

LAND AND PUBLIC WORKS LEGISLATION AMENDMENT BILL 2022

Second Reading

Resumed from 23 November 2022.

MRS J.M.C. STOJKOVSKI (Kingsley — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.01 pm]: I rise today to make a contribution to the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. This bill will establish a new form of land tenure for people in Western Australia, known as the diversification lease. It will support a range of uses to unlock under-utilised crown land to enable the expansion of the Western Australian economy and to contribute to the realisation of something that I hold very dear to my heart—a low-carbon future.

This piece of legislation is actually a piece of visionary legislation. It is government leading by example. It is a demonstration of how ministers and departments can work together to achieve a common goal. One of the things it also does is help advance the state government's climate change action plan. I was very excited that the Minister for Environment further expanded on that recently in January by giving us targets that we need to adhere to. Our action plan provides a robust and credible emission reduction strategy of net zero emissions by 2050. This bill provides an opportunity for the government and people who have leases on crown land to contribute to that effort.

We can see from some government organisations that we are looking towards this emissions reduction through a very serious lens. Synergy is transitioning out of coal-fired power by 2030 and is investing \$3.8 billion in new green power infrastructure, including wind generation and storage. The government has an emissions target of below 80 per cent. I did not write what year that was for, but I am sure I can go back and look at it.

I will talk about wind generation. Renewable generation for Western Australia just makes sense. We are potentially in the best place in the world to capitalise on renewable energy generation for not only wind, but also solar and, increasingly, hydrogen power. Wind generation is one of the fastest growing electrical generation sources in the world, and particularly in Australia. One of the reasons for that is that it is clean and renewable. It can be used to power on site and to transport power to the grid. This is a particularly important aspect of all our renewable generation because, as we know, Western Australia is a very large state with lots of consumers that have electricity demands. Our south west interconnected system can supply only so much energy in a connected manner to our main energy generation, and so we need to investigate and invest in other energy generating opportunities throughout the vast state of Western Australia. This renewable energy generation system, such as wind and solar generation, is vital to ensuring that we have equitable access to energy across the entire state.

Ideal conditions for wind turbines for generation are windy areas, particularly those that are coastal, with mid to high-latitude or mountainous regions. These are generally characterised by high, relatively consistent wind conditions with average wind speeds in excess of six metres per second in places, and more than nine metres per second is ideal. Western Australia is one of the world's windiest places, with the strongest recorded wind gust in WA recorded on Barrow Island at 408 kilometres per hour. That occurred during tropical cyclone Olivia in 1996, but that is not an isolated event in the wind gust records of Western Australia. The strongest recorded gust on mainland Australia was also in WA. It blew at 267 kilometres per hour and was recorded at a weather station at Learmonth south of Exmouth during tropical cyclone Vance in 1999. They are extreme wind speeds, but anyone who has ever walked down St Georges Terrace on a windy day knows that Perth is very windy. That is consistent throughout Western Australia. The average wind speeds in Western Australia rank between 18.4 kilometres per hour and 22.8 kilometres per hour, giving the ideal wind speeds for turbines of around five to six metres per second. We have the conditions that support a greater use of renewable energy from wind turbines. Anyone who drives in the regions, as I do regularly because I have family members living in Jurien Bay, will see the wind farms popping up along Indian Ocean Drive. I know that Albany has a great wind farm there because I visit friends down there. That wind farm produces not only enough energy to power the town for a large percentage of the time, but also provides a tourist opportunity. People can trek to the viewing platform and see the wind turbines in all their glory in Albany, whether they are rotating or on the ground for maintenance. That is, apparently, also very exciting for a six-year-old boy to look at, which I found out a few years ago when I took my son and he was very excited that one of the wind turbines had been tilted over and maintenance was being done on it. We are very lucky in Western Australia that we have the conditions that support clean and renewable energy, and that can go on to support the burgeoning hydrogen industry, which I know the Deputy Premier is very keen on supporting in Western Australia.

The other thing we have an abundance of in Western Australia, besides wind, is sunshine. We are the sunshine capital of Australia. Sunny days in Perth average 8.8 hours of sunshine per day, compared with Darwin, which gets 8.5 hours; Brisbane, which gets 8.2 hours; and Adelaide, which gets 7.7 hours of sunshine in a day. That equates to around 3 200 of hours of annual sunshine. Perth gets 138.7 clear days annually. We get 138.7 sunny days, making it the sunniest capital city in Australia. But Perth is not alone in its record number of clear days in Western Australia. Broome has 190.2 sunny days, Bunbury has 126.8, Geraldton has 192, Kalgoorlie has 177.9 and Port Hedland has 232.4 days of sunshine every year. What does that tell us? They are interesting numbers. Of course, Western Australia is very sunny and we need lots of sunscreen, particularly people who are of my complexion, and hats. What it tells

us is that we have an abundant energy source that we can utilise here in Western Australia. We do not have to work to create the energy; the energy is already there. What we have to do is ensure that we are harnessing that energy and using it, and this is something that Western Australians have already cottoned on to. We are very aware that we are in a privileged position to have sunshine here in Western Australia and that we can harness that with photovoltaics on our rooftops. In November last year, *PV Magazine* had an article that states —

The booming uptake of home PV systems has steered Western Australia to a new peak for instantaneous renewable energy share, with clean energy—including rooftop and large-scale solar—providing a record 81% of the total electricity generated in the state's wholesale electricity market.

That is an astonishing number for anyone who has read anything about electricity generation and how our reliance on it has been, historically and traditionally, based on fossil fuels and non-renewable energy. For us to be able to produce 81 per cent of our electricity generation on a particular day is astounding. Households, particularly in Perth, have embraced this renewable energy technology, and we are installing PVs on our rooftops at a rate of 3 000 homes each month. There are 3 000 homes every month that are realising that we can use the abundance of solar energy that we have in Perth to not only lower our own household electricity bills, but also provide electricity into the system.

From my conversations with the Minister for Energy, I know that a lot of work is happening at the moment on how to store that energy, now that we are producing so much energy and have the capacity to move away from coal-fired power generation. But how do we store this energy, moving forward, so that we can use it during the peak demand times. For those people who have solar panels on their roofs, now is a great moment to take stock of how they program their lives around their PVs to make sure that they can do things during the day that use the energy they create on their rooftops so that we can reduce demand on the system between 5.00 and 9.00 pm, when we all get home and turn on our air conditioners, dishwashers and washing machines. We could schedule some of those things to happen during the day, when we are producing energy. I just received my new electricity bill and I can see that as we have made changes to our habits, our electricity bill is slowly decreasing every single bill cycle. When I receive my bill, it has a little graphic on it showing that this bill is substantially lower than the last bill, and nearly half of the bills we had before we started making these changes last year, when we had PVs put on our roof.

All this renewable energy generation obviously also contributes to our burgeoning hydrogen industry. The Deputy Premier is very keen to see this industry take off, and this piece of legislation will allow for this industry to diversify across Western Australia. This is a really innovative piece of legislation. The minister needs to be commended on the vision that he has had, and I am sure that the Minister for Environment has had some say in how we look at this. Obviously, diversifying the leases that we can use on crown land to allow for people to provide greater security for renewable energy in Western Australia will do only great things for not only our economy, but also our drive to get to net zero emissions by 2050.

One small part that I wanted to touch on before I sit and cede the floor to my colleague the member for Kimberley—I am sure that she will talk about this as well—is the ability for diversification on this land for Aboriginal tourism. I have been looking into this issue for a long time, and, in March 2019, I brought a grievance to the then minister about the lack of availability of and access to Aboriginal heritage and culture in the regions and the metro areas. At the time, visitor research conducted in 2017–18 indicated that 82 per cent of visitors to Western Australia wanted to have an Aboriginal tourism experience, but only about 26 per cent secured that experience. Therefore, I would like to commend the minister for also accommodating Aboriginal tourism in this bill, because it is an essential and unique part of Western Australia. It is something that we should celebrate. It is something that we should explore how to promote further. Aboriginal tourism is something that we could offer the world that people have never experienced before.

When I went to Kalbarri last year, the favourite thing that we did was an on-country experience where we cooked fish in a fire pit and learnt about all the different skin groups and why people could not marry between them. This was something that I had never known about and something that makes a lot of sense. In western culture we have written records and until we had written records, nobody understood that there might be dangers in intermarrying. But our Aboriginal culture has known this for thousands of years, and really strict rules have been in place to make sure that people did not intermarry. I did not know that until last year and I have lived in Western Australia for 41 years—minus a couple of years back in Ireland. I have lived in Western Australia since 1981, and I only learnt that in 2022. Therefore, I think that Aboriginal tourism is a great initiative of the minister and he should be commended for his vision on this bill. I commend this bill to the house.

MS D.G. D'ANNA (Kimberley) [1.16 pm]: As my colleagues have indicated, the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 will have huge benefits across Western Australia, especially in the Kimberley. The new opportunities for managing land, including through partnerships and allowing for diverse uses of the same land, will bring benefits for people across my electorate. I have sat here and listened to some of the ministers deliver their brief ministerial statements, and I acknowledge and thank those ministers who put the needs of the Kimberley up there, especially Minister Templeman. Thank you for acknowledging such a huge contributor to the awareness

and importance of cultural tourism and cultural knowledge through Mr Woolagoodja and the Mowanjum Art and Culture Centre. I would also like to acknowledge Minister McGurk for letting everyone know that the sewerage is fixed at the Fitzroy Crossing Bridge!

I will speak about the recent floods. This bill will allow for the Minister for Lands to prescribe a class of pastoral leases for rent relief, such as the leases up there that were impacted by cyclones, bushfires or this flood. Members have seen the impact of the flood on the townships and pastoral stations on not only the infrastructure, but also the cattle and stock. The Fitzroy River reached peak levels at Fitzroy Crossing, resulting in the destruction of the Fitzroy Crossing Bridge on the Great Northern Highway, which is the only sealed road connecting the East and West Kimberley. Many Kimberley pastoralists will have suffered significant damage, including loss of livestock, erosion and damage to pastoral infrastructure.

There are currently 434 pastoral stations in Western Australia, including 92 in the Kimberley. Thirty-one pastoral stations in the Kimberley are held by Aboriginal interests, and the remainder are held by individuals, families and corporate entities. Currently, the minister can only consider applications for rent relief on an application by a pastoral lessee and on recommendation from the Pastoral Lands Board in certain circumstances, such as a natural disaster or hardship caused by poor economic conditions in the pastoral industry. Once applications are received, the PLB will provide the minister with its recommendations on whether to grant rent relief and, if so, the form of the rent relief. It is impractical and administratively inefficient to require lessees to apply for rent relief individually, particularly when lessees are facing hardship. Many people in the Kimberley are struggling with the mental capacity to be burdened with such paperwork. Under the proposed amendments, the minister will be able to grant relief on the minister's own volition or on the recommendation of the Pastoral Lands Board. This will streamline processes while pastoralists and communities are facing hardship.

Another important part of the legislation relates to the diversification leases. Diversification leases will open up significant new opportunities, particularly for Aboriginal people and native title holders. These leases will mean that land can be used for more than one purpose. For example, land might be used for both carbon farming and tourism on country, which can be led by native title holders or local Aboriginal organisations. Diversification leases will assist traditional owners, through Indigenous land use agreements, to plan on how best to utilise that country. An example of this is El Questro station, as we saw last year. This ILUA places management and ownership of this incredible part of WA back with traditional owners, who were fighting with the Wilinggin Aboriginal Corporation in partnership with the G'day Group. This was a personal moment for me as my own children come from that area. This agreement is the result of careful work and negotiations to get the best possible outcome. The agreement also demonstrates how changing attitudes towards partnerships and working together can deliver the best outcome for everyone. It also demonstrates how traditional owners can lead the delivery of incredible and authentic tourism experiences. Through negotiations and partnerships, diversification leases will mean that these cultural and tourism ventures coexist alongside other land uses. This means that maximum benefit can be achieved for everyone.

People travel to the Kimberley from across the world because we know that they want to experience authentic country and the living cultures of Aboriginal people. As my colleague said, it is a very eye-opening experience for those who have never taken part. Time and time again, surveys show that visitors to our state are coming to see the unique things that make WA so special. They come for the once-in-a-lifetime experiences they can only get far out west. The Kimberley offers many of the experiences that cannot be found elsewhere. In many ways, our ancient lands host some of the last truly wild and pristine parts of Australia. This is a huge selling point for our region and our state.

There is huge market demand for cultural tourism. Providing more opportunities to set up unique cultural tourism will bring economic growth and social benefits. Diversification leases will support this continued growth. Delivering cultural tourism and land management in partnership with Aboriginal people supports the continued living cultures of the Kimberley. Diversification leases support this because they provide for traditional owners to be involved in many forms of land use on crown land.

Today, pastoral stations are a big part of the Kimberley and other parts of Western Australia. Of course, in the long span of time, pastoral grazing is a relatively recent thing. Livestock have roamed on lands in the Kimberley for fewer than 200 years. During this time, Aboriginal people have always been linked with the pastoral industry. The success of the pastoral industry is important for the Kimberley and WA. We know that Aboriginal people working on pastoral stations on their traditional lands have not always been treated fairly. There is a terrible history of forced labour, wage theft and abuse. It is critical that Aboriginal people share in the success of the pastoral industry. Today, the expertise of Aboriginal people in caring for stock is widely recognised. This skill will always be linked to the deep knowledge that Aboriginal people have for caring for country. We see this in Aboriginal-owned pastoral stations, both in the Kimberley and in other parts of Western Australia. For example, in 2019, Myroodah station, which is about 100 kilometres south-east of Derby, was transferred to the Nyikina and Mangala people. The station is operated by the Indigenous-owned Kimberley Agriculture and Pastoral Company. It aims to eventually employ more than 200 local Aboriginal people.

More and more projects across WA demonstrate the massive benefits of Aboriginal people being at the heart of managing land. That is why the improvements for pastoral leases introduced in this bill will be important for my electorate. Planning for the future of pastoral leases with Aboriginal people gives everyone a great say, and greater certainty, in how grazing stock will deliver economic and social benefits.

The parts of the bill that support carbon farming will also assist Aboriginal people managing carbon farming on traditional lands. There is the global benefit of capturing carbon and the local benefit of having Aboriginal people caring for country. With climate change, we know that we need to manage land carefully. We also need to make sure that land brings social, economic and cultural benefits to local people and communities. The reforms in this bill mean that careful land management can be supported, including through the involvement of Aboriginal people on native title lands. Together, these parts of this bill will bring significant benefits for the Kimberley and other parts of regional WA. This bill is a big milestone in managing crown land and involving native title organisations and Aboriginal people in partnership to deliver economic activity.

Before I commend this bill to this house, I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that this is the voice National Week of Action. In this week of action, it has been great to see so many people, both old and young, from many diverse backgrounds come together to learn how they can be part of a genuine move to empower Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Now is the time for recognition of our First Nations people and for us to ensure that genuine positive changes are made to Australia's decision-making processes and systems in matters affecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I stand here proud to say that I was part of dialogues that happened across the nation by the Referendum Council that came together in Uluru. The result of that gathering was this statement —

We, gathered at the 2017 National Constitutional Convention, coming from all points of the southern sky, make this statement from the heart:

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander tribes were the first sovereign Nations of the Australian continent and its adjacent islands, and possessed it under our own laws and customs. This our ancestors did, according to the reckoning of our culture, from the Creation, according to the common law from 'time immemorial', and according to science more than 60,000 years ago.

This sovereignty is a *spiritual notion: the ancestral tie between the land, or 'mother nature', and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who were born therefrom, remain attached thereto, and must one day return thither to be united with our ancestors. This link is the basis of the ownership of the soil, or better, of sovereignty.* It has never been ceded or extinguished, and co-exists with the sovereignty of the Crown.

How could it be otherwise? That peoples possessed a land for sixty millennia and this sacred link disappears from world history in merely the last two hundred years?

With substantive constitutional change and structural reform, we believe this ancient sovereignty can shine through as a fuller expression of Australia's nationhood.

Proportionally, we are the most incarcerated people on the planet. We are not an innately criminal people. Our children are alienated from their families at unprecedented rates. This cannot be because we have no love for them. And our youth languish in detention in obscene numbers. They should be our hope for the future.

These dimensions of our crisis tell plainly the structural nature of our problem. This is *the torment of our powerlessness.*

We seek constitutional reforms to empower our people and take a *rightful place* in our own country.

When we have power over our destiny our children will flourish. They will walk in two worlds and their culture will be a gift to their country.

We call for the establishment of a First Nations Voice enshrined in the Constitution. Makarrata is the culmination of our agenda: *the coming together after a struggle.* It captures our aspirations for a fair and truthful relationship with the people of Australia and a better future for our children based on justice and self-determination.

We seek a Makarrata Commission to supervise a process of agreement-making between governments and First Nations and truth-telling about our history.

In 1967 we were counted, in 2017 we seek to be heard. We leave base camp and start our trek across this vast country. We invite you to walk with us in a movement of the Australian people for a better future.

That was the Uluru Statement, which I am proud to be a part of; I was a signatory to it in 2017. I acknowledge the Albanese government for moving forward in 2023 with its election commitment to enshrine an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice into the Constitution.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms M.M. Quirk): I give the call to the member for Cockburn. That is a hard act to follow.

MR D.A.E. SCAIFE (Cockburn) [1.32 pm]: Can I say what an absolute pleasure it is to serve in this chamber with the member for Kimberley. I am quite emotional after hearing from the member for Kimberley because she put so well what I think many of us in this chamber aspire to for our First Nations people. She is a woman of great steeliness, aspiration and ambition for her people and for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and indeed for all Australians. I really thank her for that contribution. I want to say personally and, I am sure, on behalf of the whole chamber, that we, too, want to walk with our First Nations people along the path to reconciliation. The work of acknowledging the traumas of the past started a long time ago. We have not made as much progress as we should have, but we have made progress and we need to continue to make progress.

I am a very strong supporter of the Voice to federal Parliament and I would also like to see a voice at other levels of government into the future. I am confident that we can deliver a yes vote in the referendum later this year. I will say on that note, though, that it is really disheartening to see the attitude that has been taken by the federal opposition on this issue. This should not be a partisan issue. This should be a simple concept, which is to recognise our First Nations people in the foundational document of our nation and to provide a mechanism for consultation so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have a seat at the table and a voice in relation to matters that affect them. The case could not possibly have been put better than the member for Kimberley just did, and I thank her for doing so.

I will turn now to the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022, which is the bill before the chamber at the moment. I will echo a couple of the comments that were made by both the members for Kingsley and Kimberley, and then it will fall to me, as it unfortunately does sometimes, to dive into some of the technical detail of the bill. I hope not to bore members too much, but I will get to that contribution later.

The first thing I want to say echoes the member for Kimberley in relation to the great opportunities for Western Australia in renewable energy, decarbonisation and the green economy. Western Australia has a long and proud history of being a resources-rich and successful mining state, particularly in iron ore and gold and now increasingly in critical minerals. The world is changing and is increasingly looking for low-carbon and zero-carbon options. That means there will be a change in our energy mix, but also a change in the requirements of industry in things such as steel fabrication, domestic power supply or the supply of electricity to very electricity-intensive industries such as smelting or electric arc furnaces in the manufacturing of steel. The world is changing and we have to keep up with that.

As the member for Kingsley said, we have enormous potential in Western Australia to capture both solar energy and wind energy. If we look at a heat map that shows the parts of the world that have the most abundant access to sunlight and to wind power, we see that Western Australia is one of about five hotspots right at the top of the list. If we combine that with our heavy industry and our modern, developed economy, we basically come out on top for opportunities in renewable energy generation and the capacity to transition that solar and wind energy generation into a green hydrogen industry, which this government is pursuing. Anybody who has been paying attention to the debates on the development of our hydrogen industry and our renewable energy industry will know that one of the things that has been putting a bit of a handbrake on the development of the industry is land tenure arrangements.

In Western Australia we have pastoral leases. If vast swathes of land have been given for a particular purpose—in this case, running cattle—that land can be used only for ancillary purposes. It cannot be used for another dominant purpose. We might have absolutely hundreds of thousands of hectares of land that are locked up for pastoral purposes that are perhaps under-utilised or completely unutilised. As a result, we have these vast swathes of land that are potentially available to be used for green energy or green hydrogen projects, but the land tenure is holding back our ability to attract industry and investment into that land. Coming up with a fix to that is extremely important. The fix, which is the diversification lease, is set out in this bill. It will allow for large amounts of crown land or land administered by the state to be leased for a diversity of purposes and it will allow for us to attract investment and encourage industry to invest in the development of green energy and green hydrogen projects. I am really pleased to see this bill come before the house. It is a step forward in this government's decarbonisation agenda.

The second thing that I want to reflect on briefly is the contribution of this bill to advancing the wellbeing and the self-determination of our First Nations Australians. The contribution of this bill was set out in quite some detail by the member for Kimberley and at this point I just want to reflect on the historic Indigenous land use agreement that was struck by G'day Group, the state government and the local Aboriginal corporation in relation to El Questro. El Questro is a beautiful property. It is a beautiful part of this world. I had the privilege of visiting it on a holiday with my wife about 18 months ago. It is a wonderful location and I encourage people to go there. When we went, we were surprised to find that the Aboriginal history of the place had been basically erased. There was really very

little reference to it. There were very few, if any, Aboriginal staff that I could see. There was certainly no easy access to cultural guidance or education about property. That struck me as sad. However, one thing that is pleasing to see is that around the time that we visited there, the property had been bought by G'day Group, which administers a couple of caravan parks in my electorate and indeed different properties all around Australia.

Grant Wilckens, who is the CEO of G'day Group and with whom I have met, noticed the same thing. In cooperation with local traditional owners and the state government, G'day Group began a process of negotiating an Indigenous land use agreement, which means that Aboriginal people are now given a level of self-determination and control over land, which has always been their land. It allows an organisation like G'day Group to run a tourism rather than pastoral offering and engage the local traditional owners in the tourism experience. I really want to celebrate that, and I congratulate the Minister for Lands. I have congratulated him privately, but I congratulate him again in this chamber on the negotiation of that Indigenous land use agreement for El Questro.

I want to comment on two matters that go to the technical nature of the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022. First, I would like to comment on how this bill makes a series of technical and administrative improvements to the way we deal with land tenure in this state, particularly, the transfer of land tenure. Members of this chamber might be familiar with the concept of an easement. An easement is a non-proprietary right placed over a plot of land that is attached to an adjoining, dominant piece of land. For example, a block that would otherwise be landlocked and could not access the street because another block of land is in front of it has an easement placed along the adjoining block to allow the right of way. That is a classic easement—somebody can put a driveway down somebody else's property so they can access the main road. The person on the back block does not own the front block, but they have a right of way. That is an easement.

The point with an easement is that it usually attaches to the dominant piece of land, but we have a type of easement under the Land Administration Act that is known as an easement in gross. An easement in gross is a statutory easement and a device of the legislation. An easement in gross is not attached to the land; it is actually attached to a legal person, and a legal person might be a company or corporation. An easement in gross may be provided under the Mining Act 1978, I believe, and if, for example, a business has a slurry pipeline that runs across land that is not covered by a mining tenement, under the Mining Act, an easement in gross is provided so the operator of the mine still has a right over the use of the land for the purposes of the slurry pipeline. An easement in gross is really important for diversification leases because if a business has large-scale infrastructure, solar arrays, wind turbines and that kind of thing, it may need to have easements in gross, if, say, transmission infrastructure, other types of pipelines or utility infrastructure needs to be connected across plots of land.

The difficulty is that at the moment if the land is transferred, the easement in gross does not transfer with the land because the easement in gross does not rest with the land; it rests with the owner of the land. What has to be done is, basically, the lease has to be transferred to a new owner, the old easement in gross has to be cancelled and a new easement in gross has to be issued for exactly the same purpose as previously. Obviously, that creates hesitancy for capital investment in projects because investors want certainty that when they take over an asset, like a solar array or a wind farm, they will get all the adjoining and necessary infrastructure that goes with it. One thing that this bill allows is the transfer of the easement in gross, rather than requiring it to be cancelled and issued again.

The second thing I want to point to is a technical but really important change. At the moment, the Minister for Lands has no power to hold and deal with freehold and conditional freehold land. If the Minister for Lands wants to transfer freehold land to a new lessor, the freehold land has to be revested into the crown estate, and then carved back out of the crown estate by the minister and given to the new lessor or leaseholder. That is an unnecessary piece of bureaucracy. This bill will provide the minister with the ability to simply deal with freehold and conditional freehold land by transferring it over to a new leaseholder who wishes to purchase the lease, rather than going through that complicated process of revesting the land into the crown estate and then carving it out again into new freehold land for use by the new leaseholder.

Those are just a couple of examples of how this bill will streamline the process. It is a very good bill. It is consistent with our commitments to decarbonisation and self-determination for Aboriginal people, and it makes sensible technical changes to facilitate that agenda. I commend the bill to the house.

MS K.E. GIDDENS (Bateman) [1.45 pm]: I thank the member for Cockburn for his contribution. I think I have learnt more about easements than I ever wanted to know in my life.

Mr D.A.E. Scaife: And still do want to!

Ms K.E. GIDDENS: It is an important consideration and they are important details, so his contribution is always well received here.

I would like to share with members in this place something that is already well known among us sandgropers; that is that the eastern states are extremely jealous of what we have here. As somebody who grew up in Tasmania, I know

that jealousy is rife throughout my family. In family conversations about our economy, we discuss our economy under the McGowan government and the surpluses we run. Of course, about our natural resources, the conversation typically runs something along the lines of “Western Australians have not had to do anything for this”. It is a wealth that belongs to all Australians and, although it was, obviously, found in Western Australia, it is a wealth that we have not had to do anything to derive. Actually, nothing could be further from the truth. The preconditions for the contribution that the Western Australian economy now makes to our national economy were set many decades ago by former governments that set the legislative and regulative requirements to realise the potential of the state. Likewise, the Land and Public Works Legislation Amendment Bill 2022 will do exactly the same thing.

Climate change provides a severe challenge to mankind. It is predicted that 1.5 degrees of global warming from pre-industrial levels is what we should not exceed if we want our biological and ecological systems to remain balanced. Almost no writer of widely regarded scientific literature thinks we will remain under that 1.5-degree level of global warming. Beyond 1.5 degrees, scientists predict that our natural feedback loops could spiral out of control and release sea ice. We could even get to the point that the Amazon, that great carbon-capture resource, could begin to release carbon dioxide instead of capturing it. We could see mass kills of krill, seaweed and coral reefs and, of course, our ecosystems dying. That is the challenge and why we are transitioning to clean energy and net zero.

It is a moral obligation for governments to respond to this challenge, but it is also an economic opportunity. The transition to net zero, particularly around green energy, has the potential to generate significant jobs, particularly jobs in the regions. The McGowan government has been focused on jobs and diversification since day one of forming government in 2017. With the WA jobs plan and Diversify WA, the government has recognised and taken advantage of what we have here in Western Australia to create the kind of lifestyle that the next generation of Western Australians will come to expect and deserve.

How many jobs are estimated to become available during the green energy transition? The figures vary, but one that I read was that to reach net zero emissions by 2050, the world will need to create 14 million clean energy jobs. That statistic comes from the International Energy Agency.

An article titled “45 000 renewables jobs are Australia’s for the taking—but how many will go to coal workers?”, which was published in 2020, sets out really well not only the opportunities but also the challenges in green energy transition. Of course, last year we saw the election of the Albanese Labor federal government; however, prior to that, we had eight years of inaction and chaos in climate change and energy policy. This inaction not only caused harm to our goal of achieving net zero, but also cost the opportunity of jobs for Australians and Western Australians. The article that I have just referenced states that the carbon target set by the then Liberal–National government was reached in 2019. The article states —

According to the Reserve Bank of Australia this caused renewables investment to fall by 50% last year ...

That is, in 2019. The investment in renewables reached the target set by the federal Liberal–National government but then fell by 50 per cent compared with the previous year. The article stated that under that ongoing policy setting, over 11 000 renewable jobs would be lost by 2022. However, the reverse of that was that if the Paris climate change targets were committed to, renewable energy jobs in Australia would grow to 45 000 by 2025. The interesting and exciting thing is that from that point in 2025, renewable energy employment would then average around 35 000 additional jobs each year up to 2035. From a Western Australian perspective, even more excitingly, up to two-thirds of those jobs are predicted to be in regional areas.

We can see the impacts that a policy vacuum on energy, net zero and carbon targets has caused and can cause to our economy. Again, with a change of government at the federal level, we can see the types of opportunities that exist for Western Australia. An example of this is the program launched just this week, when Prime Minister Anthony Albanese was in Perth at our North Metropolitan TAFE for the program launch of \$100 million to support 10 000 new energy apprenticeships. This is real skills, real investment into our Western Australian TAFE system, and real opportunities in the regions and throughout Western Australia.

One of the things we know about green energy jobs is that they cut across multiple skill sets. We are talking about sparkies, boilermakers, construction workers and people in software, because we need the software systems to be sophisticated to interact with the energy grid. We are talking about people installing solar panels and wind turbine manufacturing. The whole supply chain benefits from the creation of these green energy jobs and from renewable energy.

Although those benefits are largely going to be benefiting regional Western Australians, of course, the benefit does not stop there. An example of that is ChemX Materials. I talked about ChemX last week in this place. It is developing a novel technology to produce the high purity alumina that is required for the battery storage for our green energy transition. It is employing trainees in chemical engineering and chemistry. These are highly skilled, well-paid educated jobs that are available for Western Australians with our green energy transition.

Of course, Western Australians are not new to renewable energy; in fact, we overwhelmingly embrace it. Household solar is now the single largest source of generation in the state's largest network, which is the south west interconnected system. Our household solar generates three times more power than our single largest power station. We are familiar with it. I think the member for Kingsley said that something like 3 500 solar panels are going on to household roofs in Western Australia—did she say every week? It was quite extraordinary; it was a huge number. It is certainly not new to Western Australians, but there is an opportunity to take that even bigger, because with our solar and wind generation is the opportunity to generate the economic opportunity that comes from energy storage.

In Saul Griffith's book *The Big Switch*—a book I recommend reading—there are some very interesting stats about what we can do to reduce our carbon footprint just by electrifying our households. He comments, as has already been mentioned in contributions prior to mine, that almost nowhere in the world is as well positioned as Australia to take advantage of the economic uplift from the green energy transition. If Australia is again the lucky country in relation to the green energy transition, Western Australia is the luckiest state in the luckiest country.

Western Australia already has a record of delivering major energy projects. We already have a record of attracting the international investment that is required to create the jobs and build the infrastructure. We already have people who are working in tech. We have seen that Western Australia has more automation than any other jurisdiction, for example. We are developing the high-tech solutions. We have everything that we need here, in addition, of course, to the sun and the wind. But just like our resources industry all those years ago, and just like my family members and people from my home state of Tasmania are so vastly wrong when they say that somehow the economic uplift from our resources industry was achieved without any effort, the realisation of the opportunity from the green energy transition has to be laid down now in our legislative and regulative changes, and that is exactly what this bill will do.

The member for Cockburn went into some of the technicalities of this bill. Actually, the outcome of this bill will be to diversify the economy and set the preconditions for the investment, skills and training to create the jobs that can come from this opportunity. How will it do that? Currently, of course, it is a pastoral lease, so the use is restricted to exactly what the name suggests. Through this bill, we will now have the opportunity to diversify that land use without going through the red tape that was previously in place. I have talked in detail about the renewable energy opportunities, but, of course, it is more than just that. The member for Kimberley made a very powerful contribution about what this bill will mean to the uplift of economic opportunity for Aboriginal people and for traditional owners in her patch, the Kimberley, but, of course, that is true for traditional owners throughout the state. The opportunity to create cultural and economic development activities is a very important one. Likewise, conservation organisations will be able to preserve and rehabilitate their habitats and ecosystems, and economic uplift through tourism and other industries will be made possible by this bill.

Of course, this bill builds on other initiatives that the McGowan government has prioritised to ensure that the diversification of our economy and the jobs of the future are planned and prepared for right now. That includes, of course, the priority on hydrogen as an emerging industry for this state and the opportunities that that presents. We have a minister directly dedicated to hydrogen. I acknowledge the work of the former Minister for Hydrogen Industry, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, and note that the portfolio is now in the very good hands of the Deputy Premier, who, appropriately, has hydrogen with his other portfolios of state development, jobs and trade, tourism and science. In those titles alone we see the type of focus that is being given at the highest level of cabinet in the McGowan government to not only hydrogen opportunities, but also economic diversification and jobs creation more broadly.

What has not been mentioned in my colleagues' contributions is this state's location to Asia. Our existing trading partners will also be looking to transition to a green economy. That will provide substantial benefits to Western Australia.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

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