last two years whereby I spent an enormous amount of time talking about the price of iron ore and exactly what it does to the budget of Western Australia. They will be pleased to know that I will reference a question I asked in February 2019, which is now two years and two to three months ago. The question I put to the good minister, who replied using the information provided to him by the then Treasurer, was, “Have you modelled what will happen to your budget if the price of iron ore stays above \$US90 a tonne?” In early February 2019, there was a definitive surge in demand, particularly in China, but also in a couple of other countries, which drove the price of iron ore to, I think, \$US93 a tonne. The answer came back that a longer term price average above \$US90 a tonne had not been modelled because it was, and I quote, “highly unrealistic”. This is important, because this is the birthplace of the McGowan government boom. In February 2019, the price peaked at over \$US90 a tonne, and for only short periods briefly dropped below that before rebounding back up. As the *Quarterly financial results report* says, for the financial year so far it is at \$US139.40 a tonne. Let us say we are averaging \$US140 a tonne. The price today is somewhere around \$US205 a tonne, which is an embarrassment of riches for the state government. Obviously, iron ore miners do very well out of it as well, but it is also an embarrassment of riches.

It is also important to note that with the signing of the GST deal originally researched by Scott Morrison as Treasurer, then signed by Scott Morrison as Prime Minister, the correction of those additional revenues was removed because a floor was put into the GST payments in this state. I am delighted for new members to go through that process, because I am sure they will be immensely interested to note —

Hon Stephen Dawson: How did that motion go at the federal council on the weekend?

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I understand it was passed without dissent, but I was not there, obviously, to let you know.

Hon Martin Aldridge: You should’ve gone!

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: To a Liberal Party federal conference?

Hon Tjorn Sibma: I’ll send you the minutes, if you like.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Thanks; I just wondered.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I understand there was no dissent. Hopefully, I will not be proved wrong on that one, but we will see. If I am, I will not take my bat and ball and go home; I will continue onwards. We have to try hold the standards high in the Legislative Council.

The federal government recognised that when an individual state had a massive own-revenue source that pushed it beyond the capacity of other states to match, there was a balancing out with the redistribution through the Commonwealth Grants Commission. In the old days that used to happen through various state grants, and the state with its most own-revenue capacity would generally receive fewer infrastructure grants and less funding through those other grant systems. With the introduction of the GST in 2000, the system was shifted to a GST process. The Commonwealth Grants Commission at that point had a balancing act. It would rebalance the income of various states as best it could, reflecting that not all states have an equal capacity to raise revenue. It was an immensely topical discussion for many years in Western Australia. During the mining booms—because we have had multiple mining booms—it redistributed a large amount of money out of Western Australia through the Commonwealth Grants Commission to the eastern states. That has stopped because the current federal government introduced a 70¢ floor that in 2024 will go up to a 75¢ floor. That has been a massive income boost for Western Australia.

Before I go on to explain exactly how big that is, let us look at how much the iron ore royalties have varied over time. I draw members’ attention to page 17 of the document I mentioned before, the *Quarterly financial results report*. Under “General Government Operating Statement” of Western Australia it states that last financial year, 2019–20, the total royalty income was \$8.45 billion. Bear in mind that the McGowan mining boom started in February 2019. There was already, let us say, four to five months of the boom before the 2019–20 financial year. The actual royalty income at that point was \$8.45 billion, which was a massive amount of money. For the nine months to date, royalty income in the 2020–21 financial year is \$8.245 billion. That is the nine months until 31 March. For three quarters of the year the current government has received \$8.245 billion of royalty revenue, which is remarkably close to

the \$8.45 billion that it received for the entirety of 2019–20, which was entirely within the McGowan government mining boom. It is looking to make a significant amount of money on top of that this financial year. In fact, the estimated out turn—as much as we could potentially trust it, because it is obviously Treasury’s best guess at where this is going—for the McGowan government this financial year is \$10.7 billion in royalties alone. If members want to know why I call it an embarrassment of riches, that is the reason.

Let us look at some of the iron ore royalty returns over previous years, particularly towards the end of the last boom when significant amounts of money were floating around. The iron ore royalty revenue in actual figures in 2012–13 was \$4.871 billion. It crept up. Towards the end of the boom, under the previous government, in 2013–14 it was \$5.824 billion and in 2014–15 it was \$6.176 billion. In 2015–16 we had a significant correction. The vast majority of royalty income is iron ore royalties; it is not quite all of it, but almost. In 2014–15, royalty income was \$6.176 billion. In 2015–16, when we had that correction, it was \$3.67 billion. It almost halved. Members can remember, no doubt, the impact that that had. In 2009–10 for example, which is the financial year just at the end of the global financial crisis—bear in mind that the global financial crisis was a tough period, but fiscal economies did not collapse in the same way that other parts of the economy did—total royalty revenue, the majority iron ore, was \$2.577 billion. In 2009–10, \$2.577 billion was probably closer to the long-term average run, perhaps even a little below it, because I think the price went significantly lower at that point. We then reached a point of \$6.176 billion in 2014–15, going back in 2015–16 to \$2.67 billion. That is what we call the boom-and-bust pattern of Western Australia. That discussion about diversifying the Western Australian economy was mentioned in a number of first speeches that I have listened to, particularly in two tonight that were excellent contributions. What happens is that we have a boom-and-bust cycle. Members have to remember that from the period from 2009–10, it increased to \$6.176 billion dollars in royalties in 2014–15; obviously the Commonwealth Grants Commission process was in place and there was a recalculation. Some of the iron ore boom that occurred in Western Australia was redistributed to other states in a significant way to the point at which the GST returns to this state wandered down to the region of 30 per cent of what would otherwise be applied if it was a dollar-for-dollar value. The Morrison government has applied a 70 per cent floor. I would have thought that it would be very interesting to work out precisely what level of GST income this state would receive if that floor was not in place.

I understand that those numbers have been done and I think somewhere around 42 per cent was mentioned. That is worth a couple of billion dollars to this government. It is on top of the rise in iron ore royalties from, let us say a \$4 billion or \$4.5 billion long-term average to \$10.7 billion expected in the current financial year. That is what I call an embarrassment of riches, particularly given there is an extra couple of billion dollars in the GST pot because of the deal signed by the federal government by the current Prime Minister and previous Treasurer. That has given this government an enormous capacity to spend. It intrigues me that when the government has such a great capacity to spend, but when we look at where it is spent, we would not have thought that a government with more revenue than any government before it would find itself with the sort of service provision crises that it currently does.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 969.]

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

PUBLIC SECTOR — STAFF

185. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Public Sector Management:

I refer to the composition of the Western Australian public sector.

- (1) How many people were employed, by headcount and FTE, on 31 March in —
 - (a) 2017;
 - (b) 2018;
 - (c) 2019;
 - (d) 2020; and
 - (e) 2021?
- (2) How many people were in employed in senior executive services roles, by headcount and FTE, on 31 March in —
 - (a) 2017;
 - (b) 2018;
 - (c) 2019;
 - (d) 2020; and
 - (e) 2021?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. Answers to questions (1) and (2) are in tabular form so I seek leave to have the response incorporated into *Hansard*.

[Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.]

(1)–(2)

Quarter	Sector Headcount	Sector FTE	SES officers (headcount)
31 March 2017	139,144	109,895	519
31 March 2018	140,799	110,404	403
31 March 2019	142,278	112,099	375
31 March 2020	146,343	115,548	412
31 March 2021	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.

There is some additional text: data for March 2021 will be published in mid-June 2021. The Public Sector Commission publishes this information in the *Western Australian public sector quarterly workforce report*. The increase in FTEs has been driven by the recruitment of additional teachers and education aides as well as nurses, medical practitioners and cleaners, who have been essential in the state government's response to keeping Western Australia safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The McGowan Labor government makes no apologies in hiring additional frontline workers to support Western Australians, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PUBLIC SECTOR — STAFF — PERMANENCY

186. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Public Sector Management:

I refer to the composition of the Western Australian public sector.

- (1) How many public sector staff have been converted to permanency by year since 2017 under the government's policy to convert existing contract and casual staff to permanent roles since its implementation?
- (2) What is the average annual salary by level and dollar amount, including on costs for staff converted to permanency?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Public Sector Commission advises —

- (1) Public sector agencies have reported the conversion of 15 214 fixed-term and casual staff by headcount to permanency since 2018.

I seek leave to have the following three lines of data incorporated into *Hansard*.

[Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.]

Year	Headcount
2018–19	2,691
2019–20	10,482
2020–21*	2,041

* Year to date.

- (2) The Public Sector Commission does not collect this information.

CYCLONE SEROJA — WESTERN POWER — RECONNECTIONS

187. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the challenges faced by farmers in the midwest recovering from the effects of tropical cyclone Seroja, specifically regarding electrical service reconnections.

- (1) In which areas and/or localities are reconnection works incomplete?
- (2) Please provide a breakdown of each of those areas and the proportion to which works have been completed and estimated time to completion.
- (3) What actions are being taken to expedite these reconnection works?
- (4) Is the minister aware of reports that Western Power crews have not been recently sighted in locations such as West Binu?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Energy, I provide the following answer.

- (1) The line that runs from Yerina Spring Road, West Binu to Northampton town site has sustained significant damage and works are incomplete in parts of the surrounding area. The majority of customers who remain without power are impacted by this work.
- (2) Customers whose premises are safe for reconnection are expected to be reconnected in the next two to three weeks, with work on the network expected to be complete by the end of June.
- (3) All available resources in the region are being deployed and contractors are in the area to bolster the restoration efforts.
- (4) No.

CONSERVATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AMENDMENT BILL 2021

188. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:

I refer to the minister's answer given on 27 May that a "case-by-case" approach will be taken to determine whether any extant recreational and commercial activities in marine reserves are inconsistent with the objects of the Conservation and Land Management Amendment Bill 2021.

- (1) How many management plans for marine reserves and the like are either being prepared or revised?
- (2) What are the particulars of each plan and what is the anticipated timing of their gazettal?
- (3) In the course of preparing or revising these plans, has the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions been advised of the potential for any extant activity to be inconsistent with the "protection and conservation of the value of marine parks to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people"?
- (4) If yes to (3), please provide details.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) There are three management planning processes currently being progressed. These processes are for the proposed marine parks in the Buccaneer Archipelago, the proposed marine park on the south coast and the proposed extension to Marmion Marine Park. The proposed extension to Marmion Marine Park will require the existing management plan to be reviewed.
- (2) The particulars of the indicative joint management plans for the Buccaneer Archipelago marine parks are available via the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions website, where the indicative joint management plans can be viewed. The management plans for the proposed marine park on the south coast and the proposed extension to Marmion Marine Park are in the early stages of consultation and will be prepared with stakeholders and the community.

Honourable member, apparently they are 100 pages long. I am happy to give you a link to those, or if you want a copy of them printed out, please see me behind the chair and I will be happy to provide them to you at a later stage. The answer continues —

It is anticipated that the management plans for the Buccaneer Archipelago marine parks will be finalised in 2021. The plans for the proposed marine park on the south coast and the proposed extension to Marmion Marine Park are to be finalised by 2024.

- (3)–(4) The formal public submission period for consultation on the indicative joint management plans for the proposed Buccaneer Archipelago marine parks is currently open. Advice has been provided on the potential for existing activities in proposed special purpose zones for cultural protection to be incompatible with the protection and conservation of the value of marine parks to the culture and heritage of Aboriginal people. This advice is reflected in the indicative joint management plans, which are subject to ongoing consultation.

AISHWARYA ASWATH AND COHEN FINK — CORONIAL INQUESTS

189. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the powers under section 22(1) of the Coroners Act 1996 to direct that a coroner holds an inquest.

- (1) On how many occasions has the Attorney General used that statutory power of direction from the time he was first appointed on 17 March 2017?
- (2) On how many occasions has the State Coroner used that statutory power of direction since 17 March 2017?
- (3) Following the death of Aishwarya Aswath —
 - (a) has a coroner issued a section 24 notice of refusal; and
 - (b) has the State Coroner directed a coroner to hold an inquest?

- (4) Following the death of Cohen Fink —
- (a) has a coroner issued a section 24 notice of refusal; and
 - (b) has the State Coroner directed a coroner to hold an inquest?
- (5) If yes to any part of (3) or (4), on what date?
- (6) Will the Attorney General direct a coroner to hold an inquest into one or both of those deaths?
- (7) If yes to (6), for which one and when will this direction be made?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following response on behalf of the Attorney General.

- (1) According to advice from the Department of Justice, since the Coroners Act was enacted in 1996, no Western Australian Attorney General has ever exercised the power of direction under section 22(1)(d) of the act. Further, no examples have been found of an Attorney General in any other Australian state or territory directing that an inquest be held.
- (2) According to advice from the Department of Justice, there has been none.
- (3)
 - (a) No.
 - (b) On 14 May 2021, the Deputy State Coroner determined that an inquest would be held into Aishwarya's death.
- (4)
 - (a) On 2 January 2020, the State Coroner notified the Fink family's lawyers of her decision to refuse to hold an inquest, including the reasons for making that decision. On 27 May 2021, the Coroner's Court notified the Fink family's lawyers that the decision to refuse to hold an inquest was being maintained, including the reasons why.
 - (b) No.
- (5) See answers to part (3)(b) and (4)(a).
- (6) The Attorney General does not have the power to direct that there be an inquest into either death. In Aishwarya's case, the Deputy State Coroner has already determined that there will be an inquest. As the matter is now before the Coroner's Court, it would be inappropriate to comment further.
 The Solicitor-General has advised that once a coroner has decided to not hold an inquest, the Attorney General does not have the power to overrule that decision and direct that an inquest be held. Therefore, in the late Cohen Fink's case, the Attorney General has no power to direct that there be an inquest. As this matter is now the subject of Supreme Court proceedings, it would be inappropriate to comment further.
- (7) Not applicable.

ST JOHN OF GOD MIDLAND PUBLIC HOSPITAL — BUDGET

190. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to the answer given to question without notice 133 provided on 27 May 2021, and the 23 May 2021 ABC online article titled "Looming Midland Hospital funding cut not the fault of WA government, Roger Cook says", which included the statement —

Mr Cook said it was an issue for the hospital's private operator and the Department of Health to resolve.

- (1) Given that the matter was not resolved at the time of the article's publication, when was St John of God Health Care informed that additional funding would be provided to ensure that the base hospital budget for 2021–22 would not be reduced?
- (2) What is the total amount of additional funding that will be provided in the 2021–22 financial year to ensure that the hospital's budget is not reduced?
- (3) What is the total funding that will now be allocated to the hospital for the 2021–22 financial year?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of question.

I have been advised that further time is required to answer this question. Information will be provided to the honourable member by 3 June 2021.

The PRESIDENT: Hon Peter Collier.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER COLLIER: My turn.

The PRESIDENT: Thank you, honourable member, how about you ask the question and I will do the chairing.

POLICE — ONLINE OFFENCES

191. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

Will the minister provide the number of offences by specific offence type, facilitated by online means over the past five financial years, 2015–16 through to 2019–20; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police.

For the Western Australia Police Force to provide a response it would take considerable time and resources. The diversion of resources to complete this task is not supported by the WA Police Force. If the honourable member is able to refine his question and place it on notice, the WA Police Force may be able to provide a response.

COST OF LIVING — FEES AND CHARGES

192. Hon WILSON TUCKER to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer the Premier to the expected increase to household fees and charges of about \$100 per household a year. I draw the Premier's attention to the fact that rental vacancy rates are at a historical low, while rental stress and homelessness have skyrocketed over the past six months and is expected to worsen with a sudden influx of applications to end tenancy agreements. I also note that the state budget is expected to include a surplus of \$5 billion. At a time when Western Australia's most vulnerable are struggling to make ends meet, how can the Premier justify such an unnecessary increase to household fees and charges?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

The McGowan Labor government has delivered on the commitment it made at the state election to limit increases to inflation. In 2021–22, the basket of household fees and charges is estimated to increase by 1.6 per cent, below the projected consumer price index of 1.75 per cent. For the average household, this results in an increase of less than 30¢ a day. This will be the first time a CPI cap policy will be implemented in more than a decade.

The McGowan Labor government has increased concessions available to support the most vulnerable, including the energy assistance payment, an indexed grant of more than \$300 a year paid to around 300 000 households, as well as the hardship utility grant scheme, which is up to \$580 for those south of the twenty-sixth parallel and up to \$960 for those above it. Last financial year, the McGowan Labor government delivered the biggest decrease to household fees and charges on record—a fall of 10.4 per cent. This included the one-off \$600 WA household electricity credit.

MEDICAL CANNABIS — PHARMACEUTICAL BENEFITS SCHEME

193. Hon SOPHIA MOERMOND to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

I refer the minister to recent media reports suggesting that medicinal cannabis continues to cost patients here in WA as much as \$600 a month, forcing some to turn to the black market for pain relief that is frustratingly legal, yet remains financially out of reach. I acknowledge that the pharmaceutical benefits scheme is wholly within the purview of the federal government.

- (1) Does the McGowan government favour the inclusion of medicinal cannabis as part of the PBS either now or in the near future?
- (2) If yes to (1), will the minister commit to actively lobbying his federal colleagues with an aim to bringing this about?
- (3) If no to either (1) or (2), why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Yes, subject to meeting all the normal criteria for funding.
- (2) No.
- (3) The Minister for Health has previously written to Minister Hunt on this matter.

CEMETERIES ACT — REVIEW

194. Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Local Government:

I refer the minister to the many questions posed both in here and the other place about renewal at Karrakatta Cemetery during the previous Parliament, and most specifically to the response given to question without notice 913 on 15 September 2020, confirming that a review of the Cemeteries Act 1986 would commence in October 2020 and likely conclude in late 2021.

- (1) Can the minister confirm the current status of that review?

- (2) Can he inform the house whether public consultation has commenced; and, if so, on what date and when is it scheduled to conclude; and, if not, when is it expected to commence, what form will such consultation take and what deadline, if any, has been placed upon submissions?
- (3) Will the minister consider instructing the Metropolitan Cemeteries Board to pause any anticipated renewal works until such time as the review has concluded and any recommendations from it have been considered?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Consultation is currently being undertaken with key stakeholder groups.
- (2) Public consultation is expected to be undertaken in the second half of this year.
- (3) There has traditionally been acknowledgement for the need for cemetery renewal across both sides of the Western Australian Parliament and bipartisan support for the longstanding renewal program. Managing burial capacity is a challenging issue for cemeteries. Renewal of gravesites to provide ongoing capacity for burials is a regular practice in Australian cemeteries and around the world. As the renewal process is essential for the ongoing operability of Karrakatta as an open cemetery, it has been continuing consistent with the Cemeteries Act 1986, including during the current review.

MINISTERIAL EXPERT COMMITTEE ON ELECTORAL REFORM

195. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Electoral Affairs:

I refer to government's electoral reform review, which was, and I quote, "not on the agenda", immediately prior to the last election.

- (1) Please identify the person or persons who drafted the discussion paper.
- (2) Was the discussion paper approved by the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform; and, if so, on what date?
- (3) How many submissions were received by the committee prior to the release of the discussion paper?
- (4) Is the government yet in a position to advise the Legislative Council of the cost of the expert review process?
- (5) How is the government advertising or intending to advertise the establishment of the review and the request for public submissions, and what budget has been allocated for this purpose?

Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer is provided on behalf of the Minister for Electoral Affairs.

- (1)–(2) The discussion paper was drafted by the Ministerial Expert Committee on Electoral Reform.
- (3) Over 50 submissions have been received. Approximately 28 were received prior to release of the discussion paper.
- (4) The cost of the review is yet to be finalised and will be reported to Parliament in the usual manner when determined.
- (5) *The West Australian* and all regional newspapers have been contacted and provided with information about the committee and the discussion paper. Paid advertisements in *The West Australian* commenced from Saturday, 1 May 2020. The committee has a public website at waelectoralreform.wa.gov.au that includes details on committee members, the terms of reference, the discussion paper and public submissions as they are processed. The chair of the committee has also spoken publicly about the work of the committee on the ABC 720 morning show. I refer the member to answer (4) above regarding costs.

WATER DEFICIENCY DECLARATIONS

196. Hon JAMES HAYWARD to the minister representing the Minister for Water:

I refer to the Minister for Water's media release regarding the cessation of water deficiency declarations in some localities.

- (1) Has the minister consulted directly with the affected localities to ensure all farmers in those areas have no further need for the provisions afforded via water deficiency declarations?
- (2) Is the minister able to allow for individual cases to continue to receive provisions if they are needed?
- (3) What metric is used by the minister to determine the need for water deficiency declarations to be declared, and what metric is used by the minister to determine when those declarations are ceased?
- (4) Can the minister assure the public that the revocation of water deficiency declarations will not result in hardship for individual farmers and their livestock?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Water, I provide the following answer.

- (1) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation consulted with affected shires and farmers registered under the water deficiency declarations prior to the nine water deficiency declarations being revoked.
- (2) Strategic community water supplies and scheme water supplies have been assessed as being adequate to support the current off-farm water needs of farmers in the areas previously declared water deficient.
- (3) A water deficiency declaration is a last resort option to provide emergency livestock water in central locations, after all available community water supplies and on-farm water supplies have been exhausted. The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation continually monitors water availability in areas affected by water deficiency declarations. A decision to revoke a water deficiency declaration is made based on the adequacy of on-farm and off-farm community water supplies in the affected area, and in consultation with affected farmers and shires. Significant rainfall has been received in affected areas with good run-off to farm dams and community water supplies.
- (4) The Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has advised that farmers have access to adequate on-farm and off-farm water supplies to meet their livestock water needs in the areas where water deficiency declarations have been revoked.

BROOME REGIONAL PRISON

197. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to the announcement on Friday, 28 May that the location of the Broome Regional Prison has been finalised. The minister's answer to question without notice 138 asked on Tuesday, 25 May—three days before that announcement—suggested that two locations were still under consideration and a consultation process would occur with affected community members in the coming weeks.

- (1) On what date did the minister finalise the decision on the location of the new Broome prison?
- (2) If a decision was imminent, why did the minister say in his answer that two locations were still in consideration and, I quote "...the Department of Justice will begin the next phase of consultation with affected community members in the coming weeks before a final decision is made"?
- (3) Did the minister mislead Parliament with his answer to question without notice 138?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services, I provide the following answer.

- (1) The traditional owners provided consent for an approximately 200-hectare parcel of land to be made available to the state government for the development of the new Broome Regional Prison on 28 May 2021.
- (2) At the time the answer was provided to the member, it was not known if and when the traditional owners would provide consent for a site to be progressed. Two sites remained under consideration until consent was provided on 28 May.

The consented site is further away from the 12 Mile community than the second alternative site. This site is at least two to three kilometres away from residential properties. Further work must now be done to progress and finalise the location of the prison development within the larger site. The Minister for Corrective Services has publicly undertaken to engage in further consultation, including an offer to personally attend a meeting with affected community members.

- (3) No.

CYCLONE SEROJA — WESTERN POWER — RECONNECTIONS

198. Hon STEVE MARTIN to the minister representing the Minister for Energy:

I refer to the homes and businesses in the midwest affected by cyclone Seroja.

- (1) Is the minister aware how many homes and businesses remain without power in the midwest region?
- (2) Can the minister advise when power will be restored to those homes and businesses?
- (3) Is the minister considering subsidising the cost of the diesel used in gensets by victims of cyclone Seroja to power their homes and businesses over the previous seven weeks?

Hon DARREN WEST replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. On behalf of the minister representing the Minister for Energy, I provide the following answer.

- (1) As of 1 June, 80 customers remain without power.

- (2) Western Power is working to have customers reconnected within two or three weeks, with final work on the line to be completed by the end of June 2021.
- (3) The McGowan government is considering all appropriate means of support for those impacted by tropical cyclone Seroja and thanks the member for Geraldton, Ms Lara Dalton, MLA; and the members for the Agricultural Region, Hon Darren West, MLC; Hon Sandra Carr, MLC; and Hon Shelley Payne, MLC, for their advocacy on behalf of those affected by tropical cyclone Seroja.

VOLUNTARY TARGETED SEPARATION SCHEME

199. Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the McGowan government's voluntary targeted separation scheme.

- (1) As at 31 May 2021, what is the total number of separations achieved under the VTSS?
- (2) From what departments and agencies have the redundancies occurred, and in what number for each department and agency?
- (3) As at 31 May 2021, what is the total amount paid out to employees who have separated under the VTSS?
- (4) What was the actual net saving made by the VTSS from the implementation date of the VTSS to the end of the financial year 2019–20?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. Given the level of detail required, we are unable to provide an answer in the time provided. We will endeavour to provide an answer tomorrow.

DEPUTY PREMIER — PORTFOLIOS — MEETINGS

200. Hon COLIN de GRUSSA to the minister representing the Deputy Premier:

I refer to meetings the Deputy Premier has had in his various ministerial roles since 13 March 2021.

- (1) Has the Deputy Premier met with the director general or, if they were unavailable, their equivalent of each department under his portfolios?
- (2) If yes to (1), for all portfolios, can the minister please detail the date and time of each meeting with the relevant director general or equivalent, the attendees of those meetings and the duration of each of those meetings?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

I have been advised that further time is required to answer this question. The information will be provided to the honourable member by 2 June 2021.

McGOWAN GOVERNMENT — LEGISLATIVE AGENDA — LAPSED BILLS

201. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the Leader of the House:

I refer to a number of government bills that were introduced in the other place in the fortieth Parliament and lapsed on prorogation.

- (1) How many such bills does the government intend to reintroduce in this Parliament?
- (2) What are those bills?
- (3) Has there been any changes to bills that have been reintroduced or are about to be reintroduced, other than the date referred to in the short title?
- (4) If yes to (3), can the Leader of the House please provide details?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(4) The drafting of bills for reintroduction is a decision of cabinet and is cabinet-in-confidence. All bills, including those that have been reintroduced, are listed on the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly notice papers.

KIMBERLEY SUICIDES — CORONER'S REPORT — FOETAL ALCOHOL SPECTRUM DISORDER

202. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection:

I refer to the State Coroner's recommendations arising from the inquest into the deaths of 13 children and young people in the Kimberley region, delivered on 7 February 2019, and in particular recommendation 1a that there be universal screening for foetal alcohol spectrum disorder upon a child entering the child protection system for the first time.

- (1) Is universal FASD screening now consistently being conducted in accordance with that recommendation?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) In what time frame is this screening being implemented from the time a child enters the system?
- (4) How many such FASD screening assessments were completed in the 2020 calendar year?

Hon SAMANTHA ROWE replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The answer is provided on behalf of the Minister for Child Protection.

- (1)–(2) As outlined in the government’s statement of intent on Aboriginal youth suicide, the Western Australian government supported the overall intent of the recommendation. There is presently no universally accepted screening tool available for foetal alcohol spectrum disorder and the accurate diagnosis of this condition requires assessment by a multidisciplinary combination of clinicians. All children who come into care are required to have an initial medical assessment with a general practitioner or other health professional within 20 working days. The general practitioner can make any referral as a result of this assessment, including for FASD.
- (3) The time frame varies depending upon the circumstances under which the child came into care, as well as other factors, including trauma, that may complicate or obscure problems that may lead to a hypothesis of FASD.
- (4) There were 111 neurological and intelligence quotient assessments undertaken in 2020. These assessments include testing that screens and identifies potential FASD indicators. If these indicators are present, a medical referral for the FASD assessment occurs.

POLICE — STAFF

203. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

- (1) Will the minister provide the number of FTEs within the technology crime services area; and, if not, why not?
- (2) Will the minister provide the number of FTEs within the sex crime division, broken down by sub-unit; and, if not, why not?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police.

- (1)–(2) The Western Australia Police Force advises that due to operational sensitivities, specific information relating to staffing levels of individual police stations or business units is not publicly released.

URGENT CARE CLINICS — GERALDTON

204. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to WA Labor’s plan for Geraldton released in February 2017, and specifically a commitment to establish an urgent care clinic in Geraldton.

- (1) At what location is the urgent care clinic located?
- (2) What are the operating hours of the urgent care clinic?
- (3) What services are provided at the urgent care clinic?
- (4) Is access to the urgent care clinic bulk-billed and at no cost to patients, as was committed?
- (5) If the government is unable to answer parts (1) to (4) because no such urgent care clinic exists, and noting the government’s own standard, which is that it has four years to deliver election commitments, has the government now abandoned its election commitment to the people of Geraldton and the midwest?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer is provided on behalf of the Minister for Health.

- (1)–(4) There is no pilot site in Geraldton.
- (5) Strategic discussions have previously been facilitated by the Department of Health around the development of the statewide urgent care clinics initiative in regional areas, and for local fit-for-purpose models of care to be considered for implementation in the previous term of government. In line with the election commitment, the research and consultation undertaken has demonstrated that the healthcare needs are uniquely different across the identified regions. Further developments will be identified based on the pilot findings.

COMMUNITY KINDERGARTENS — ENROLMENTS

205. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the Minister for Education and Training:

I refer to community kindergartens operating in Western Australia. Will the minister provide the current enrolment for each community kindergarten for the 2021 school year?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

The information is in tabular form, so I seek leave to have that incorporated into *Hansard*. It is the community kindergarten enrolments as at the 2021 February census.

[Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.]

Community Kindergarten	Town/suburb	2021 Enrolments
Albany Community Kindergarten	Albany	29
Bullsbrook Community Kindergarten	Bullsbrook	31
Byford Community Kindergarten	Byford	16
Glen Forrest Community Kindergarten	Glen Forrest	13
Hazel Orme Community Kindergarten	White Gum Valley	38
Hillarys Community Kindergarten	Hillarys	28
Kindaimanna Community Kindergarten	Kelmscott	6
Lockyer Community Kindergarten	Albany	73
Lower King Community Kindergarten	Albany	17
McDougall Park Community Kindergarten	Como	38
Mount Helena Community Kindergarten	Mount Helena	9
Mullaloo Community Kindergarten	Mullaloo	39
Padbury Community Kindergarten	Padbury	27
Pineview Community Kindergarten	Coolbellup	8
Rossmoyne Community Kindergarten	Rossmoyne	36
Seaview Community Kindergarten	Cottesloe	31
Spring Road Community Kindergarten	Kalamunda	20
Tuart Hill Community Kindergarten	Tuart Hill	18

PINDAN GROUP — LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS — SHIRE OF ASHBURTON

206. Hon NEIL THOMSON to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the recent announcement that construction company Pindan has been placed into external administration. The Shire of Ashburton has confirmed that this will leave the building of the Tom Price childcare centre and the emergency services precinct on hold indefinitely.

- (1) Since the announcement, has the minister contacted the Shire of Ashburton to gauge the impact that the delay in these projects will have on the community of Tom Price?
- (2) What actions will the minister take to ensure that these vital community infrastructure projects will be completed in a timely manner?

Hon SUE ELLERY replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) The administration of Pindan is very concerning and has significant impacts across a number of local government areas. The Tom Price childcare centre is project managed by the Shire of Ashburton and Rio Tinto. The state government is working actively to mitigate the impacts of administration. The Minister for Commerce and the Minister for Finance will continue to work with the administrators on matters relating to Pindan's existing projects.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 7 AND 9*Papers Tabled*

Papers relating to answers to questions on notice were tabled by **Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House)**.

TREASURER'S ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BILL 2021*Second Reading*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition) [5.05 pm]: I am sure that everybody is very keen to get back to the economic discussion in which we were partaking before we were so rudely interrupted! I will resist the urge to do an in-depth recap of where we got to previously and proceed from roughly where we were. We were looking at the embarrassment of wealth that the current government is receiving in income. We had looked in some detail at the issue of iron ore and the GST. Again, if we refer to the revenue as indicated in the *Quarterly financial results report*, we find that it is not just royalty income that has significantly increased over the last nine months. The income from royalties has come mostly from iron ore. I suspect that this jurisdiction has had the best outcome during the COVID-19 pandemic of any jurisdiction that I can research. The reality is that this state has, to some degree, made money out of the COVID virus. We have piggybacked on the economic stimulus packages of a number of countries. These economic stimulus packages have frequently involved infrastructure development. China has led the way with a massive infrastructure spend. A lot of other countries around the world have taken up the opportunity to use government funds to invest in infrastructure. Interestingly, a lot of those government funds have been, let us say, debt funded. Western Australia is in this remarkable situation in which it is, to some extent, the great beneficiary of those massive economic stimulus packages, because that, as much as anything else, is driving up the price of iron ore. Not only are those economic stimulus packages driving up the price of iron ore, but also the disruptions in supply in some countries, particularly Brazil, have contributed to the rise of the price of iron ore. We are the jurisdiction that is, in effect, making a massive profit out of the COVID response through these economic stimulus packages.

That has meant that, in total, the additional iron ore royalties that this state has received are beyond the money that has been expended by the state government in its COVID response. We are, in effect, making something of a profit out of the process. The original COVID package announced by the government was about \$5.5 billion. I know that the government claims that the current expenditure is a bit over \$7 billion, and I am happy to accept that it has put in additional funds because there have been some things, particularly with additional lockdowns. Perhaps it could even have been a little more generous.

The additional iron ore royalties generated by Western Australia have tipped at least \$8 billion into the state's coffers over a similar period, and it shows no real sign of ending soon. I suspect that we will see that correction perhaps sometime next year, when we will see some correction down into the mid \$US150 range, and I think most companies that predict these prices are suggesting that a price of \$US130 to \$US160 will be around for a fair bit of 2022. It will be interesting to see whether by 2024, we are back down to the long-term average run in the price of iron ore, because when we start to get full vaccination around the world, which will certainly be after the end of this year and, I suspect, some way into 2022, we will find that the supply issues around the world will reverse and many countries will no longer be spending an enormous amount of money on their economic stimulus packages.

Although that in itself raises a question for the economic tragiacs amongst us, Deputy President—that is, around the world we have all, to some degree, become Keynesian economists. Not many countries are looking at this situation and saying that the old debt-and-deficit model and the question of whether we can live within our means is still primary in their thinking. Most governments seem to have drifted out to a much more Keynesian approach. I must say that I miss having Hon Aaron Stonehouse in the chamber to throw these economic debates across to. I hope that in time the crossbench will jump up and engage in this process because Hon Aaron Stonehouse was a very good contributor to the economic debates in this house. But we are all sort of Keynesians now. I note that the federal government's debt level will approach \$1 trillion in about three years. I remember the outraged discussion when it hit a couple of hundred billion dollars under the Rudd government. We are all kind of going down that path now.

I will diverge for a minute. My concern is that at some point we will have to ask the questions: Is this the last pandemic? Can countries and jurisdictions around the world spend the next 50 years repaying the debt that they have accumulated? Will the simple transposition of a gene, probably an influenza species in a host that is not human, jumping across that divide again in five to 10 years' time see us suddenly back were we started, rushing around propping up economies to keep jobs in place? The suggestion that this is the peak and we will now start paying it off might prove to be something very different in the future. We have hit a point in the economic debate at which no jurisdiction these days tends to just allow economies to react naturally—economies have to be propped up and employment has to be propped up. I understand the argument that if there is massive unemployment, the welfare budget also goes up. I understand that argument, but it generally comes at a far greater cost to government and is debt funded over time.

In my view, at some point there will be a reckoning in this process, and it will go in one of two directions. Here is where I miss Hon Aaron Stonehouse. I think we are going in one of two directions. We will have to have a massive correction in national debts in particular whereby countries that hold enormous government debt with effectively zero capacity to pay it off will simply have to be forgiven the debt. If one thinks that it is only the very poor countries that do not have great capacity, I think, from memory, the United States of America's government debt

sits at about \$28 trillion at the moment. We are talking about Australia hitting \$1 trillion; America is at \$28 trillion. It is at the level of United States' gross domestic product at its most productive. Japan is a little bit over 100 per cent of gross domestic product. A lot of countries are basically running off debt. China is very interesting because the debt is often internal and it shifts between governments, so it is very hard to get a measure of it. But at some point we will have to have a correction. At some point the holders of that debt will be forced to surrender it because they have no capacity to repay it. It will amaze members to know that with a \$28 trillion debt there is no potential for the United States to have a budget surplus in the foreseeable future. We probably will not see one in our lifetimes. I start to worry that there will not be one in Australia any time soon. It is very hard to deliver. I know there is some optimism amongst my federal colleagues that they can get there, and I hope they can because they have been good financial managers, but the starting point is quite grim.

Western Australia is in an amazing situation. The debt level here is going to hit in the region of \$42 billion compared with most other jurisdictions in the world, but we have done so on the back of the iron ore industry in particular, the correction of the GST floor and the benefit we have received from those massive stimulus packages around the world. I do not have the answer, Deputy President. I do not know which way it will go, but I suspect the late 2020s and early 2030s will be a very interesting time economically, because that will be about the time when we will start to hit that crucial period.

I want to raise a couple of other issues before we get into the minutiae of the bill, which I suspect, minister, it might be better to do in Committee of the Whole House. I have a range of questions about some of the projects and processes the government is going to run. Today I asked a question about the size of the public service, because that is a significant cost to government. Honourable members should start picking up the quarterly statements, budget papers and *Annual report on state finances* because they will find an enormous amount of material in there. I know it is kind of longwinded and nerdy reading, but it is good to get a handle on how the state operates. For members' information, I refer to page 55 of the *Quarterly Financial Results Report* —

Salaries represent the single largest component of general government sector expenses (39% for March 2021, or 43% if concurrent superannuation costs are also included).

One usually puts on-costs into the cost of an employee, so let us say that 43 per cent of expenses goes into wages. It is a significant cost. The report continues —

Relative to the same period in 2019–20, general government salaries grew by \$469 million (or 4.9%) over the first nine months of 2020–21, to total \$9,967 million.

I think that 4.9 per cent growth in wages is a pretty significant figure. I understand that the government still has the \$1 000 pay rise policy in place. Given the answer to a question I asked last week, it would seem that that policy remains in place. We could potentially assume that much of that 4.9 per cent growth in salaries was in FTEs or additional employees rather than in pay rises, but it would be interesting to get a breakdown of that. On the following page of the same document, of interest and also of the same level of concern, is a table with a breakdown of the salaries costs of the general government sector. It indicates that for the year to 31 March—there is a rounding—let us assume there is an additional cost of \$469 million in wages and salaries. It intrigues me that there is also an actual for 2019–20 and an estimated overrun for the current financial year, 2020–21. The difference between those two numbers—where they were last year and where they are expected to be this year—is only \$261 million. That seems to indicate that in the last quarter of this financial year, the government, if it hits its particular target, given that the figures in this document should be up to date, will save \$208 million on the amount that it has expended in the last three months. I am intrigued to get an answer from the minister's advisers on precisely how they intend to achieve that particular miracle because I would say it is immensely optimistic. Does the minister have any additional detail on the savings that might be made in the next three months? It might be that the voluntary termination scheme perhaps kicks into hyperdrive for April, May and June 2021, but I cannot quite work out why there would be such a significant saving in all those places.

Although we may ask the minister those questions, he might not be in a position to provide this information in a rush. I did note that the salaries costs for the Department of Communities was basically the same for the first nine months of 2020–21 as it was for 2019–20, but the government expects a saving of \$28 million for the entire financial year. I would have thought that the Department of Communities would struggle to reduce its salaries costs in particular over the next three months to the point at which there is \$28 million of savings available. Perhaps we could get that information if not in the minister's second reading reply, then later down the track in Committee of the Whole. Wages are a big component of the costs. There are some question marks about the levels, and we will continue to chase those down.

Effectively, the government has asked for an additional \$750 million of capacity—let us not say necessarily expenditure, but capacity—to expend in the current financial year. That means the government has partly spent it already, I suspect, and some of it will be spent in the not-too-distant future. There is generally a buffer in budget bills. There is a buffer in appropriations bills. There should not be a buffer in supplementary bills, but there often is a buffer in the Treasurer's advance bill. I note that this one is a \$210 million buffer. I would have thought that was about par in terms of how Treasurer's advance bills generally go. Perhaps the minister might be in a position, in his reply, to give us an indication of whether that is a relatively normal and common level of buffer.

There are a few interesting components; most of them I will go through during Committee of the Whole. I note there is \$220 million worth of election commitments. I would have thought that that would give all members an opportunity, during the Committee of the Whole, to look at the election commitments. If members do not have a copy of the election commitments that will be funded under this particular bill, please let me know because I am happy to photocopy the information that was generously supplied, eventually, by the government. The minister might even be able to table a copy and members can have that. There is probably no reason why I cannot table it. I seek leave to table what is called attachment A, the \$220 million worth of election commitments under the Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill 2021.

[Leave granted. See paper [237](#).]

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I believe it was tabled in the other place. Given that fact, it is effectively a public document anyway. I cannot imagine the minister would have any issue with it.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Was it attachment A?

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Yes; I think that is the critical one.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I was going to table it.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Okay. Do I get any points for getting in first?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Yes; a gold star!

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Excellent. Thank you. I will have a nice stamp for that!

I am generally happy. We have covered most of the generalities around the economic position of the state. I am looking forward to a bit more detail in some of those areas that are specifically referred to, particularly the vaccination program and the election commitments. Can the minister provide some advice on the buffer, because that is reasonable? There will be some issues about the recurrent funding description. On top of \$220 million worth of election commitments, there are a number of other proposals. Is the minister happy to table that other component, which is attachment 1? Has the minister got that?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Yes.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I am happy for the minister to table that during his reply. Members will be interested in asking a few questions about components of that. Personally, I would be very interested to see how the relocation of Edith Cowan University—the Perth City Deal—is going. There will be a few others in there as well.

I will finish by repeating that the opposition will support the Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill 2021. This is a fairly normal process. It gives all members of the opposition and the crossbench an opportunity to question the government about its expenditure in those areas. To some degree I will miss some of these opportunities when I suspect we will pass the Financial Legislation Amendment Bill 2021, but some of these will still occur no doubt. I am sure this economic debate will be going on for some time. I look forward to continuing those. I am sure this minister at least understands the gravity and importance of this sort of scrutiny, particularly in the Legislative Council.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Mental Health) [5.24 pm] — in reply: I thank Hon Dr Steve Thomas for his indication that the opposition alliance is supportive of the bill before us. Can I say at the outset that I am sure Hon Dr Steve Thomas will get plenty of opportunities to have fun in this place in relation to financial or Treasury bills over the next four years.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I do not want to take it for granted.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, no; you do not. Equally, you will get an opportunity to provide proper scrutiny, as is your wont and as is the correct thing to do. Again, I thank Hon Dr Steve Thomas for his contribution.

The Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill 2021 seeks \$750 million as an extension of the automatic authorisation under section 29 of the Financial Management Act 2006, as Hon Dr Steve Thomas indicated. That is to fund public spending that may arise by 30 June 2021. As outlined in my second reading speech, that amount is consistent with the financial forecast detailed on pages 79 to 84 of the *Pre-election financial projections statement* that was released on 8 February, with an allowance added for issues emerging since that time. The additional items since the PFPS include additional COVID-19 spending, including the Western Australian rollout of the national vaccination program; funding of small business lockdown assistance following the Anzac Day weekend lockdown; an allowance for natural disaster costs that emerge by 30 June including the Wooroloo fire and cyclone Seroja; the value of election commitments that have an estimated impact on 2020–21; and an allowance for any new but as yet unidentified but unavoidable spending that may require central funding before 30 June 2021.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas mentioned the availability of details of the items that sat behind the Treasurer's advance for 2020–21. A number of documents were tabled in the other place by the Premier during debate. I want to make sure that this house also has available to it the same documents. Hon Dr Steve Thomas tabled the election

commitments document, so I will not table that. I have a document titled “Treasurer’s Advance 2020–21 Summary” that lists the various departments and the amount of money and a description of what that money would likely be spent on. I table that document.

[See paper [238](#).]

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I table a further document, which was the third document the Premier; Treasurer tabled in the other place, the “Treasurer’s Advance Authorisation Bill 2020–21 Summary”. I table that for the benefit of honourable members in this place.

[See paper [239](#).]

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I want to make the point that the Treasurer’s Advance Authorisation Bill is not an approval to spend; it is administrative in nature. That is an important issue that members need to be aware of. The Treasurer’s Advance Authorisation Bill will grant access to consolidated account funding when an agency’s existing appropriation is not sufficient to meet its cash needs and when the existing appropriation limits under the automatic Treasurer’s advance have been exhausted, as Hon Dr Steve Thomas pointed out in his contribution. It does not provide government with a blank cheque. As such, all drawdowns are reported to the house in the public ledger disclosure in the *Annual report on state finances*. An audited report is released in late September every year.

If the additional funding requirement does not crystallise by 30 June 2021, the authorisation lapses and it is no longer available. That is what has happened previously. In his contribution, Hon Dr Steve Thomas acknowledged we had a similar issue to deal with in April 2020. Parliament approved a similar bill. That bill authorised access to an additional \$1 billion for the Treasurer’s advance. That was approved to provide the flexibility to deal with uncertain spending outcomes that were arising as the COVID-19 pandemic began to unfold. In the end, only \$166.1 million of the additional funding was required by 30 June last year. The remainder lapsed at the end of the last financial year.

In the bill before us, some of the anticipated spending may not occur by 30 June, or lower spending outcomes and other initiatives may allow existing funding to be directed to support the issues that we have discussed, and we will discuss, in this debate. The forecast time with cash flows for \$30.2 billion in appropriations for 2020–21 will not be exact and some variations will emerge by 30 June. The bill merely provides certainty of funding, if needed. In the crazy world that we live in at the moment, and have lived in over the past 16 months, who knows what might be thrown at us? We have had cyclones and terrible bushfires, and of course we had a pandemic. The only thing we have not had thus far is a plague of locusts!

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Mice!

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Let us leave the mice in the eastern states! Let us hope a plague of locusts does not happen.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas acknowledged that he and others might have some questions about election commitments. We will deal with those during Committee of the Whole House, but we do not make any apology for seeking to deliver our election commitment outcomes as quickly and as is practical following our return to government. Obviously, the community expects prompt action by its elected officials. We could have sought to delay the benefit of these commitments, but we made the decision to bring some of those forward where appropriate and when they could be dealt with fairly quickly. They are fully costed election commitments, so we are seeking to deliver some of those before 30 June. This bill supports the delivery of what the government committed to deliver on and what it was elected to do just two months ago. We are not, of course, the first government that has sought to seek an authorisation that includes the implementation of election commitments. Former Treasurer Troy Buswell introduced the Treasurer’s Advance Authorisation Bill 2009 for the then newly elected Barnett Liberal–National government, and that bill sought \$762.3 million to fund new government commitments and other increases in that year. This included about \$337 million for the establishment and half-year funding for spending by the royalties for regions fund election commitment, \$117 million more than the \$220 million allowance for commitments included in the bill before us today.

To the other questions that the honourable member raised, I do not have answers to those yet. I may well be able to tackle some of them with the advisers at the table; we may well have to revisit others at another stage, potentially even at estimates. Let us see what we can answer in here.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: There will be more bills coming.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: There will be a lot more opportunities, honourable member. Let us see what we can answer here, but those that we cannot answer today, because these are not the appropriate advisers, we will get to at some stage in this place.

I thank Hon Dr Steve Thomas for his support, and also others who are here today for their tacit support and approval of the bill. I commend the bill to the house.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

Committee

The Chair of Committees (Hon Martin Aldridge) in the chair; Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Mental Health) in charge of the bill.

Clause 1: Short title —

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Just before I start, I think a couple of members do not have those documents. Thank you very much. I knew the efficient staff here would get to that point very, very quickly. I appreciate that.

Let us perhaps start and try to work our way through it all methodically. Let us go to the 2020–21 summary. Overall it lists the total \$1.438 billion roughly expected, giving a \$210 million buffer. I previously asked whether that was an average buffer. I presume that information might come. My memory is that it is a very regular position. We might start with that question.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I would be very happy to answer that question. Generally, the previous buffers have been between \$150 million and \$365 million over the year.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: When was \$365 million, sorry?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That was in 2006. Generally, since 1986, they have been between those figures.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Eric's budget?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told \$1 billion was the contingency last year because of COVID. Last year was much higher.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: If we jump into the vaccination program, \$140 million is effectively allocated. It may not get that big. How is that expenditure being rolled out? Is that expenditure that has already occurred, or is that an ongoing part of that vaccination program?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is ongoing. Health has to come back to us with the details of its spending. It will be audited as part of the *Annual report on state finances* that I spoke about in my second reading reply.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The minister is not then in a position to give us a breakdown of what has been spent and what is yet to come?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, I am not, because this will provide the capacity to spend. It has not necessarily spent it yet. Certainly, it has spent a great deal over the last year on things such as personal protective equipment and quarantine, and in relation to COVID some of the money that has been spent related to enhanced cleaning of schools, public transport et cetera. There are other such things that are still floating around that we are still doing more of. We are doing more than we would ordinarily outside the COVID period, but from time to time, for example, if there is an outbreak or a lockdown, quite often it is the case that enhanced cleaning or something extra is done to deal with that outbreak or lockdown.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I am going to presume that the minister cannot tell us whether any of that has been used for the purchase of vaccines at all?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The commonwealth buys the vaccine and we deliver it. Another point that has been made is that a reconciliation process takes place with the commonwealth, because certain elements of COVID spending are recouped from the commonwealth. That is an ongoing process, too.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The next item on that page is the small business lockdown assistance grants. I am presuming these are the lockdown grants that apply to only the Perth metropolitan and Peel regions. Has the government made any assessment of the need to extend that grant beyond into regional areas?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: This was purely about the Perth and Peel region. It is a grant of up to \$2 000 to directly deal with any loss small businesses might have faced as a result of the Perth and Peel lockdown.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I will just confirm that small businesses that might have been able to demonstrate a financial impact outside Perth and Peel could not apply for those small business lockdown assistance grants?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That is correct. It was when they had to throw out perishable items, for example, as a result of lockdown. This is an amount they could seek to recoup for their costs.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The government assumed that no perishables had to be thrown out outside the Perth metropolitan and Peel regions?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Certainly those areas were not in lockdown. It was the Perth and Peel regions. It is purely in response to that lockdown in those two regions.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I feel like I am hogging it, Deputy President.

The CHAIR: No-one else is standing, so I will give you the call.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Regarding natural disaster response, can the minister give us a breakdown of that line item on that particular document? That is a fairly broad response. Obviously there has been a range of natural disasters. I am talking Wooroloo and cyclone Seroja. I am sure it is legitimate expenditure. Do we have any indication where that is likely to go?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: This is a contingency. This is \$50 million in case it is needed. As I indicated, the costs from the Wooroloo fire and cyclone Seroja could be paid for from this. In terms of what has been spent so far, these officers here do not have that information and in fact Treasury may not have that information yet because, for example, the cost of the work that the Department of Fire and Emergency Services has to take or the cost of clean-up, for example, is done by line agencies. The line agencies need to bring their costs to the attention of Treasury and that obviously gets a fine comb run over it before the money is allowed to leave that \$50 million bucket.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Sorry, minister, I was absent from the chamber when a question was put by Hon Dr Steve Thomas regarding the vaccination program. Forgive me for going over it so recently after you provided an answer about the \$140 million ascribed to the vaccination program. I am sorry to everybody here, but I think it is important to clarify it. Can I understand exactly how that provision has been accounted for? What activities are funded from that amount?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is a contingency amount. It is not necessarily expended yet. An amount of up to that figure could well be expended between now and the end of June, potentially depending on how things go. I previously made the comment that we do not fund the vaccination itself. That is funded by the commonwealth, but we fund its delivery in most cases. In certain commonwealth-run aged-care facilities and in some disability settings we do not provide the vaccination delivery—the commonwealth does. This amount will allow us do our part of the vaccination program. It may not have been spent yet. Health needs to make the case with Treasury about the costs they have had to incur as part of this program, above the costs of their normal business.

Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER: The thought occurred to me as I was listening to the honourable member talking about the vaccination needs and the current difficulties they are having in Victoria; I assume that the amount provided for here has taken into account such events as those in Victoria being translated into Western Australia—the unpredictable nature of these things. Does the minister have any modelling that would suggest there may be a further need for finances based on further unforeseen circumstances?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Thank you, and a good question. There is a buffer built into the \$210.5 million. That is really for unseen issues and the potential for things like what has happened in Victoria. I will make the point again that last year we had a significant amount set aside of the Treasurer's advance but of that, only \$166 million needed to be spent before 30 June. We think we have it right based on last year, and bearing that in mind, God only knows what can happen between now and 30 June. We hope that because there is a buffer built in, if there is a further outbreak, there will be the capacity to deal with those costs between now and the end of June.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: And if there's not, there'll be another Treasurer's advance bill and you'll get to do another speech?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: There is always the potential for that but I hope not. I indicated what happened last year. This amount will, hopefully, get us through to 30 June, bearing in mind that that is only weeks away. Obviously, then we will deal with costs in the next financial year. Can I rule out another Treasurer's advance bill? In the crazy world we are in, I think it would be a brave person to do it.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I assume that attachment 1 outlines the 2020–21 Treasurer's advance of \$688 million, but I would like an explanation for an item that seems rather odd. It is \$27.8 million for mines, industry regulation and safety. It reads —

Predominately attributable to mining royalty assistance (Koolyanobbing Iron Ore, Ridges Iron Ore and spodumene producers).

Is there any chance of an explanation of what that is all about and why we have \$27.8 million for royalty assistance?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I think this reflects that the rebates are higher than previously anticipated and it reflects the higher iron ore prices. Those companies have an agreement with government that we will rebate their costs to a certain degree. At Koolyanobbing, at one stage there was a risk it would close down, so government at the time made an agreement to keep that mine and those jobs going.

Hon Neil Thomson: And Ridges might be the same because it is a fairly marginal mine?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Yes. Ridges produces low-quality iron ore. Again, it was to keep the mine going to keep the jobs in our electorate going, but obviously, because of the higher iron ore price, the rebate is higher than was previously anticipated.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: As I understand it, those iron ore companies are given a holiday on paying royalties; that is the layman's way of describing it. Given that when they were given a holiday and were making decisions about whether their business would be successful and the iron ore price was significantly lower, how did we get to a point at which the iron ore price is massively higher and now the state carries a debt, effectively? Do we know

how large the debt is between when that deal was made and the subsequent effect of how much the iron ore price has lifted? Effectively, we have made a deal based on making sure the businesses are sustainable. The iron ore price has gone up massively, so their businesses are far more sustainable and they probably do not need all the help they are getting. I wonder what the measure is between those two?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I can answer some of that. It would have probably been a line agency that was involved in the negotiation of some of these deals rather than a central agency and Treasury. At Koolyanobbing for example, Cliffs was the previous operator. It ceased production, so there was a risk of jobs for the people who were employed at the mine and transport companies—drivers and trains down to Esperance port et cetera. So an agreement was reached a number of years ago, I think with Mineral Resources Limited, that it would get a 100 per cent rebate on royalties. If it closed, we would not get any royalties. There was no price threshold. In terms of what we missed out on, we do not have that information. For Ridges, again, the decision was made to protect employment in the east Kimberley, particularly for Aboriginal people in that region. It was potentially to provide funds for the mining of an additional deposit. Ridges gets a 50 per cent rebate on the royalties. As I indicated, Ridges' iron ore is of low quality so it receives very low prices and requires support even during times of higher iron ore prices. I think they are the two main cases. In terms of what we have missed out on, it is hard to quantify, honourable member, because although we might not be getting royalties, we are getting payroll tax and other things, including benefits in remote communities. It is not a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul but making sure that the economy continues to provide jobs to the people who need them. The state gets the benefit as a result of that.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Minister, the \$18 million for communities includes compensation payments to community housing organisations—\$12 million on attachment 1. Can I please have a small explanation of that?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I understand that those organisations anticipated getting rent increases, as they do from year to year, but there was a rent freeze. This acknowledges that they would have got more had there not be a rent freeze. We are giving them money to supplement what they would have had had there not been a rent freeze.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I go back to item “Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety” and royalties. The minister mentioned a 100 per cent rebate on royalties. I would have thought that if there was a 100 per cent rebate and the royalties went up—it sounds like a dumb question—there would be no effect on improved access and a new item. I am still unclear why there is additional funding for all four in support of these marginal projects, particularly in areas of low employment. It seems a little odd that we are paying for more. Maybe the minister can explain this. Is this a net figure or is this some quirk of the finance system in which revenue is not being accounted for? I seek the minister's clarification on that.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told that those companies pay royalties and that we reimburse them by way of a grant. That is how that is done.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Is the minister saying that there is revenue in that column on attachment 1 that we are not accounting for?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: This is an expenditure bill; it is not the budget papers. When the member sees the budget papers later in the year, he will see that it comes in one place and goes out another. This is solely about expenditure, or potential expenditure.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: At some point I might put a question on notice or ask a question without notice about this to seek the amount of reimbursed royalties, just out of interest.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Probably do it on notice, because if you ask me without notice, you might not get it.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Yes; that will be for another day. We probably will not get that level of technical detail tonight, honourable members, but it might be a good way of testing the questions without notice process, which I have to say is not easy to navigate on the parliamentary website. That might be worth chasing up.

I refer the minister to the top item on attachment 1, “WA Health” and \$166.8 million that is predominantly attributable to COVID-19 costs. That makes sense. But it then says “\$130 million recurrent and \$2.1 million capital”, which, obviously, does not add up to \$166.8 million. Is some reserve built into that figure? I am not sure why that \$2.1 million is not in the capital budget; it is in the recurrent budget. There might be an explanation for why it looks that way, but \$34 million is not in there. I am interested to know whether the minister has any more information on that. I suspect the recurrent funding was fairly obvious, but could the minister comment on that? I am interested in what that capital funding of \$2.1 million is for, even though it seems to be in the wrong section. All the same, could we get some detail on that?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: In relation to the second part of the question, I think that \$2.1 million amount relates to ICT costs associated with COVID tracking. I note, of course, that the description given on attachment 1 states that it is predominantly attributable to those other things; however, \$39 million is related to the National Health Reform Agreement. That was a realignment. There was a reduction of \$39 million in commonwealth revenue under that agreement so that had to be offset by state appropriation and approved in the 2020–21 midyear review.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: To whom is that \$2.1 million capital figure that is attributed to COVID tracking payable?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: That would be the Department of Health’s capital costs for putting that tracking system into place. I do not know what further has been spent on that. That is all that Treasury knows. If the member wants to delve into that deeper, perhaps he could put that question on notice too.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The Perth City Deal relocation project is an area of interest to me. I can see that virtually all of the \$100 million Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation funding is going into that. Can the minister give an update on where we are at with that project?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told we are negotiating with Edith Cowan University on various milestones. The money has not gone yet, but it may well go before the end of June.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: What is the total budget of that project and how much of this reserve is likely to go into that?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: These are rough figures. These officers here are not dealing with that project so I can give only a ballpark figure. It is about a \$695 million project, and \$100 million in cash is coming from the state, plus \$50 million worth of land for the new campus. The commonwealth is putting in about \$300 million and the remainder is being put in by ECU.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: The approval of \$29 million for additional expenditure to cover custodial staffing costs seems to be a large increase. I am wondering whether there will be any commensurate increase in the number of custodial sentences? If the minister could give us any detail on that, it would be appreciated.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told that a new alcohol and other drug unit was opened at Casuarina Prison. The associated cost is \$29 million. Extra staff will be required. Custodial officers’ salaries and on-costs will be a big component of that, noting, of course, that this is a contingency and may or may not be spent before the end of June.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: I have a question that follows on from that. It is all very well to have additional staff. That is great, but usually there will be additional staff, particularly for a change in the budget requiring a Treasurer’s advance. It seems odd that we are going to spend more on staff. There must be some underlying reason for that. I appreciate that the Treasury staff here probably do not have the detail on hand, but I would be happy to ask a question on notice, if that is possible, of the custodial arrangements and the number of people incarcerated. I would be very interested in seeing that.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The honourable member is welcome to ask that question through the question on notice system, and to ask it of the Minister for Corrective Services rather than me—Treasury. That is a justified question and I am sure that the member will get a good answer.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: I have a question about a couple of the line items. One is the total impact from election commitments. Are they election commitments from 2020–21 or commitments that are still hanging over from 2017?

Hon Stephen Dawson: From 2021–22.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: There is also a figure for “Murray-Wellington, Mandurah & Dawesville Sport And Community infrastructure”, which is about \$7 million. Is that \$7 million spend not part of the election campaign?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: These are all part of the election campaign. They would have come after the *Pre-election financial projections statement*. The items on attachment A are publicly announced election commitments. The intention is to get the money out the door as quickly as possible to those organisations so their projects can get underway this financial year.

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again at a later stage of the sitting, on motion by Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Mental Health).

Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.30 pm

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

Order of Business — Motion

On motion without notice by **Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That order of the day 7 be resumed.

TREASURER’S ADVANCE AUTHORISATION BILL 2021

Committee

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting. The Deputy Chair of Committees (Hon Peter Foster) in the chair; Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Mental Health) in charge of the bill.

Clause 1: Short title —

Progress was reported after the clause had been partly considered.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Congratulations, Mr Deputy Chair, on your entry into the chair.

The DEPUTY CHAIR: Thank you.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: It is something I did for four years in the last term of Parliament.

Hon Stephen Dawson: You did it very well.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The minister is too kind. The minister is a very good minister as well.

Now that the lovefest is over, we might continue with the bill. In terms of attachment 1, which the minister referred us to before the untimely interruption of the dinner break, the \$20.5 million potential payment by the Electricity Generation and Retail Corporation—Synergy—is predominantly attributable to the \$500 small business and charity offset in response to the five-day lockdown announced on 31 January 2021. This was, in effect, the February lockdown. I am particularly interested in whether the minister has any information about the total level of applications and how much of that money has been distributed. My understanding is that this is a fairly slow process. I know that this is an additional potential revenue source for that, but how has it been calculated that this additional revenue source is required?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am not sure how helpful this is going to be, honourable member. The whole offset amount for the \$500 small business and charity tariff offset is actually \$39.7 million. It is using savings and other things to make up the difference between the \$20.5 million that is on the Treasurer's advance summary and the \$39.7 million. This is being processed by Synergy rather than Treasury, so we do not have the detail. Apparently, the processing for some of the organisations has been slow. In relation to Synergy, this credit was provided, I think, in January or February—it was one of those bills—and some of the businesses or charities that got the credit have used it already while others will not have used it; it will sit on their bill until they use it. Treasury will not get the figures until the annual report, so we are not in a position to tell the member what amount of that money has been used so far.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Before you sit down, will it be potentially the August annual reporting season?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Yes, it will be August or September, honourable member.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I refer to attachment A of the schedule that has been helpfully tabled by the minister concerning individual election commitments. I have a series of very brief questions. First of all, I note a commitment to the Chung Wah Association community centre of \$5 million. I recall dimly the time at which the government made that election commitment, but I also recall a commitment made to the Indian Society of WA and note its absence from this attachment. Can the minister explain why this commitment is missing?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told this is just for 2020–21, which will be expended between now and the end of June this year. I presume the commitment for that Indian Society centre that the member referred to is in a future financial year, so it will appear in the next forward estimates.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Following up on the Kalgoorlie–Boulder basketball court infrastructure, which I assume is the home of the Goldfields Giants basketball club, I know there was quite a bit of discussion on that around election time. I have a couple of questions about that. It is fantastic and I fully support it.

Hon Kyle McGinn interjected.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: Yes, well done! I know it was a commitment by all major parties going into the election. If that \$5 million commitment is for expenditure in 2020–21, I assume that means works will have started. But I understand that commitment is contingent upon funding from the Building Better Regions Fund from the federal government. I ask the minister to clarify that. I can see my colleague on the other side nodding his head, but I would like to understand whether that funding is likely to be extended past 2020–21. I assume that this list contains only funds that are likely to be expended because, as my colleague Hon Tjorn Sibma has mentioned, a number of election commitments are not listed. I am interested in the background on this and whether full funding is available to that proposed development in Kalgoorlie.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I thank the honourable member and I appreciate and acknowledge his support for this election commitment. As a member for the Mining and Pastoral Region I, too, am supportive of that facility, and the great clubs that use it. The money will be expended by the state between now and 30 June. The state will provide a grant to the local organisation and it is then up to it whether it uses existing funding or seeks co-contributions from others. Certainly, the state's grant will be expended because we will give them that money shortly.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Continuing in the multicultural support vein, I note a multicultural community support line there of \$676 000. Can the minister explain what that is for?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am advised that this is a series of grants and it supports a number of multicultural communities and their supporting associations around the state. It is not an amount for one organisation but is for a number of organisations. Their grants are added together and that brings us to that amount.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Would the minister be able to table by the end of this financial year, please those organisations that are likely to be beneficiaries of those grants moneys?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am happy to take that on notice, and I undertake to provide the member with a list. I will not provide it tonight as the document I have here is not in a format that suits being tabled tonight. I undertake to provide the member with a list tomorrow or the next day, once I have it.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: It is not intended to be a leading question, but obviously there are some items listed for expenditure that are designated as election commitments that will be spent before the expiration of this financial year. For example, I refer to the Byford skate park. Barely does an election go by that funding for skate parks throughout the length and breadth of this state are not committed to. I recall a commitment to a skate park in Kingsley by the government in the course of the election. Using this skate park example, what logic determines that certain commitments get funded within this financial year compared to the 2021–22 financial year?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: There could be quite a lot of variables. Again, it might be that certain things are ready to go and can be funded immediately, such as a grant to a council, as in the case of the goldfields basketball centre; for others, it may well be that more work needs to be done or it is for a different organisation that is not ready to proceed at this stage. I give the member an undertaking that if a commitment was made at the election, certainly we are focused on delivering those commitments.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: Would the minister be able to outline now or table the animal welfare groups on attachment A that were election commitments receiving funding of \$728 000?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I can certainly undertake to get the honourable member a list as well. The list I have has “Committee of Cabinet” stamped on it, not to be copied, so it probably is a cabinet-in-confidence document. However, I can give the member a list. I am happy to give him the same undertaking as I gave Hon Tjorn Sibma. I will take that away and provide the member with a list over the coming days.

Hon STEVE MARTIN: I have a follow-up question to the animal welfare package of \$5 250 000—some details around that, please.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I do not have a list as I had for the earlier animal welfare groups. I think there are probably two or three big organisations, like the RSPCA. We are not sure whether the guide dogs funding is in that, and there will be a couple of smaller ones. It will not be a list, but I can certainly find the member the names of what is included in that.

Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER: I welcome very much the government’s commitment to road safety. I see there are two relevant areas here. One is “Metro Intersection/Black Spot Program”, for which there is \$16 million or thereabouts, and another one is “Transport and Road Safety—Minor”. There is perhaps a disproportionate number of deaths in rural and remote areas. I am wondering, do we —

Hon Stephen Dawson: Honourable member, a polite interjection, if you don’t mind: can you tell me what you’re reading from so I can find the same page?

Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER: I beg the minister’s pardon. This is attachment A.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Attachment A? Thank you. Sorry, keep going.

Hon Dr BRIAN WALKER: I am just wondering: do we have a breakdown as to where these amounts are being spent, and is there any idea of how well road safety in rural and remote areas is being catered for within this budget?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: An amount of \$40 000 is going towards an electronic speed sign on Huntington Parkway, Landsdale. That work will be undertaken by Main Roads. There is \$40 000 for the Gngangara Road, Madeley, electronic speed indicator sign. I understand that that will be going to the local government to undertake that work. There is \$25 000 for road safety measures in Mt Hawthorn. That is a capped local grant as well so, again, it is presumably going to the local government. There is \$475 000 for speed chicanes. We do not have a breakdown for that, but that is again local grants, so I presume it is going to a variety of local governments. There is \$200 000 being spent on bus stop shelter upgrades; again, that is a capped local grant. There is also \$100 000 being spent on Aveyel bus shelters, and that is also a capped local grant. Bearing in mind that this is not the full extent of what is being spent on road safety, these are the sorts of smaller commitments that were made, and those are the projects that are listed.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: If the minister could indulge me a little on this one, I refer to the line “Kimberley Sport and Community Infrastructure”. I assume that that is for the Shire of Wyndham–East Kimberley; could we have some clarification on that? If that is another project, I think it is a good one. But the main area of concern, if I can just do a double-banger here, is the \$10 million for “Port Hedland Sporting and Community Hub”. It is my understanding that that is for the Town of Port Hedland. It is well short of the funding that would be required to complete the development that has been proposed. I am wondering whether Treasury has a view on this, knowing the discipline in the management of our finances. When the funding of grants for local governments do not fully cover the costs of a capital project, they can end up basically sitting in the bank account of that local government. According to attachment A, that money is going to be transferred in 2020–21 to the Town of Port Hedland, and I assume that that is what it is for; the minister can please correct me if I am wrong. But the project will then pretty much sit in limbo until there is the ability for that council to come up with the other \$40 million. I am wondering whether that is good financial practice, in relation to the management of this budget.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It is the same as any grant program administered by agencies. Agencies would enter into a grant agreement with the council or organisation. Everything is auditable and if, at the end of the day, the money is not spent, it will be required to be repaid. In relation to the Port Hedland example, the Town of Port

Hedland's cash reserves in the bank are significant; from memory, it is about \$200 million. Obviously, the \$10 million contribution from the state government is significant, and it is my understanding that members of that council have indicated that they are supportive of this project. I am sure we will see that built in no time at all.

In relation to the "Kimberley Sport and Community Infrastructure" line, there is \$2.35 million going towards upgrades to basketball courts, the sport field and lighting at Warmun. There is \$300 000 for the new Mowanjum community change rooms, and \$4 million for upgrades to the multiuse courts at Fitzroy Crossing. There were other commitments—some in Kununurra and some in Wyndham—but that is a different process, and that will be done after 1 July.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I am looking at the \$220 million in election commitments at attachment A and I note that of that, roughly \$153 500 000 appears to be for community sporting infrastructure. Is the minister in a position to tell us how much of this, if any, is going via or through the royalties for regions fund; and, if so, which ones, and to what extent?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told that this is all appropriations-funded. My understanding is that it is not to be paid for out of royalties for regions.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Just to follow up, none of this will go through the royalties for regions fund, for example, before it is expended?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: No, the bill before us allows us to spend this money. My advice is that this will not go through the royalties for regions process.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I have the same issue, minister. Would it be fair for me to assume, in relation to the response the minister just gave Hon Dr Steve Thomas, that those funds will not be expended through the community sporting and recreation facilities fund standard process that exists in what used to be called the Department of Sport and Recreation?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: It will not be done through the community sporting and recreation facilities fund process. That is not to say it will not be done by the department. The grant agreements will be done by the respective state government departments, so if it is a sporting grant, it will be done by the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries, but it will not be out of the CSRFF, which is a dedicated process that is set aside.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Minister, I think have come to the end of my questions on this one. This is obviously money that will be made available in the current financial year, which now has 30 days to go. Is the minister in a position to give us an indication of the expected date by which the moneys will be expended; that is, will it be made available now? Do we know when the funds are likely to be transferred? I presume, based on this, that it will be before the end of the financial year, although this is a capacity, not necessarily a guarantee, for the money to be out there by the end of the financial year. Is it likely to go out by the end of the financial year? At that point, is there any expectation that it will be acquitted by a certain time?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: The commitment is to get this money out the door before the end of this financial year. Of course, there will be grant agreements, and the intention is to have them written up very soon and for the money to go to the organisations before 30 June. Regarding what is said in the grant agreement, it will depend on the organisation—some will be more advanced. For some, money will be sitting there and we will be ready to start immediately, but for others it might take a little longer. There will be a report at the end of the financial year to indicate what has been spent and what is outstanding. If the grant agreement says they need to spend the money in the next financial year and they have not, the state could certainly seek to recoup that money based on the grant agreement they have signed.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I have one remaining question and it concerns the line item in attachment 1 on the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation. This matter was addressed before the dinner adjournment and concerns the Perth City Deal. I put on the record that I think it is a good concept. I have been a worker in the tertiary sector. I am a supporter of the city deal and I recognise the commonwealth's contribution. Nevertheless, could I get a bit more clarity on how that \$100 million, which I think was a cash payment, to Edith Cowan University will be used? What purpose will it fulfil? What is the imperative to give provision for that before the end of this financial year?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: We will pay that amount to DJTISI so it can draw it down. The intention is to try to get this money out the door, again, before 30 June. The member is right; the money is cash. It is to go towards the construction costs of the city campus. We are hopeful that some commonwealth money will flow at the same time as our money does over the next few weeks. It will certainly be drawn down by DJTISI, but the intention is to hopefully get it out the door to ECU over the next few weeks as well.

Hon NEIL THOMSON: This, my last question, is more to help me better understand the appropriations bill. It will be my first comment on an authorisation bill like this in this place. I see that with the \$750 million is an increase to the expense limit of the total expenditure of about \$23 million, which is approximately another three per cent increase. I am interested in the projected revenue increases from the last Treasurer's Advance Authorisation Bill. I assume there was one when the \$688.8 million increase was made. We know there is a massive surplus in the budget—we believe there is anyhow—so how will this impact on the overall net operating balance of the state going forward?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am told that that information is available in the *Pre-election financial projections statement*. We do not have that with us here now, but it is easily accessible on the Treasury website.

Hon JAMES HAYWARD: All this stuff is fantastic news for our community, and it is fantastic to see the money being spent. The minister mentioned that he would provide some more detailed information at a later time. Could the minister also do that for the community sport and infrastructure amount of \$57 million?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I can provide that to the honourable member at a later stage. We do not have it here now. We just have an in globo figure, but if the member gives me a couple of days, I will provide that information to the house at a later stage.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: What does the minister expect the iron ore price to be in a year's time?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: I am not a soothsayer. Who knows? If someone had said to me 14, 15 or 16 months ago that the world would go crazy and we would have a global pandemic that would close down businesses and millions of people would die, I would not have believed them. Having lived through that, I am not in a position to make a guesstimate today, unfortunately.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 put and passed.

Title put and passed.

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third Reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Mental Health)**, and passed.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan) [8.10 pm]: I start by congratulating the President on her election to that position. I hope she does well in that role. I will come back to that in a moment. I also congratulate you, Mr Deputy President (Hon Martin Aldridge); it is a role that I am sure you will perform in a very distinguished manner. I would like to pay my, dare I say it, sincere congratulations to the government on what was an absolutely emphatic win, probably unseen globally in any liberal democracy. We cannot deny that. I can say without a shadow of a doubt that the COVID-19 pandemic was largely responsible for the magnitude of the victory. It was definitely an opportunity for the public of Western Australia to say, "Thanks, Mark", because, quite frankly, there is nothing more compelling in human life than survival. When we get back to that raw human instinct of safety and survival, of course we know that our protector deserves recognition. That is what we have with the re-election of the Labor government. Congratulations, guys. The enormous majority that the Labor Party now has in both houses comes with enormous responsibility. No longer will we hear ad infinitum through the bleatings from those in the other place that it was the terrible Liberal Party in the upper house that stymied any sort of legislation, which was a load of rubbish the whole time, and I will go through that in a moment. It is all yours, guys. You only go around once. This a genuine opportunity. If you want to do reform and do it with the consent of the public, which you have at the moment, you cannot blame anyone else.

I will go through a few things with regard to the chamber. I am delighted to be here. I am back sitting in exactly the same seat in which I started 16 years ago. I sat in this seat as a raw, naive backbencher. I have done the rounds—I have been a backbencher, a frontbencher in the opposition, a minister, Leader of the House and Leader of the Opposition, and I am back in this seat again. Can I say to whoever is sitting over there, just watch yourself, because in four years I will be back there. No, I will not! I can promise you; this is it! Having said that, I am delighted to be back. I can assure members that I have as much fire in my belly right now as I did on that day back in 2005.

If members go back and look at my maiden speech, one thing I said was that I felt that the upper house was a house of my choosing. I have great respect for the upper house. I think we do things a lot better up here. We definitely scrutinise legislation more forensically. We make sure that legislation leaves this place in a better state than when it arrived. Generally, there is much more consensus between the government and the crossbench, and that is very, very good.

Having said that, the conventions of the chamber are vital. We can rely on the numbers. I had a whopping majority when I was Leader of the House as well, but we never abused it. I would like to think that members opposite will not do that either. We do not abuse it. We do not use the gag and the guillotine like the rank amateurs in the other place do. We make sure that everyone who wants to have a say gets a say. Sometimes games are played. The other side does it, and we do it. I can assure members opposite that all the terrible things they hear about us we will defend, and I am sure we will say some terrible things about them. I will say that members opposite cancelled pairs at one stage when they could not get their own way in the last term of government, which was unheard of. Might

I also say that they made us sit for 24 hours. I sat in that seat right there until nine o'clock the next morning, on a bill that the opposition supported. Three months in, they tested me out, eyeball to eyeball, and I did not blink. All I am saying is that those sorts of things happen. That comes with the chamber. I am not being self-righteous here; I am just saying that in 16 years in this place, I have seen it happen on both sides.

I will just take the opportunity to comment on something that Hon Pierre Yang said. Unfortunately, he is away on urgent parliamentary business. We had a sermon on the mount from Hon Pierre Yang on 5 May 2021 when he stood up with a Bible in his hand and said —

I choose to use the word “bible” because I am a Christian. I am a Catholic. This is the bible for us. We have a duty to uphold the standards of this house. We have a duty to make sure that no-one puts forward a motion that is trying to subvert and achieve some insidious intent by setting up a select committee when, as a matter of fact, it is a standing committee.

I do not have a problem with him having an argument, but to stand there and hold up the Bible, quite frankly, I found that offensive. I thought he was better than that. I hope he does not do that again. If we are talking about standards and convention, I will put my reputation on the line any day. I can tell members that I will never breach conventions. I did not do it when I was over there, and I will not do it when I am over here.

In Hon Pierre Yang's response to the Address-in-Reply on 29 April 2021, he stated in part —

In her speech, Hon Dr Sally Talbot discussed the important progress Western Australia has achieved in gender equality and female political leadership. I want to echo her celebratory remarks. Western Australia's first female Governor was Hon Kerry Sanderson ...; Hon Sue Ellery is the Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council; and Hon Kate Doust was the first female President of the Legislative Council.

There are a couple of things there. First, we appointed Kerry Sanderson to be Governor; our government did that. The second thing is that Hon Kate Doust came in as the President of this chamber. But let us not forget that the Leader of the House—I will remind members of this, particularly the new members—did everything that she could to get a male from this side of the chamber to take on that role. It was 18—all, as in there were 14 Labor and four Greens members and, dare I say it, the centre right had 18 members, from a plethora of parties. On any good day, we could count on 18 votes, if we did our work. I can tell members that after four years in that seat, it was like herding goldfish every day, trying to get the seven parties to get together. It was really tough, but that was our job. If we worked with those parties and convinced them, we would get them across the line. But, of course, we would have lost the opportunity to get a majority if we had taken out the President. Hon Kate Doust logically, and automatically, should have been President. She of course lost her potential role as a minister because Hon Alannah MacTiernan came back in. She had decided she was going to have a comeback. She had done the rounds. She had done the lap of honour of every Parliament in Australia and decided that she would come into the Legislative Council again. What actually happened was that Hon Kate Doust had to have something to do, but the Leader of the House tried to get one of our guys to take on the presidency. Go figure!

Hon Kyle McGinn: You had women on your side as well.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Beg your pardon?

Hon Kyle McGinn: You said “to get a male to take the position”.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Yes, we did.

Hon Kyle McGinn: Okay.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Why did they not take one of our women?

Hon Kyle McGinn: That is what I am saying. It was an opportunity for you to do that.

Hon PETER COLLIER: The member is absolutely missing the point here. The point is that the bastions of the suffragette movement over there carry on all the time about how wonderful they are at women's recognition et cetera, yet when they had a woman who logically should have been President, they tried to sacrifice that role because they wanted the numbers. It all came down to the numbers. I say to those members who are with us now, new members in particular, that they should take a bit of time every now and again to go into the President's chamber and look at the paintings. They will see all the former Presidents. What they will see is Presidents who stopped being President either as a result of losing the election or of their own volition. None stopped being President because their party turfed them out. There will be one there now, and that is Hon Kate Doust. I cannot believe it. It is not a reflection on the role of the current President. I am not saying anything about her integrity, her capacity or her ability; I am defending the integrity, the capacity and the ability of Hon Kate Doust.

Hon Kate Doust did what she should have done. She upheld the integrity, the fortitude and the conventions of this chamber. That is her terrible crime and the reason she was not reappointed. As I said, the conventions of this chamber are sacrosanct and she refused to be bullied. We will go into all this Corruption and Crime Commission stuff and read the reports, and we will see that what Hon Kate Doust was doing as head of the Standing Committee on Procedure and Privileges was 100 per cent correct. She did not go weak at the knees at the prospect of losing preselection or her presidency. She upheld the conventions of this chamber. She was meticulously and ruthlessly professional in

her rulings all the time, always, because she is a woman of integrity. She respects the sovereignty of Parliament like no other. Hon Kate Doust is a principled woman of enormous integrity. I respect her so much. I am so disappointed that she has not retained that position. As I said, it is not a reflection on the current President. I have enormous respect for Hon Kate Doust and I congratulate her on the job of work that she did. Pretty much I know without doubt that every single member of the previous Parliament on this side of the chamber, and the Greens, would agree with me and, dare I say it, most of the Labor Party would also agree with me that she did an outstanding job. As a result of that, history will reflect extraordinarily positively upon Hon Kate Doust—a woman of integrity, a woman who upheld the principles and conventions of this chamber—and I wish her well.

Having said that, I will quickly move on to what happens with one of the other conventions. We have this issue with bills that get passed at the end of each session. We stand behind the chair and the leaders determine what bills are going to get through. I nearly had a coronary the other day when I heard Hon Alannah MacTiernan state, in part, during a response to a question on the Building and Construction Industry (Security of Payment) Bill 2021 —

We are introducing the Building and Construction Industry (Security of Payment) Bill 2021 today. The Building and Construction Industry (Security of Payment) Bill 2020 passed through the Legislative Assembly in November 2020, but, unfortunately, did not make it through to the Legislative Council due to the opposition members' refusal ...

... to sit beyond the scheduled 2020 parliamentary year to consider the bill.

Members can wonder why we were apoplectic. It is rubbish. It is garbage. That came out in the media release as well. I remind members that we make a determination. The party leaders come to an agreement on what bills will get through. On 7 September 2020, all the leaders got a list of the bills that the government wanted passed in the last five weeks of the session. There were 18 of them. It was never going to happen. We had a whole pile of bills, including the Electoral Amendment Bill; the Road Traffic Amendment (Immobilisation, Towing and Detention of Vehicles) Bill; the Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Bill; the Swan Valley Planning Bill; and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment (Change of Name) Bill. The government added the draft Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Bill and the National Disability Insurance Scheme (Worker Screening) Bill, but there was no Building and Construction Industry (Security of Payment) Bill. That was not on the list. It was never there.

Every single time after Parliament rose last year, the Attorney General and the Premier were out there bleeding on about the terrible Liberals who stymied the legislation. Every time they got a question on why a bill did not get through, they would respond, "It was the terrible Liberals. They're shockers. They're the ones who stymied the bill." That is absolute garbage, but it is very convenient for the government to say it. Is the media going to be honest? That is not a sexy topic. It is not going to worry about that. All I am saying is that what we have here is misleading Parliament. It did not happen. I then sent several emails back to the leader's office and said, "Look, we will pass the bills through. Just tell us what bills you want to get passed by the last week." I have been here for 16 years. Every single time that is how it has been done. We agree. We have an agreement. I say to the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Dr Steve Thomas, be careful what we agree to next time, because if we do not agree to it, the government is going to go out there and lambaste us yet again. There is no integrity behind this anymore. The whole convention of coming to an agreement at the end of a parliamentary session does not exist anymore. The government has cancelled its pairs; it has ensured that what we decide with regard to agreements on legislation means nothing. Its thumping majority is good, but these guys should remember that the seeds of destruction for a government are always sown in Parliament. They really are. If government members take that attitude and think Parliament is a bit of an inconvenience and a pithy little thing that gets in the way of its agenda, I promise they will start to pay for it. That rubbish about legislation is without foundation. I always worked with the Leader of the Government, as I did when I was Leader of the Opposition, to ensure that we compromised on legislation. If the government said that it would like to get through five bills, we would get them through. The list of 18 bills that we were provided back on 7 September did not change and it did not include the five or six that we keep hearing about from members down the other end.

It is a unique opportunity. I welcome the new members. As members will find in this place, we get on a lot better, believe it or not, than the members in the other place do. We get on pretty well. We have our fights but we go out of the chamber on a Wednesday and Thursday afternoon and have a cup of tea and everything is fine, but it does not mean we do not go for the jugular when we are in here.

Hon Tjorn Sibma: You're a good bloke, Hon Kyle McGinn. I will not let people tell me otherwise.

Hon PETER COLLIER: He has his moments. He is from my home town.

Over my parliamentary career, I have pursued several issues when I have found that there was an issue literally to be pursued. It went beyond the realms of the normal gamut of portfolio responsibility. One was the Balga Works Program when I first came in, and I identified some very serious issues with a flawed training mechanism that existed. Some of the most marginalised students in our community were being exploited. The outcome of that review was great. Again, at that time the government came to the review kicking and screaming but we got it. There have been several others. I will not go into them at this stage, but one that has come to my attention over the last six months and is a real concern to me is Lotterywest. I have asked dozens upon dozens of questions. I have made FOI requests.

I have made a number of speeches, and the deeper I dig, the worse it gets. Without a shadow of a doubt, Lotterywest is precariously on the brink of becoming a political arm of the Labor Party, and that is a real shame. An agency such as Lotterywest, which has extraordinary public respect because of its grant process, has a question mark over its head.

I say at the outset that Margaret Court is one of my closest friends. I say that quite unapologetically. However, I am not a member of the Victory Life Centre, and never have been. I do not attend. I am not a member of any church. My motivation with Lotterywest has nothing to do with my personal association with Margaret Court, which stems entirely from tennis. I coached with Margaret for about 20 or 30 years. She is a valued friend, as is Barry and their four children and their children. They are valued friends of mine. My issue was prompted by a phone call from Barry Court in October last year. Barry said to me that he was concerned because the church applied for a grant for a freezer van for its community outreach centre to assist with the distribution of food and supplies. Particularly with COVID, the church was literally pouring out tonnes of food every week, and it could not keep up. They said that they put in an application. It was rejected. They were called in to see the CEO and Susan Hunt told them in no uncertain terms that they were not going to get it because of Margaret Court's attitude towards same-sex marriage. I thought it was strange that that would be the only reason, so I looked into it. I identified some serious issues regarding the Lotterywest grant process. I asked Barry to put in writing what actually happened. I will table this email for everyone to have a look at. He said, in part—

After many communications, we were advised to meet Jenna Leslie and Susan Hunt from Lotterywest. This meeting we presumed was to convey some positive news.

This was not the case and we were advised that no funding would be given to Margaret Court Community Outreach (MCCO) or any other organisation that Margaret Court was associated with. This was specifically because of Margaret Court's stand on her opposition to same sex marriage.

The email is quite lengthy. The other person at that meeting from Margaret Court Community Outreach was Bryam Robayo. He said —

Then Susan proceeded to reveal the outcome of the grant application, by stating that the Board of directors of Lotterywest has unanimously agreed not to approve the grant due to Ms Margaret's views on same-sex marriage and what she has said in the past.

I seek leave to table that email in its entirety.

[Leave granted. See paper [240](#).]

Hon PETER COLLIER: The community outreach centre itself assists around 5 000 families a week, particularly as a result of COVID. It went from 1 647 clients in December 2019 to 6 402 clients in July 2020. It is literally delivering over 75 tonnes of food to almost 5 000 people a week. All it is asking for is a van to assist in the process. The Courts put in their original application in 2018. It took two years to get a response, which was no, so Barry and Margaret wrote to the Premier. The letter reads, in part —

We have had an application with the Lotterywest for over 2 years and this week have been informed that the application has been unsuccessful due to the changes in Lotterywest grants program to support organisations dealing with the community impacts of COVID-19. They have advised that funds have been reprioritised to establish the COVID-19 Relief Fund to respond to the hardship being experienced by the WA Community as a direct or indirect result of the pandemic.

To be advised that our application has not progressed is very disappointing. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic MCCO distributed 32-42 tonnes of food per week. Today we are distributing over 62 tonnes of food per week.

That went up to 75 tonnes a week.

The Premier wrote back and said —

Unfortunately, I have no capacity to override the decision by Lotterywest not to support an application. However, I am advised that Lotterywest is presently receiving applications under the Emergency and Crisis Relief program which is a key program of the new Lotterywest COVID-19 Crisis Relief Fund. I believe that your organisation has recently been in contact with Lotterywest about a new application.

After the Courts received this letter from the Premier, they thought that the new grants program was a good idea and that they would apply for it. They thought they were onto a bit of a winner in getting a recommendation from the Premier to write to Lotterywest. Of course he cannot intervene, but he recommended for them to write. As a result of that, they got a meeting with Susan Hunt, who told them in no uncertain terms that because of Margaret Court's views on same-sex marriage, they were not going to get funded.

It was also relayed to them on 7 October 2020 via letter. It states, in part —

As discussed at the meeting of 2 October 2020 with Mr Barry Court and Mr Bryam Robayo, I regret to advise you that your application was unsuccessful.

Under our legislation, Lotterywest has discretion as to which eligible organisations receive Lotterywest funding. I confirm that the Lotterywest Board unanimously agreed not to support your application.

That certainly does not reflect anything about the conversation with Barry Court—nothing at all. I then decided that I would pursue this matter and find out exactly why the application was rejected. I submitted a general question to the Premier on 7 October and asked whether any church had recently applied for, or expressed an interest in, a Lotterywest grant that had been refused. It was a three-part question, and that is important. I will come back to this very important question. The Premier replied —

- (1)–(3) Decisions on grant applications from LotteryWest are made by the LotteryWest board, which is independent of Government.

That is absolute rubbish, but I am used to that in the responses from the Premier’s office. I always get the hand. Then on 21 October, I asked —

I refer to the Leader of the House’s response to question without notice 1056, asked on Tuesday, 13 October 2020, and to section 26(2) and section 26(5) of the Lotteries Commission Act 1990 which state, in part, respectively —

For parliamentary processes or for the proper conduct of the Minister’s public business, the Minister is entitled to have information in the possession of the Commission and to have and retain copies of documents.

And —

parliamentary processes means for the purpose of —

- (a) answering a question asked in a House of Parliament;

It cannot be answered. It is in the act. I knew that. The Premier replied, “No proposal has been received from Victory Life church.” No; it was not. It was from Margaret Court Community Outreach, which operates through Victory Life Services. We get this rubbish from the Premier’s office all the time. I do not know who does the questions up there, but they need to grow up!

The next day I asked —

Was a grant proposal to Lotterywest that was recently lodged by Margaret Court Community Outreach, operating through the Victory Life Centre, rejected?

The Premier’s response was quite categorical. He replied —

The board expressed concerns about Lotterywest being associated with the public statements made by the organisation’s founder on gay and lesbian issues and on marriage equality.

That is quite unambiguous. That is why the application was rejected. That was reinforced by a holding statement from Lotterywest, which I received through FOI on 1 October 2020. It states, in part —

This decision has been made on the basis that it does not want to be associated with the comments and stated beliefs of the founder and Chair of MCCO.

Also, Susan Hunt actually said it to Nadia Mitsopoulos on ABC radio on 8 October 2020. According to my notes, she said, in part —

So that’s really why in this case the Lotterywest Board in their decision-making around which grants they would support felt that the grants from the Margaret Court Community Outreach Group didn’t fit with that approach because of the public statements of the founder not aligning to our strong commitment to inclusion and diversity.

Nadia Mitsopoulos responded —

And specifically that was in reference to Margaret Court’s views on same-sex marriage?

Susan Hunt responded —

Yes. And the LGBTQI community more broadly, where she has been very outspoken, and from the feedback that we get and many of your listeners might also hear, people have been quite damaged and quite hurt and offended by that, and that really doesn’t align what Lotterywest is about and I think what the majority of the community values about being Western Australia.

Unambiguously, that is why Lotterywest denied them the grant. There are numerous other examples I received through FOI that completely reinforce that yes, Lotterywest did not provide the grant because of Margaret’s views on same-sex marriage. For example, the minutes of the Lotterywest board meeting on 22 October 2020 state —

The Board discussed the potential risks and agreed to the CEO’s proposed approach; confirming that the comments and stated beliefs of the founder and Chair of MCCO do not align with those of Lotterywest. The Board affirmed Lotterywest’s commitment to equality and inclusion in unanimously rejecting the MCCO’s application for funding.

I really wanted to know whether that was the actual reason. I put in the FOI application and it took months to get it back. It was always being rejected and the government wanted to constrain the time frame or the amount. When

I received the FOI documents, they raised more questions than they answered. Without a doubt, they led me to the conclusion that if this continues, Lotterywest will rapidly go down the path of becoming a political arm of the Labor Party.

When I asked the Premier whether Margaret Court Community Outreach had been rejected, and why it had been rejected, remember, members, his original response was as follows —

(1)–(3) Decisions on grant applications from LotteryWest are made by the LotteryWest board, which is independent of Government.

That is the response from the Premier. However, the freedom of information document that I received actually shows that Lotterywest answered the question; it gave a response. There is a trail or path of the FOI documents. Document 337 states —

Hi Susan,

Here is Mhairi's response to the PQ for your approval. We have updated (3) to be the date of the September meeting, where the application was formerly rejected.

Kind Regards

Tracy

An email from Susan Hunt to Tracy Parker states —

REVISITING MY LAST EMAIL—I am confused about the date—it was rediscussed in September because I wanted to confirm the messaging on the rejection but I think the decision was August. Please double check with August minutes

It goes on and on. The long and short of it is that Lotterywest gave a response to the Premier's office. The Premier's response was the one-liner, "Decisions on grant applications from LotteryWest are made by the LotteryWest board, which is independent of Government". That is the response that we got. It was a political decision on the part of the Premier's office. It is because I got that FOI document that I have asked all these questions this year and that is not even half of them. I asked —

Why was the response to the answer provided by Lotterywest to the Premier's office replaced with "(1)–(3) Decisions on grant applications from LotteryWest are made by the LotteryWest board, which is independent of Government"?

The response was —

Ministers are responsible for answers provided to Parliament.

Members need to listen to that. Once again, ministers are responsible for answers provided to Parliament. That is a perfect example of the lack of transparency of this government. Lotterywest provided an answer. The political decision not to answer it was made in the Premier's office in Dumas House. They made that decision. All that does is create an attitude of a lack of transparency on the part of the government. We cannot see it any other way. Lotterywest answered the question; the Premier's office made the decision to not give the answer. We get that in this place over and again. I direct members to numerous speeches that we have made and that I have made personally about the lack of transparency. There was no reason that the Premier's office should not have given me that original response.

As I said, it took me dozens of questions to get to that end, but it was really the FOI documents that showed that a lot of the answers I got were wrong. Members can understand why this is an issue. It has nothing to do with Margaret Court's views on same-sex marriage—nothing to do with it. It is about secrecy in government.

Members should see the FOI documents; I will put them out publicly. They are extraordinary—absolutely extraordinary. The people in Lotterywest panicked—absolutely panicked. After six months of questions, FOIs et cetera, Lotterywest made this decision—I will get to exactly why right at the end—and after it made the decision, it hit the fan. As soon as Barry phoned me and it went public—a few of the media outlets were on to it—Lotterywest was inundated with phone calls and complaints, and that is in the FOI documents as well. I have here the "Early unapproved notes of discussions by board executive officer". They have to try to justify why they made the decision. They already made the decision but now they have to justify it. This is compelling stuff. The notes state —

There has been anonymous feedback that the group evangelize when delivering support services. They appear to have not demonstrated inclusivity in the past.

However, there is no evidence.

Board members expressed their discomfort with the organisation and their views however noting that there are not clear conditions on religion in terms of our grant giving. Discussion was held on the importance of organisations demonstrating that they are inclusive of all in the community prior to providing funding. Board members would like to see referees/references to stand up and be open and accountable—demonstrate that this organisation and any organisation welcome all walks of life.

Evidence that they are not doing this is critical if we take the path to not support funding. Board members are concerned that evidence that faith components are incorporated into delivery of MCCO services are anecdotal—more solid evidence required.

They have already made the decision; one would think they would have the evidence, not anecdotal evidence. It gets better; members should read this stuff. Honest, it makes my blood boil. What about this email from Lannie Le-Patterson from the Premier's office, which states—

Hi Holly

Thanks for sharing.

I've suggested some tweaks.

When organisations complete their application are there guidelines that they get to review and can we point to the fact that they don't meet the guidelines as outlined in the application process as well?

One would think that they know that; they have made the decision. An email from Holly Wood from Lotterywest to James Mooney is headed "Lotterywest Board decision re MCCO" and states—

Hey

See below. Is there somewhere on the website that talks about inclusion and aligning with our values?

They are panicking; "We've got to try to justify this." The next one is a pearler. It is an email exchange between the executive officers of Lotterywest and is headed "MCCO Victory Life—Media Queries" from Holly Wood to Mhairi Cowden. It states —

Lannie is ok with our response. We'll send to the west now.

James has a draft response for staff in the AM if needed and we'll work with the digital team to manage social.

Lannie asked if the board had done this previously in terms of rejecting a request?

Susan Hunt writes to Holly Wood —

As far as I am aware, none have been rejected based on non-aligned values (at least not over the past 3 years since I have been here).

This is the first time. Dozens upon dozens of organisations with exactly the same views as Margaret Court have been getting grants over that period. If members go on the Lotterywest website and look, they are there and there are dozens of them. An email from Mhairi Cowden to Susan Hunt reads —

The Board haven't done this before as far as anyone in the team is aware.

It has not been done so they singled out Margaret Court. I wish I had unlimited time; still, I have four years. In another email, Miriam Borthwick writes to Susan Hunt —

Hi Susan,

Have we run this letter by our lawyers?

Do we actually say on any of the grant documents and application processes that an applicant must demonstrate a commitment to diversity or that we have our own commitment to diversity?

Again, they made the decision and I would like to think that it has to be out there somewhere. They were so afraid of it up in the Premier's office that they did not give the original response. They culled the response and gave a one-line response. If the government had been open and transparent from the start, we would not have gone down this path.

They then started asking whether there are any other reasons why Margaret Court's application was rejected. Was it because of her views on same-sex marriage or were there other reasons? This is littered throughout these documents. They are trying to find other reasons: "It's not working. We've given all these other organisations grants. Is there anything? Please find something on our website that says that they have to align with our values." They cannot find it. Even the chief executive officer says it is not there and that they have never done it before.

Hon Dan Caddy interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: You go and have a look on the website.

Hon Dan Caddy interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Go and look at the website.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon James Hayward): Order, members! Can we have some order, please? Thank you. Please continue.

Hon PETER COLLIER: It is on the website—check it out.

Hon Dan Caddy interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: That is irrelevant to this argument. If that is the path the government is going to take, that just shows why it is in trouble. Let us go on.

Several members interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Listen. Thank you.

My question to the Leader of the House representing the Premier continues. I wanted to know about these “other reasons”, so I asked the Premier —

(2) Were there any other reasons ...?

I asked this on the first day back after the break. The Premier answered —

(1) The proposal was rejected by the board for a number of reasons, including concerns about Lotterywest being associated with these public statements.

He said there were “a number of reasons”! That completely contradicts the response the Premier gave on 22 October 2020. Unless the Leader of the House was misleading Parliament, the Premier said, quite categorically —

The board expressed concerns about Lotterywest being associated with the public statements made by the organisation’s founder on gay and lesbian issues and on marriage equality.

Yet on 4 May, he told this chamber —

The proposal was rejected by the board for a number of reasons, including concerns about Lotterywest being associated with these public statements.

The Premier cannot have it both ways! That is a completely different response. I asked about these “other reasons” again —

With reference to part (4) of the question, how was Margaret Court Community Outreach notified that its grant application containing all of the reasons referred to ...? “

The letter that Lotterywest sent to her was tabled! They tabled the letter with all the reasons. Let me remind members, because I have already read this in, what the reasons were. The letter states —

Under our legislation, Lotterywest has discretion as to which eligible organisations receive Lotterywest funding. I confirm that the Lotterywest Board unanimously agreed not to support your application.

There are no reasons given there, yet that is what I was provided in an answer to this chamber. There are no reasons given.

The next answer is a pearler. In 2020, I asked three or four questions on this to try to find out where on the website it states that applicants have to align their values to those of Lotterywest. Good luck, guys! Go and look on the Lotterywest website. I finally got to the point. The answer reads —

(1) Yes; in the assessment criteria for the “Supporting the Most Vulnerable” grant program of the COVID-19 relief fund.

(2) Yes, as stated in (1), and in the “Community Investment Framework” published on the Lotterywest website.

Then in another answer, I am referred to item 4. In the end, after all of the questions I asked, I was told to have a look at the Lotterywest website under “Grants”, “Supporting the Most Vulnerable”, “Crisis and Emergency Relief Assessment Criteria”, and then item 4, “Organisational capacity”. One needs a PhD to find this thing! Finally, after scrolling down and scrolling down, I zipped across, then scrolled down again, and right down under “Organisational capacity” it says —

- How will your organisation provide services according to good practice principles (for example, offering dignity, choice and ensuring services are inclusive and non-discriminatory)?

That is the only wording about that on that entire website. I challenge anyone with an ounce of common decency to say that that is appropriate to reject Margaret Court’s grant application. Honest, they are not discriminatory! The Margaret Court Community Outreach centre is feeding thousands of people every day. They are distributing 75-plus tonnes of food every day. They are distributing dozens of rugs, blankets and clothes for the underprivileged every single day. That is what they are doing. If the government wants to lay its case on the fact that one sentence mentions the words “inclusive and non-discriminatory” as justification, it has to be joking. It has absolutely got to be joking!

How did all this start? When did this change in attitude start? I will tell members when it started. It started after 2017 when the current government took office. How do I know that? It is because Susan Hunt said it on radio. She stated —

Well, as I mentioned, it’s around our commitment to diversity and inclusion. So that stands. It’s in our Grants Framework. Our Grants Framework has been more explicit around these issues. About the last three years we’ve had a very clear Lotterywest Grants Framework with five pillars.”

She refers to the last three years, which was midway through 2017. What happened then? Let me remind members. One of the first things that the Labor government did when it took over office in 2017 was to sack the CEO of Lotterywest. An article in *The West Australian* on 19 August 2017 states, in part —

“The boss of Lotterywest was forced out by Premier Mark McGowan, with documents revealing he wanted to sack Paul Andrew within days of winning the State election in March.

...

The documents reveal for the first time how the Premier told Mr Wauchope five days after winning the election that he wanted Mr Andrew replaced because of concerns about his “attitude”.

...

Speaking on 6PR in June, Mr McGowan was asked if he had clashed with Mr Andrew about where Lotterywest grants should be allocated.

“I do not want to go into why Mr Andrew left,” the Premier said, arguing his concerns were over an apparent breakdown in relationship between Mr Andrew and retailers.

The government got rid of the CEO—the Premier does not like him. That is his prerogative; he is the Premier. Then the Premier and the Minister for Health announced a further aligning of Healthway and Lotterywest. Guess who came on to the board? The former WA Attorney General and Minister for Health Jim McGinty, AE, came on to the Lotterywest board. There was a complete restructuring of the Lotterywest board. The government pretty much napped the old board and got a new one.

Now, they are going to make some significant changes to the grants process within Lotterywest. I know this through a question I asked in the Parliament. I did ask this in estimates, but we did not get an answer to any of our questions because Parliament was prorogued at that time. It was a complete revamp of the commitment process and policy updates to equality, diversity and inclusion from Lotterywest right across the board. Lotterywest is going to go right through its grants processes and completely change the standards for qualifications for a grant’s success. For example, under “Grant making eligibility guidance” Lotterywest states —

Suggested Lotterywest updates (bold italics): “As a matter of policy rather than eligibility, Lotterywest does not support religious organisations for their faith or spiritual activities. Grants only support the welfare and community services activities of faith-based groups **which meet the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion in line with Government policies, practices and anti-discrimination legislation.**”

Then it goes on, under “Good practice guide for events” and “Suggested Lotterywest updates for the internal guide.” —

...

- Update the section of the document relating to “Access and Inclusion” to become “**Equality, diversity and inclusion**” and include the following text: “**Lotterywest is committed to equality, diversity and inclusion, in line with Government policies, practices and anti-discrimination legislation. Events, initiatives and programs supported by Lotterywest are encouraged to adopt this approach.**”

It goes on and on. This is what they were going to do. Then, of course, they decided they would have to bail on this, as I said, as a direct result of what went on with the furore that was created as a result of the Margaret Court Outreach Centre’s application being rejected, they decided to can it. An email went to staff, which said —

Hi

As you may have already been made aware, the Board did not support the proposed change to the Our Commitment at this time.

While supportive of the proposal to include the themes of Diversity, Inclusion and Integrity (with some minor wordsmithing to the proposal) they want to hold off on making these changes until we do the broader review of the Strategic Plan in 2022. The Board do not wish to be seen to making reactive changes to the Plan in light of the challenges with Victory Life.

In short our work is not wasted, but will be parked until 2022.

As I said, we have a situation now in which an organisation that is assisting thousands of people, particularly during the pandemic, followed the processes that were recommended by the Premier. It is delivering, as I said, tonnes of foods to the underprivileged and marginalised every single week. Susan Hunt brought up the antidiscrimination law on this issue. I read that antidiscrimination aspect of the act in this chamber, saying that Lotterywest cannot discriminate when it comes down to grants. Lotterywest cannot do this; it is in the act! It cannot do that, yet it evidently has done that. I tried to get some responses to these questions during estimates and this really disappointed me.

Last year we had constrained budget estimates hearings and I asked Lotterywest to come in because I wanted to ask Susan Hunt questions directly—legitimate questions; that is why we have estimates in this place. It is the one opportunity we get to ask questions of agencies and ministers, through which we can forensically dissect issues. Of course, I went straight to the Lotterywest issue with regard to the grants proposal. Hon Sue Ellery, who was representing the Premier, stated —

I am happy to assist the committee in providing answers in respect to matters in the annual report or the budget. I am not going to be dealing with particular individual decisions of the board. They are not captured in the budget or in the annual report. The specific decision that you are referring to was indeed outside the reporting period. But if there were questions, honourable member, about the criteria generally applied to those sorts of decisions, I am happy to assist the committee with that.

The government has got to be joking. This is upper house estimates. We have always had latitude in this place, as members will find out. I am privileged to now be Chair of the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations, and that is a standard that I will uphold. It has always been the case. I asked those questions and was told, no, it is not within the time frame. An hour later, I went into the Department of the Premier and Cabinet estimates and asked questions about how many FTE there were to that date, who had been using the jet up to that date: “No worries, you can have that. You can have all of that. You can have whatever you like.” Why was the standard not okay for Lotterywest but was established for the Department of the Premier and Cabinet? Again, it is the hand. As I have said, this is an Alfoil government, not a Glad Wrap government.

If the government had just been open and transparent from day one, we would not have had an issue. Well, there would have been an issue, but it would not have taken dozens upon dozens of questions to get to the bottom of exactly what we knew in the first place. That was the issue. As a direct result of that, I put some questions on notice, which is something that is done in budget estimates. I then waited and waited, and a couple of days before the questions were due to be answered, what happened? The Premier prorogued Parliament. He prorogued Parliament in early December for an election in March, so all the questions we had asked of this open and transparent government during estimates—there were hundreds of them—were not answered. We eventually got them last week, but half of the guys who asked those questions were leaving Parliament.

If members ever want an example of the secrecy of this government, that is it. Surely there is some communication between the Premier and the Leader of the House in the Legislative Council. If the Leader of the House really respected the integrity and conventions of this house, she would have said, “No, hang on. Just wait a few days until the estimates questions are answered and then we’ll prorogue Parliament.” It would have meant nothing; the government did not need to prorogue Parliament until the end of January, but it did.

The worm always turns. When we get to the point that government members are sitting on this side of the chamber and we are on that side of the chamber again, and they want questions answered and they get the hand, they will understand why we are frustrated—particularly at the moment, when we have asked a plethora of questions and have been given the hand.

From all I have seen in respect of the questions I have asked and the questions that have been responded to, I am not satisfied. I am not at all satisfied with what I have seen in the FOI documents from Lotterywest, and I am very, very disappointed. It is blatantly clear that there was some political interference here. I am really disappointed that an organisation like Margaret Court Community Outreach is being penalised as a direct result of comments Margaret Court made that do not at all reflect on the distribution of food and equipment to some of the most marginalised people in our community.

With that said, while I have a few more minutes, I will say one more thing on an issue that continues to bubble along—that is, the appointment of the Corruption and Crime Commissioner. That spat was a massive issue in the last Parliament. The Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission comprises two members of the upper house and two members of the lower house. By convention, again, it is members from the government and the opposition. The government in this house appointed a member of the Greens to the committee in Hon Alison Xamon. I had no issue with that because I have great respect for Hon Alison Xamon.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, the appointment of Hon Alison Xamon was the will of the house rather than the government.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER COLLIER: Well, yes. That was the recommendation, sorry. If the member honestly thinks that, good try.

As a result of that appointment, the committee decided that it would not recommend Hon John McKechnie. The government should respect the processes of the Parliament. The Premier, the Attorney General and the government went feral. They said it was the Liberal Party. Government members called us terrorists—I have said this over and again—and said we were corrupted. I will make one thing perfectly clear, because I will have plenty more to say on this in the months ahead: the motivation as far as the CCC was concerned has been to follow the processes. It

was not the Liberal Party—we had nine members in this chamber—it was the will of the chamber that accepted those reports. President, welcome back. There is a process for how we appoint a commissioner of the CCC. When the government does not get what it wants, it does not mean it can spit the chewie and try to change the rules. The government needs to accept the processes of the Parliament.

I go back to where I started on the conventions of the Parliament. As soon as a government starts changing the rules to suit its side, again, it is sowing the seeds of destruction. As far as I am concerned, as I said at the start, I have met John McKechnie a couple of times and I do not have an issue with him. I have no issues whatsoever with him or with him having the laptop. He can get the laptop, but he cannot have the privileged information. As soon as we start going down that path, guys, I say now, we will be throwing away 800 years of parliamentary convention. Parliamentary convention is going to be here a hell of a lot longer than the Australian Labor Party is going to be in government in Western Australia. Our motivation was always to ensure that the principles and the conventions of Parliament were upheld, and that is what we will continue to uphold.

John McKechnie made a speech at St George’s Cathedral on 25 November 2020 titled “Coffee, Prayers and Spirituality”. I will refer to that speech in one I have coming up. If members read that speech and can say that he is definitely someone who does not have a political bent a particular way, they need to look in the mirror. I was really disappointed with this speech. Members should go and have read of it. As I said, it is publicly available. They should read it and then say that it is the correct processes and procedures. As I have said, we will always follow the processes and procedures with regard to the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission. If the committee comes up with a recommendation this time, we will respect that. We will not stamp our feet and spit the chewie and say we want to change the rules because we did not get our way; we will say, “Yes, we respect that recommendation.” That is what we will do. If you cannot do that, guys, go fishing! We only go around once.

It is such a privilege to sit in this place. It is going to be here after all of us are gone, so, I say to new incoming members, please treat the Parliament and the chamber with respect. It is going to be here long after you leave. If you go outside the conventions, processes and procedures of the Parliament in any shape or form, ultimately you will be the one who will be judged. If you adhere to the processes and procedures of the Parliament, you will never go wrong. You only go around once; you only get one opportunity. You can treat life as a series of events or a series of opportunities. This is definitely an opportunity, so make the most of it, because we on this side of the chamber, I promise, will forensically, ruthlessly and consistently adhere to the principles, procedures and conventions of the Legislative Council.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Colin de Grussa**.

BATTLE OF CRETE

Statement

HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.10 pm]: I rise to talk about a couple of things I have attended in the last few days in remembrance of the eightieth anniversary of the Battle of Crete. Last Thursday evening after the house adjourned, I attended the unveiling of the plans for a memorial to be placed in Kings Park in honour of the Battle of Crete, given the service of Western Australians in that battle. A committee has come together and come up with a final design for that memorial. It is interesting to note that even though the Western Australian contingent that fought in the Battle of Crete was pretty significant, there is no specific war memorial in Western Australia acknowledging the sacrifices that were made by Australians and those from Greece and the cause of freedom in that battle. I congratulate the committee on reaching the point at which it has now selected a design, and it is looking forward to trying to get that memorial built.

On Sunday just gone, I attended the State War Memorial in Kings Park for the memorial service for the Battle of Crete. The sole Western Australian surviving veteran of the Battle of Crete, Arthur Leggett, who is 102, came along to both of those events on Thursday evening and Sunday. I have to say that he strutted in to the event on Thursday evening, and you would never have picked this was a 102-year-old veteran who had been imprisoned for four years in a German prisoner of war camp. It was incredible to see how fit and healthy he was and to see him at the service. I acknowledge a number of people there at the war memorial service on Sunday, including my colleague in this place Hon Dan Caddy as well as members from the other place. It was great to see everyone there.

I will talk a little bit about the Battle of Crete. This was a battle for the island of Crete, which was fought in the second week of May 1941 when the British commonwealth and Greek garrisons on the island were attacked by German airborne troops. It was one of the biggest aerial assaults in history to that point. Even though those defenders based on the island had greater numbers, they were overwhelmed by the incredible advantage that the Germans had in their logistical and air support. Many thousands of paratroopers came down. They were very well organised and they overwhelmed the troops on the island. I am going to go through a description of some parts of the battle from a document from the Australian War Memorial. It states —

The invasion of Crete began the morning of May 20. Ralph Honner, at the time a company commander with the 2/11th Battalion, —

That is a Western Australian battalion —

described the arrival of the Germans, as seen from his vantage point under the olive trees east of Retimo:

[It was] a spectacle that might have belonged to a war between the planets. Out of the unswerving flying fleet came tumbling lines of little dolls, sprouting silken mushrooms that stayed and steadied them, and lowered them in ordered ranks into our consuming fire. And still they came, till all the fantastic sky before us was filled with futuristic snowflakes floating beneath the low black thundercloud of the processional planes—occasionally flashing into fire as if struck by lightning from the earth.

These “little dolls”—German paratroopers of General Kurt Student’s XI Air Corps—were highly trained and motivated. For ten days they, and the elite mountain troops that were sent to reinforce them, hunted and were hunted by Australian, New Zealand, British, and Greek soldiers, as well as Cretan farmers, townspeople, and police. Fighting was savage and bloody, with little quarter given. Men fought to the death in solitary duels or major engagements; their bodies cluttered the narrow streets of the towns or lay among the olive trees and creek beds of the countryside.

As I said, the defending forces were overwhelmed eventually and many thousands of soldiers were evacuated by ship as soon as they could be. Some Western Australian veterans who fought in that battle hid on the island for more than a year, thanks to the help of the Cretan people. I think it is particularly important that we remember that great bond that has been forged between our nation and the Greek nation as a result of this and other battles we jointly fought. Of course, Greece was involved as far as one of the islands being used for the Gallipoli campaign.

I think it is very important that we remember the service of those people, particularly the Western Australians. I look forward to a memorial being established in Western Australia for this important battle. It was great to see so many people attend the service on the weekend, even though it poured with rain most of the time, as Hon Dan Caddy can attest to. We were both hiding under the same umbrella at one point. It was a very good service. I would like to acknowledge the committee for organising that and, of course, thank the Consul of Greece in Perth for the invitation to attend. It was particularly good to see members of the armed services there. It was acknowledged that they obviously had not been able to celebrate Anzac Day in the traditional way, so it was good for them to come out to the State War Memorial on Sunday and remember the eightieth anniversary of the Battle of Crete.

House adjourned at 9.17 pm

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Questions and answers are as supplied to Hansard.

ABORIGINAL HERITAGE — SECTION 18 APPLICATIONS

1. Hon Robin Chapple to the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs:

I refer to the 40th Parliament of Western Australia, and the approvals granted to mining and resource companies under section 18 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act (1972)*, and I ask:

- (a) during the 40th Parliament, how many section 18 applications were granted by the Government:
 - (i) will the Minister please table (a) *per annum*:
 - (A) if no to (a)(i), why not;
- (b) during the 40th Parliament, how many section 18 applications were rejected by the Government:
 - (i) will the Minister please table (b) *per annum*:
 - (A) if no to (b)(i), why not; and
- (c) how many section 18 applications have been granted in the period since Juukan Gorge was destroyed by Rio Tinto on 24 May 2020?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) 143 consents were granted to mining and resource companies by the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs pursuant to section 18 of the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972* during the period specified.
 - (i) 2017 (11 May – 31 December): 28
2018: 29
2019: 47
2020: 39
2021 (1–29 January): 0
(A) Not applicable.
- (b) One.
 - (i) 2017 (11 May – 31 December): 0
2018: 0
2019: 0
2020: 1
2021 (1–29 January): 0
(A) Not applicable.
- (c) 22 section 18 consents have been granted and 1 declined.

LEGAL AFFAIRS — WESTERN DESERT JUSTICE PROGRAM

2. Hon Nick Goiran to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the election commitment made to invest in the Western Desert Justice Program, east of Newman (Martu Country), and I ask:

- (a) what does this program involve;
- (b) when will this investment commence;
- (c) what are the objectives of this program; and
- (d) how will the success of the program be measured?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

- (a) The Western Desert Justice Program (the Program) has been designed and developed in consultation with the Martu people. It is intended to reduce the contact that adult and young Martu people have with the justice system. This involves prevention, intervention, diversion and transition away from the justice system. The program is culturally appropriate and involves a comprehensive “end to end” case management model that commences at the first point of contact with the justice system and continues to the last point of contact.

- (b) The investment is expected to commence during the 2021–22 Budget.
- (c) The aim of the Program is to reduce Martu incarceration through prevention, diversion and culturally delivered programs.
- (d) The Department of Justice will measure the success of the Program against:
- Reduced Imprisonment of Martu People,
 - Reduced Over-representation of Aboriginal People in the Justice system,
 - Value for Money, and
 - Its contribution to the 2020 Closing the Gap targets.

PERTH CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL — GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICE

3. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

- (1) How many children and adolescents received treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital Gender Diversity Service in the 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 calendar years?
- (2) What constitutes 'treatment' for the numbers provided in (1)?
- (3) How many children and adolescents commenced stage one puberty blocker treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital Gender Diversity Service in the 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 calendar years?
- (4) How many children are currently receiving stage one puberty blocker treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital Gender Diversity Service?
- (5) How many children commenced stage two cross sex hormone treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital Gender Diversity Service in the 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 calendar years?
- (6) How many children and adolescents are currently receiving stage two cross sex hormone treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital Gender Diversity Service?
- (7) What was the age of the youngest child to receive treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital in each of the years 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020?
- (8) What is the age of the youngest child who is currently receiving treatment at the Perth Children's Hospital Gender Diversity Service?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I am advised:

- (1)

Year	Stage One	Stage Two
2016	14	7
2017	28	17
2018	47	21
2019	47	38
2020	49	47

- (2) 'Treatment' is defined as those patients who are pubertal and who are treated with puberty suppression ("Stage One") or estrogen or testosterone ("Stage Two").
- (3)

Year	Commenced Stage One
2016	14
2017	22
2018	35
2019	28
2020	25

- (4) 44 currently receiving Stage One puberty blocker treatment.

(5)

Year	Commenced Stage Two
2016	6
2017	10
2018	15
2019	31
2020	29

(6) 43 currently receiving Stage Two cross sex hormone treatment.

(7)

Year	Stage One	Stage Two
2016	9 years 2 mths	15 years 2 mths
2017	12 years 8 mths	16 years 2 mths
2018	10 years 8 mths	15 years 9 mths
2019	10 years 10 mths	15 years 10 mths
2020	10 years 11 mths	15 years 1 mth

(8) Youngest patient currently receiving puberty suppression (Stage One): 11 years 4 months.

Youngest patient currently receiving hormone therapy (Stage Two): 15 years 5 months.

ABORTION — NOTIFICATIONS

4. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to section 335 of the *Health (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1911*, which states that a medical practitioner who performs an abortion must notify the Chief Health Officer of the fact in the prescribed form within 14 days of the abortion being performed, and that such notification must not contain any particulars from which it may be possible to ascertain the identity of the patient, and I ask:

- how many forms have been received covering the period from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020;
- further to (a), will the Minister table the forms; and
- if no to (b), will the Minister undertake to comply with section 82 of the *Financial Management Act 2006*?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I am advised:

- 7,950
- (c) The provision of this information would unreasonably divert resources from the core functions of the Department.

ABORTION — INDUCED

5. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

For the calendar year, from 1 January 2020 to 31 December 2020, what was the number of:

- induced abortions;
- induced abortions over 12 weeks gestation;
- induced abortions for women under the age of 20;
- approvals given by the Ministerial Panel for abortions at 20 weeks or later;
- induced abortions at 20 weeks gestation or later; and
- medical abortions using mifepristone and misoprostol?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I am advised:

- 7,947
- 548
- 545
- 103 approvals.
- 98
- 2,890

ABORTION — TRISOMY 21

6. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Health:

How many abortions were performed at 20 weeks gestation, or later, with the justification for the abortion given as “Trisomy 21” between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2020?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I am advised:

Less than five. The answer to this question has been suppressed for patient confidentiality; provision of this figure would reveal a number less than five.

FIRE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES — VOLUNTEER ASSOCIATIONS — FUNDING

7. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to volunteer associations supported by the Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES), and I ask:

- (a) for each association, how much annual funding has been received from DFES in each of the last five years including projected for 2020–21;
- (b) how are financial contributions to and between volunteer associations determined;
- (c) if the funding amounts to a grant, please table each of the relevant grant agreements; and
- (d) when has the State Government last reviewed the appropriateness of funding to support volunteer associations to undertake their important work state-wide?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

The Department of Fire and Emergency Services (DFES) advises the following recurrent annual payments are made to Associations:

(a)

Name	2020–21 (\$)	2019–20 (\$)	2018–19 (\$)	2017–18 (\$)	2016–17 (\$)
The SES Volunteers Association of WA	132,909	82,921	116,000	80,000	116,000
Volunteer Fire and Rescue Services Association of WA	236,000	236,000	236,000	236,000	236,000
Emergency Services Volunteers Association	75,000	54,425	75,000	75,000	75,000
Volunteer Marine Rescue Western Australia	35,000	70,000	0	31,818	35,000
The Association of Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades WA	29,000	116,000	116,000	95,000	116,000

Funding provided to Associations over and above the recurrent annual funding outlined is detailed in DFES’ Annual Reports.

- (b) Financial allocations to each association are made according to their historical annual spending that is in line with the grant agreements between DFES and associations.
- (c) Grant Agreements are provided. [See tabled paper no [235](#).]
- (d) Annual provision of funding is assessed each year as part of the end of year acquittal process. The grant agreements are currently under review and DFES is consulting with Associations.

PREMIER AND CABINET — AIR CHARTER SERVICES

9. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the use of ministerial charter aircraft between 1 December 2020 to date, and I ask:

- (a) for each aircraft please identify for each leg of a journey between a departure and arrival point the following:
 - (i) date and time of the travel; and
 - (ii) the names of the passengers on board;
- (b) for each month in question, please provide the total operating hours of each aircraft;

- (c) for each month in question, please provide the monthly costs associated with operating each aircraft;
- (d) on how many occasions was an aircraft tasked without a Minister as a passenger, providing details and reasons for such a flight;
- (e) on how many occasions was a request for air charter not able to be met providing details of the requester, date and time; and
- (f) please table the relevant guidelines for the use of ministerial charter aircraft?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)(i)–(ii) [See tabled paper no [236](#).]

Note: The names of WA Police Officers have been redacted for privacy and security reasons.

- (b)

	December 2020	January 2021	February 2021	March 2021	April 2021	May* 2021
VH-MQY Hawker Jet	45.3	45.5	22.1	7.2	17.5	3.0
VH-MQZ King Air	17.5	23.2	5.9	11.9	14.0	7.1

* Total operating hours up to and including 4 May 2021.

- (c) Please see below table for the total monthly cost associated with operating both aircraft including maintenance. All amounts are excluding GST and are unable to be apportioned to each aircraft. All figures are accurate at time of response.

December 2020	\$323,696.35
January 2021	\$399,319.30
February 2021	\$300,427.71
March 2021	\$417,665.68
April 2021	\$387,115.96
May 2021	\$218,172.53

- (d) [See tabled paper no [236](#).]
- (e) Nil.
- (f) [See tabled paper no [236](#).] Different guidelines are applicable during the State Election Caretaker period. These guidelines are also tabled. As per 1.6 of the Caretaker Ministerial Air Charter Guidelines, relevant passengers covered the cost of their own travel.

PUBLIC HOUSING — WAITING LIST

10. Hon Alison Xamon to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) How many applications are currently on the public housing wait list?
- (2) How many individuals does (1) represent?
- (3) How many applications are currently on the public housing priority waiting list?
- (4) How many individuals does (2) represent?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (1)–(4) As at 30 April 2021, there were 16,660 applications on the waiting list, representing 28,680 individuals. Of the 16,660 applications on the public housing wait list, a total of 3,062 were priority listed, representing 5,897 individuals.

Eligibility for the public housing wait list is assessed through a range of factors but is primarily based on the applicant's income. The general wait list is not an accurate representation of housing need, as some applicants may remain eligible but may be settled in their current housing arrangements.

PUBLIC HOUSING

11. Hon Alison Xamon to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) Will the Minister please advise the net increase of social housing over last 12 months?
- (2) Will the Minister please advise the net increase of social housing since 2016–17?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (1)–(2) In 2017 the McGowan Government inherited a Public Housing portfolio consisting of a significant number of dilapidated buildings which were unsafe, expensive to maintain and not fit for purpose, this stock represented a lack of investment by the Barnett Government and because of this lack of investment and the difficult decisions made to decommission large housing complexes such as Brownlie Towers, there has been no net increase in social housing over the period.

The McGowan Government is investing heavily, with nearly \$1 billion into new public housing stock, refurbishment of existing stock, and homeless support services and programs including the Social Housing Economic Recovery Package and the Housing and Homelessness Investment Package.

We are also supporting housing development across the state, with the \$20,000 Building Bonus Grant playing a critical role in the significant increases of new home building approvals, with over 24,000 applications received as at 20 May 2021. In the twelve months to March there have been 23,100 new homes approved for construction, the largest growth on record. As these new homes come online, supply side pressures will begin to ease with more properties in the rental market.

STATE AGREEMENT ACTS — PUBLICATION

12. Hon Alison Xamon to the minister representing the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer to the answers given to question on notice 3220 on 3 November 2020, question on notice 504 on 20 March 2018, question on notice 2583 on 19 November 2019 and to question on notice 2806 on 19 March 2020, and I ask:

- (a) when will a complete, consolidated, current form of all State agreements be made publicly available; and
- (b) through what mechanism will members of the public be able to access these documents?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

The Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation advises:

- (a)–(b) Consolidated copies of State Agreements will be made publicly available. The Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation is looking at the best means of achieving this outcome, including the timing and mechanisms to make consolidated copies of State Agreements publically available.

LAW REFORM COMMISSION — REPORTS

13. Hon Alison Xamon to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

Which, if any, Western Australian Law Reform Commission reports, and which specific recommendations from those reports, does the Attorney General intend to progress this term?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

The Attorney General is actively considering a number of the Western Australian Law Reform Commission reports relevant to his portfolio. If and when reforms are pursued to implement specific recommendations, the Parliament will be informed accordingly.

TREASURER — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

14. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Treasurer:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(e) I refer the Honourable Member to the answer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 23.

MINISTER FOR STATE DEVELOPMENT, JOBS AND TRADE — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

15. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d) Yes.
- (e) Yes, through the existing resources of the Government Garage.

MINISTER FOR FINANCE — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

17. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Finance:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR LANDS — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

18. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Lands:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR SPORT AND RECREATION — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

19. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Sport and Recreation:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR CITIZENSHIP AND MULTICULTURAL INTERESTS —
WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT**20. Hon Martin Aldridge to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Interests:**

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;

- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR EMERGENCY SERVICES — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

22. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Emergency Services:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

PREMIER — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

23. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Premier; Minister for Public Sector Management; Federal–State Relations:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) Yes.
- (c) Mr Guy Houston. As a guest.
- (d)–(e) Yes, as is standard practice by the Premier of the day. The Premier's transport arrangements are made in coordination with WA Police and are based on relevant security advice.

MINISTER FOR HEALTH — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

24. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Deputy Premier; Minister for Health; Medical Research; Science:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(e) Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 15.

MINISTER FOR MENTAL HEALTH — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

25. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Minister for Mental Health; Aboriginal Affairs; Industrial Relations:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;

- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR TOURISM — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

27. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Tourism; Culture and the Arts; Heritage:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d)–(e) No.

ATTORNEY GENERAL — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

28. Hon Martin Aldridge to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General; Minister for Electoral Affairs:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d)–(e) No.

MINISTER FOR POLICE — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

29. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Police; Road Safety:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not Applicable.
- (d) No.
- (e) No.

MINISTER FOR DEFENCE INDUSTRY — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

30. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Defence Industry; Veterans Issues:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

Please refer to Legislative Council Question on Notice 29.

MINISTER FOR MINES AND PETROLEUM — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

31. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Energy; Corrective Services:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d)–(e) No.

MINISTER FOR CHILD PROTECTION — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

33. Hon Martin Aldridge to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Child Protection; Women's Interests; Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d)–(e) No.

MINISTER FOR WATER — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

34. Hon Martin Aldridge to the minister representing the Minister for Water; Forestry; Youth:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Alannah MacTiernan replied:

- (a) Yes.
- (b) No.
- (c) Not applicable.
- (d)–(e) No.

MINISTER FOR HOUSING — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

36. Hon Martin Aldridge to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Housing; Local Government:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Sue Ellery replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR DISABILITY SERVICES — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

37. Hon Martin Aldridge to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Disability Services; Fisheries; Innovation and ICT; Seniors and Ageing:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Kyle McGinn replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
- (c)–(e) Not applicable.

MINISTER FOR RACING AND GAMING — WA LABOR FUNDRAISING EVENT

38. Hon Martin Aldridge to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming; Small Business; Volunteering:

I refer to a Labor fundraising event at Royal Freshwater Bay Yacht Club on 4 March 2021, and I ask:

- (a) did the Minister attend the event;
- (b) did any of the Minister's staff attend the event;
- (c) if yes to (b), please identify the staff members who attended the event and the reason for their attendance;
- (d) did the Minister travel to or from the event with the assistance of the Government garage; and
- (e) did the Minister travel to and from the event at public expense in any form?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

- (a)–(b) No.
 - (c)–(e) Not applicable.
-

