

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 29 April 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.

HON KEN BASTON (Mining and Pastoral) [3.00 pm]: Madam President, thank you for the time you have put into this chamber over the last four years. It is well appreciated.

Listening to the Governor's speech the other day, touching on everything, one thing that made me prick up my ears related to Wittenoom Gorge. The management of Wittenoom Gorge has been going on for years. Debate on the Wittenoom Closure Bill 2019 had just about finished. I went back and found the explanatory memorandum for the bill. We had gone right through the bill, dealing with the valuation of the buildings et cetera. Now we have to start all over again. The cost of the closure to the Shire of Ashburton is huge. The insurance policy ran out years ago. The shire now relies on contributions from mining companies. It would not survive otherwise. That was one issue mentioned in the Governor's speech.

I then heard a better one—that the government would increase support to \$100 a night for the patient assisted travel scheme, which will be very much welcomed. Virtually all of Western Australia comes under the PAT scheme. It is a marvellous scheme that brings down the cost of medicine and health services.

It has been a great honour to serve in the Mining and Pastoral Region. For the last 16 years, the time really flew. I did not realise that I had been here for 16 years until recently. Everyone asked, "Why are you leaving?" I said that I thought it was my time to leave. Others followed as well, and I did not plan on that. The area of the Mining and Pastoral Region that most members know covers some 80 per cent of the state of Western Australia. It also produces some 40 per cent of the nation's income. When John Howard used to visit WA, and we used to say we produced 40 per cent of the nation's income, he would say, "I don't want to hear about it", and off he went. The commonwealth drew on it pretty heavily because that was before the introduction of the goods and services tax, which resulted in a fairer system.

Not a lot has changed in the Mining and Pastoral Region but the communities have. A lot of work still needs to be done, and I will touch on that in my speech shortly. Opportunities exist across that part of Western Australia. We can harvest them in a way that drives investment in infrastructure, training and building capacity in our regions. We can go a long way towards addressing the high level of unemployment and overreliance on government services. Creating more vibrant and sustainable economies in communities throughout the Mining and Pastoral Region is still very much a work in progress.

A major piece of infrastructure that I have discussed in this place many times is the Tanami Road. I will touch on that a bit more later. I cannot stress how important it is for sustainable development in northern Western Australia. Its sealing will significantly reduce the distance to the eastern states by about 1 000 kilometres. The problem with that road is that millions of dollars get dished out towards its upkeep and the road is built up to a certain standard so it can be sealed but then along comes the wet season and only one or two trucks need to drive on it and that is the end of that beautiful piece of dirt road. Sealing is the only way to go for the future. Along with reducing the distance to the eastern states, sealing will significantly reduce the cost of servicing many of the very remote Aboriginal communities in the East Kimberley.

A number of other important road projects require completion. Doing so will greatly improve access to health services and general freight and encourage economic growth in Western Australia. The Wiluna to Meekatharra road pops its head up every year. Money is spent on it and then we have a change of government and the money goes elsewhere and it comes back again with the next government. When we get to the next government, the money should be coming back again. The Cape Leveque Road is another example. It is a 160-kilometre stretch of road linking communities along the Dampier Peninsula, with Broome as its regional centre. It is already driving investment and economic development in remote Aboriginal communities. Importantly, it is delivering a new sense of home and ambition to harness opportunities that exist in tourism and the resources sector.

Another issue that has been brewing in the north for a while relates to the Broome boating facility. On a positive note, I wanted to discuss the Broome boating facility proposal, which is yet to receive full funding. I sincerely hope it becomes a reality. I think it was a case of "We'll put up half if you put up half." I want to take a moment to emphasise the incredible community collaboration that has taken place in order for this proposal to reach such an advanced stage. I will provide a bit of background. Broome has one of the highest levels of boat ownership in

Western Australia, with approximately 60 per cent of households owning a boat. One boat ramp alone experiences 25 per cent of the boat launching traffic seen at Hillarys Boat Harbour, which is pretty significant for a town with a permanent population of around 16 000. The issue of a safe boat launching ramp has been a fraught issue for at least two decades. Over 20 different locations and concepts have been explored and abandoned for numerous reasons, including costs, the inability to build broad consensus, ongoing maintenance, such as dredging, and environmental and heritage issues. Finally, after three years of hard work, overseen by the Shire of Broome and the Department of Transport, a plan was released. The concept and location has been endorsed by Nyamba Buru Yawuru, the Broome Fishing Club and the Kimberley Ports Authority and has received qualified support from the Dinosaur Coast Management Group. The plan was released in March 2020 and put out for public comment. It received the most responses ever to a Shire of Broome survey: 1 221 responses, with 74 per cent of responses either supportive or highly supportive. Feedback on the proposal was received and, as a result, changes have been made to ensure that rock cliffs remain untouched. The known dinosaur footprints will remain in place and accessible, thanks to the very dedicated people involved in the Dinosaur Coast Management Group.

I now want to touch on antisocial behaviour, liquor licensing and police. I would like to acknowledge Hon Robin Scott's impassioned speech at the end of last year and confirm that there is growing anger and frustration in successive governments' inability to deal with some very serious issues in northern WA. Liquor licensing in the Kimberley is a patchwork of restrictions that vary from location to location, encouraging hardcore drinkers to move to wherever access to alcohol is easiest. A major centre such as Broome struggles to cope with the people who do not have homes in Broome and do not want to use the alcohol-free short-stay accommodation facility. This was built to support Aboriginal people who need to travel to regional centres for various reasons. This results in overcrowded housing and public areas close to liquor outlets, becoming temporary camps where rubbish, hygiene and violent incidents are major concerns.

The Shire of Broome spent some \$70 000 building a fence around the visitors' centre to protect staff and visitors from antisocial behaviour and property damage. Cutting the supply of grog has had some benefits, but the people who desperately require support and rehabilitation move away from their homes and that support in order to keep drinking. A lot has to change. These problems are not easy to overcome, but there is an overwhelming feeling in the community that those in authority with the power to make changes are doing too little to curb this behaviour.

A whole-of-government approach still has not been achieved in dealing with these issues. The patchwork of liquor restrictions moves problems from one regional centre to another and restricts the vast majority of the community who drink responsibly. I would be interested to see just how many metropolitan areas in Perth would react if we were to tell people that they could buy only three bottles of wine or one carton of beer in one transaction.

The absurdity of these regulations was highlighted in questions without notice. The government has acknowledged that residents in the Kimberley are not allowed to buy alcohol in bulk for a special occasion from local retailers, who are willing and able to work with local police. But they can jump on the internet, order as much as they like from a Perth retailer and have it delivered within days to the local post office for \$18.

My office received a phone call from a person based in a Kimberley town who was unable to purchase anything other than lite beer within 300 kilometres of where they live. However, at the house next door, they saw carton after carton of beer being carried out the door on a daily basis. Alcohol is very likely to be brought across the Northern Territory border or via online.

The government's response to a question asked on 4 November 2020 also confirmed that the government has no idea how much packaged alcohol is sent from metro retailers to the Kimberley or Pilbara. It is an incredible double standard. Retailers in the Kimberley regularly have to hand over months of transactions and closed-circuit television footage, and face penalties for allowing couples to purchase their daily amount of alcohol and process that sale as one transaction. It is completely ridiculous that at the end of the day these problems are still there.

The announcement that a banned drinkers register will be trialled in the Pilbara and Kimberley has been cautiously welcomed. However, I cannot emphasise enough that the register needs to be highly dynamic with open lines of communication between police and liquor outlets. A banned drinkers register with no names on it is very costly and an ultimately futile exercise. This situation has emerged in Kununurra, which is very frustrating for all involved, police and retailers alike. Having 800 new police for Western Australia will come as welcome news to many in WA; however, we have to remember that those 800 new police will be spread over the next four years.

Now I move to the very challenging issue of juvenile crime. Over a year ago I spoke at length about this issue in this place, and I am concerned that most people would say that little has changed. It is clear that the police in regional centres such as Broome are under incredible pressure. Regarding the juvenile justice strategy, this year we have seen teenagers and sometimes younger children being involved in violent attacks on other people in their community, both in and out of school. The north has a strong need for more appropriate juvenile detention options to be made available. Juveniles who reach the sentencing stage are flying to Perth for a short period—about three weeks, I am told—and then returning to the community. We need a far better way of dealing with this matter. The regions need

facilities closer to home. These facilities need to be places where serious juvenile offenders can go to receive intensive supervision and an assessment of their needs, such as health, learning abilities and behavioural problems, while still being on country and accessible to family, rather than thousands of kilometres away in Perth.

The answer to this problem requires far more than extra policing and it requires options other than short custodial sentences at Banksia Hill Detention Centre or a slap on the wrist. Banksia Hill Detention Centre, by the way, handles 10 to 17-year-olds. If children exhibit seriously violent behaviour in school, options need to be available to remove those students from the mainstream school community. Victims of these incidents deserve to feel safe when going back to school. The perpetrators need to get the support required to address their problems by continuing their education but with the understanding that, for a time, they have lost the privilege of attending school.

One of the first committees that I sat on in this Parliament in 2006 was the Standing Committee on Legislation. The committee looked into the Parental Support and Responsibility Bill 2005. One of the witnesses was a person with impeccable insight into many of the problems facing young Aboriginal people who had researched evidence-based strategies to address the very complex issues that exist in many communities today. Dr Tracy Westerman was the name of that witness and she has grown in renown ever since, including being named WA person of the year in 2018. Professor Tracy Westerman, as she is now known, has developed evidence-based best practice programs and services that aim to provide culturally competent mental health services for Aboriginal people. Significant resources are directed towards closing the gap and improving outcomes for Aboriginal people. But I believe many of us agree that those resources are not always directed in a very effective way. Dr Tracy Westerman, I have to say, had 85 per cent of her work in the eastern states and she should never have been allowed out of this state. In fact, she could be put up on a banner, and I think the changes in this state would be impeccable.

Regarding transport, the road network throughout Western Australia requires improvement. I know that most of the routing network comes from the bigger funding from the feds, but it is still important for the state to have its foot in the door. Commencing work on the Tanami Road to finally seal the WA section would be a huge boost to the East Kimberley when it has suffered tremendously from the economic slowdown attributed to COVID-19. An influx of workers required to complete this would be a huge boost and would create transport infrastructure that would provide ongoing benefits to the whole region.

A sealed Tanami Road would support a number of resources projects that would further diversify the East Kimberley economy. One project in particular is Agrimin's Mackay potash project, located in the East Pilbara. This project is forecasted to be the world's lowest cost producer of sulphate of potash, or SOP, which is an important mineral used widely in agriculture to improve crop yields. The plan is for the finished product, which will be processed on site at Lake Mackay, to be shipped directly from Wyndham port. Production capacity is designed to be 450 000 tonnes of SOP per annum over an initial 40-year mine life. Approximately 250 kilometres of the Tanami Road will be used by Agrimin in the journey from Lake Mackay to Wyndham. Wyndham, of course, always needs a bit of work because it is dredged one day and then they have to come back and dredge it again in a couple of days' time when there is a storm as it gets such big high tides.

Regarding our national parks, the plan for our parks is to continue with the funding allocation of \$26 million over four years. However, there appears to be an issue with the level of consultation occurring at the community level. The towns and communities most affected by changes or expansions to national parks in the region deserve a seat at the table when we are deciding on these parks. Shark Bay residents, in particular, are feeling that they may lose access to areas that they hold very dear and feel they may have their town surrounded by a national park, which will inhibit further growth of the town. Consultation is of paramount importance to ensure that the right balance is struck when creating these parks, and I know that there are problems in the Kimberley as well.

I will now talk a little bit about electorate office work. I am sure that all of us would agree that some of the most satisfying moments in our parliamentary careers sometimes come from being able to directly improve a constituent's situation. It is not always possible to sort out a problem that a constituent has come to your office with, but it is great when you can help restore at least one person's faith in politicians. One such constituent who springs to mind is a lady from Derby who was not afraid to get on the phone when she thought something was not quite right. This lady, Mrs Ah Chee, is in her early 80s but still drives her four-wheel drive 2 600 kilometres to Perth once a year to do her Christmas shopping. Of course, she required a medical assessment to renew her licence. Derby Hospital wanted to charge Mrs Ah Chee \$280 for a medical and she was not having a bar of it. Her instincts were proven correct. After a few questions without notice, the WA Country Health Service realised this service should be free for pensioners. An audit revealed that up to 206 pensioners across the Kimberley had been incorrectly charged for this service and up to \$57 680 was likely to be refunded. What can seem like small wins in the scheme of things can make a big difference to people's lives and that is one of the best parts of being a member of Parliament.

I would now like to touch on my time as a minister. When I became a minister, I was advised that most ministers fail to leave their mark on a portfolio and at best can expect to have one major achievement a year. Although only a portion of my time in politics has been as a minister and much of the good work I feel I did was in supporting

my electorate or sitting on a committee, I can say with confidence that my time as a minister was a highlight and I have no doubt that I left my mark on the portfolio, driving more than three big issues in three years. The most notable issue would have to be the rolling out of the comprehensive wild dog strategy, including my bounty trial, which, I would add, was a success, contrary to what anyone else might tell you. Then, of course, there was the shark cull trial. That did not go down very well with the western suburbs. And then there was the deregulation, with compensation, of the Potato Marketing Corporation. Nobody was going to touch the Potato Marketing Act 1946. Eventually, we got people onside and some funding was put forward as an incentive for it to happen.

I also travelled all over the world, especially to check the live export of cattle and sheep. Of course, one probably would not do that today. As game leaders, we were able to do it then. It was a very important part of gaining confidence in the export market and continuing that market.

The biggest issue of them all, of course, was the repeal of the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003. That took nearly three years to do. I thought it could be done really simply, but it took a long time.

As a minister in the Barnett government, I am very proud of my achievements in the departments of both agriculture and fisheries. I still believe having separate departments is the way to go for the future when the minister builds that new building. One of my first jobs as a minister was dealing with the water issues in Carnarvon. At the time, the river had not run for two long summers and things were looking grim for irrigators in the Gascoyne. I will diverge to tell a little story about former member for Gascoyne Ian Laurance, who was Minister for Lands years ago. Once again, the area was in drought. The honourable member at the time decided it was desperate and they needed to have a church meeting to pray to get the river to flow. That did happen. It was positive. The river flowed; the town flooded. He was not so popular when they saw the first street flood. It was a two-pronged result—you need to always watch out!

As a former resident and shire councillor, I have a passion for the unique town of Carnarvon, which offers so much. Addressing the water issues was always going to be one of my priorities. We appointed a Carnarvon ministerial advisory committee. The work that we did ultimately led to a large investment in water. The drilling of 30 new bores and putting power alongside the river has gone a long way to improving water security in the Gascoyne horticultural precinct.

We also instigated an independent review of investment and the administration of animal welfare. This started a long overdue process of improving the delivery of animal welfare in the state.

Although royalties for regions was a big-ticket funder of projects in agriculture during my time, I focused on driving practical outcomes that would bring more dollars through the farm gate for farmers. Irrigated agriculture is not only in Carnarvon, but also in the Pilbara. I was around the table when the decision was made to invest some \$12.5 million into the Pilbara Hinterland Agricultural Development Initiative, which trialled mine dewatering projects at Woodie Woodie. It was an important way to address both mine dewatering and droughtproofing the north. We also did a lot of work proving up the water resources in the West Kimberley, putting down 12 bores at Roebuck Plains, with the former Department of Agriculture and Food doing all the soil and farm planning. The only problem was that as fast as we proved we could develop new irrigation districts, other groups had mobilised to stop us, which means very little has happened in the Kimberley to utilise our massive water assets in the north. If I had my time again, I would like to have the role of Minister for Environment at the same time as Minister for Regional Development, but I am not gonna get there. Of course, what I am talking about is the hyper risk-sensitive departmental approach to things like Rhodes grass, which was endemic in the Kimberley. Sometimes departments and governments cannot see the wealth from the weeds.

The Bravo apple hit the news this morning. The Bravo apple has finally arrived after 20 years of development. One thing I did was to make sure that the department did not stuff up the royalty rights, as happened when we lost part of the royalties for the Pink Lady. It was a challenging journey, but I am pleased to see that industry leaders like Dr Ben Darbyshire have stayed the course and ensured that the end structure will generate good income for Fruit West and the industry development fund that oversees the apple. I thought the apple should have been called the wicked apple, and we probably would have sold a lot more. It took years to get it on the market.

Although some work on wild dogs had happened under Terry Redman, it was probably my number one priority, and I pushed for the \$75 000 trial bounty at \$100 a scalp, which I mentioned earlier. I think \$20 000 was consumed by bureaucracy and the rest went out to pay for scalps. The number of scalps rose and a department fellow said it had failed. I asked, “Why has it failed when we’ve got more dogs? Why was it rejected when we’re getting more dogs?” We did not fail because we did not get more dogs. The people getting them were the doggers. We put a dollar sign on wild dogs, and they went out and got them. That is not a bad contract. I recall the briefings from Viv Reid from the department. He could not believe what had happened. We went for total exclusion via big ring fences around stations, like Rawlinna on the Nullarbor and in Kalgoorlie and the Gascoyne. Ultimately, we spent millions on doggers, fences and culls, including \$10 million for 820 kilometres of fencing through the Shire of Yilgarn. This work led to the extension of the Esperance fence, which is a big deal for the sheep industry in that part of the world.

The new Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act was rolled out under my watch. The act replaced 16 older acts. A lot of work on this was done in opposition and I was pleased to be there when the new act came to fruition. When I first came to Parliament, Kim Chance was pushing along that legislation. I followed it through. It went to Committee of the Whole. We waited for the regulations. It came out of committee and we were still waiting for the regulations. It was not until I became minister that we ended up with the regulations catching up with us. It was quite amazing and a good lesson in politics. Under the act, recognised biosecurity groups were formed, with matching funds from the state government. These groups are an important instrument to help control feral animals, like wild dogs.

I undertook trips to China and other countries. As I said, I would not go back there for a while now. I was also keen to support our live export trade, something that is incredibly important to sheep and cattle producers in this state. I battled cabinet to get some \$23 million of royalties for regions funds for the Newdegate, South Doodlakine and Marchagee Doppler radar stations, which have been a game changer for short-term forecasting in the south west of the state. I believe this program paid a dividend recently, tracking the cyclone that hit the northern and north-eastern wheatbelt. It gave farmers detailed knowledge of what was coming. Ultimately, I put a farmer's view on the portfolio, as I believe that only a farmer can really understand how to get the best out of the department and not get sidetracked into issues that are not relevant to the portfolio or a priority for farmers.

In summary, they were good years, and I am proud of the fact that fishers continue to fish and farmers continue to farm. I was not there closing down fisheries or banning live exports; rather, I was pushing to open up more agriculture and support more rural jobs.

I would like to pay my respects to my wife, Robin, who had to put up with many late nights. She had to kick the cat off the bed and make room for me at about four o'clock in the morning, but I was still welcome at home! My sons, Derek, Richard and Thomas, were also very patient and good supporters. I would come to this place, we would battle away at a bill all day, and then I would go to one of my sons and say, "What do you reckon?" and they would sum it up in about five minutes. I would go back the next day feeling relaxed that we were doing the right thing, whatever bill it was.

I will miss this place. Getting up in the morning and not putting on a suit will be quite a change. I see the only farmer in here making comments! But I will drop in here from time to time. I see the old farmers et cetera who come back here and actually participate, having an office, using the gym and other facilities, and enjoying the meals on the right days. Thank you. I really appreciate the support that I have had over the years. I have enjoyed every minute of it. Thank you.

Members: Hear, hear!

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT: Hon Ken Baston, I would also like to offer my thanks for your service to this chamber. It has been a pleasure to work with you. I wish you well for your new chapter, as you return to your family. Hon Kyle McGinn.

HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary) [3.31 pm]: Thank you, and well done, Ken, on what was a very long career. You have definitely left your mark across the Mining and Pastoral electorate. I think that the racetracks will heavily miss you, particularly the regional racetracks. Having seen you down at the Carnarvon races last year and up in Broome, I know that you did not mind heading down to the racetrack, and you were always sponsoring the regional races as well, for which I give full credit to you.

I rise today to add my remarks to the Address-in-Reply and go through what has been, for everybody in this chamber and more broadly, a very busy, bizarre and hectic four or five months. It was an interesting feeling to leave the chamber at the end of last year and head out to the first election since we were elected. I thought that after all the hard work in Parliament, maybe it was time for a little bit of a relax, but that did not happen. We were out on the ground very early, very quickly, right across the Mining and Pastoral electorate in election mode, talking about the great things that the McGowan government had done over the past four years and the great, positive things that the McGowan government would do if it were re-elected. I have to say that, at the end of it, it was really enjoyable. The community was amazing to engage with, and we came away with a plan for the next four years that I think will progress regional WA and the Mining and Pastoral electorate even further and create all the things that we have been looking for, such as liveability, job security and community values.

Something that really came back to me during the election was that people were sick of the negative imaging, conversation and talking down of regions that was just constant over the last four years from certain individuals. It was outrageous to see that ploy being used, particularly in the goldfields campaign, running down our region, the successes that the goldfields has achieved and projects that have got off the ground, just because a Labor government achieved them. That really got on my goat, as one would say. I think the results particularly in the goldfields reflect what a negative campaign can do to a party. I think that the results of being positive and working closely with community groups—not stringing them along and running down the opposition in a negative, lying fashion—will show into the future, and hopefully the opposition will run a better campaign out in the goldfields.

I am not holding my breath, but I will raise in this speech things that happened throughout the campaign that were really disappointing and I think reflect very badly on the National Party in particular.

When we got out and about, one of the main things was meeting with community groups and finding out what was a real need within small community groups out in the goldfields. We had a fantastic candidate in the goldfields. Ali Kent hit the ground running very early on in the piece. She was already very well respected and held up very highly within the community for the work that she had done at the Women's Health Care Centre, which has been one of my favourite organisations to work with in the goldfields since getting out there in 2017. The women's health care clinic punches well above its weight and constantly runs off the smell of an oily rag, but it provides absolutely amazing services to women who are in need. It constantly goes above and beyond. When I first met Gloria Moyle, besides the fact that she is very bubbly and has a great persona, one of my key takeaways was her passion to ensure that all women are given the opportunity to access healthcare in the goldfields. The centre is a safe place to go, particularly for those who do not want to go to a hospital. It is a nice big pink house that is tucked away and it offers services discreetly. What happens most of the time is that when people are offered GP services, sexually transmissible infection checks and those types of things, they start talking about domestic violence, asking how they can get help or who they can go and see, or asking about financial assistance or food stamps. That sort of stuff comes out of a conversation about health. The women's health care clinic is a valuable resource in the goldfields that now, under an election commitment from the McGowan government, will have a GP working all year round to provide women's health. To me, that is an amazing outcome for that community group, because it will value that resource and will ensure that it is utilised to the best of its ability and that all women will have access to it. That organisation is very commendable.

Ali was the president of the women's health care clinic. As well as working in government for many years in the Department of Education, she also worked very closely consulting with and writing grant applications for community groups, often doing it off her own back to ensure that there was an improvement in playgrounds and needs within the community, that grants were accessible and that people understood the process, because we all know that applying for grants and trying to get funding can be quite onerous. There is actually an advantage in the goldfields. I think that within the gold industry, some do it right and some do not, but there are a few companies that offer access to community funds. They offer grants of up to \$5 000 or \$10 000, but there is an application process for those grants that, surprisingly, can be just as bureaucratic as a government grant and can at times be very restrictive and see organisations fall through the cracks. Ali had a real knack of being able to walk organisations through that process to ensure that they were given the best opportunity to access that grant funding.

When Ali was running as a candidate, it was amazing to see that organisations such as KCGM, BHP and Evolution Mining had already engaged with Ali in trying to bring community groups into the fold and had been successful in doing that. I think that really set a platform for what Ali Kent stood for in the goldfields—a fair go and getting our fair share out there in the goldfields, from not only the state government, but also local governments and the federal government. I think that, at the moment, the opportunity to collaborate within the goldfields is at an all-time high. It is amazing to see organisations come together to see what they can do to assist with liveability and arts and culture projects that are important to the community. This is going on while Western Australia is still in the grip of the pandemic and when learnings are still coming out of that. One of the key things Ali Kent pointed out to me was that if it had not been for all the complications of COVID last year, school groups, camps, football clubs and hockey clubs would have been fundraising. Normally, they run sausage sizzles down at the local park or rattle tins at the fair—they have a go all year round. I think it is Boulder Primary School that normally raises \$14 000 for its year 6 students to come to Perth for school camp. That fundraising offsets the cost of the camp for the kids. Instead of paying \$1 000, it would cost the kids \$200 each; therefore, the COVID situation has left a real financial hole for community and school groups. Some of the organisations got on board and definitely put in some work. Community trusts were started; there were collaborations with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia for small business grants.

We found ourselves going around and talking one-on-one to the community groups that were left behind to find out some of their key outcomes. From working very closely with the Eastern Goldfields BMX Club, one good election commitment that we identified early on was that the BMX track was not in good shape. For someone who clearly does not ride BMX bikes, I thought it looked pretty grouse, to be fair, but once we got down there, we talked to the boys and girls from the organisation. The state title competition had been recently held there; BMX riders from around the state went to Kalgoorlie. This event brings tourists; it is a really good event. The club pointed out that the BMX track was not in very good shape at all, and \$70 000 was required to resurface it. Working very closely with the club, Ali managed to secure an election commitment for the BMX track, which will see \$70 000 worth of resurfacing done. When we went there to make the announcement, hundreds of people showed up to see what would happen; they had been waiting for the track for a very long time. We also found out that, putting aside the pandemic for now, the club is in contention to hold the national titles. That event would bring to the goldfields BMX riders from around Australia. The \$70 000 commitment to resurface the track will potentially bring a great reputational event to that BMX club and give it an opportunity to build and grow. It was a very proud moment for

me to be there with Ali Kent, the new member for Kalgoorlie, to hear that this project will be delivered, hopefully very soon, after our success in the election.

Many things have happened across the Mining and Pastoral Region that I could talk about, but it is very hard to pick which ones. However, I ran across two true characters during the campaign whom I have to mention—Henry and Cathy in Laverton. Henry is the Labor man of Laverton, and he is also the salami man of Laverton; he is famous for making his own salami and prosciutto. He is a self-confessed hermit who never leaves Laverton. If he does, he spends an hour or two in Kalgoorlie and that is enough for him. Cathy is one of the best muffin makers in the business, I have to say. Her mulberry muffins and mulberry jam were phenomenal and kept us going during the election campaign. I must mention the passion that Henry and Cathy showed when they ran Ali's part of the election campaign, along with a couple of other people, in Laverton and Leonora. They were really passionate about their small town and their view about what is needed and what should come.

From talking with them and working with organisations, little projects popped up in conversation and we could see the positive effects that they would have. Negative spin came from the opposition around these commitments. However, if we take a hard look at it, funding of \$80 000 for the Laverton dirt go-karting facility is not about people in Laverton just going around a go-kart track. It is similar to what happened at the BMX club. Laverton was looking at bringing out people for a weekend go-kart racing tournament. That is in line, I think, with the thinking of particularly the Shire of Laverton. When the CEO, Peter Naylor, and I were having a chat, he mentioned that one of his visions—this has not come to fruition, by the way—is to run an iron man-type event there, using one of the old mine pits that is full of water as the swimming leg. My first view was, "Have you tested the water?" To that he said, "Not yet; she'll be right." He was looking at something that would attract triathlon runners and people in that space from Perth, South Australia and elsewhere across the east coast. The idea of running, riding and then swimming in an old mine pit is an attraction. The Laverton dirt go-kart facility is another one. Particularly through the Agriculture Region, I think—Hon Darren West might know—go-karting is quite a big deal. I can see what this funding is going to do for Laverton; it will build up the visitors' centre and accommodation. It is an all-round good project in my view.

We spent a lot of time talking with the men and women at the Laverton Men's Shed. That is another men's shed that is open to both men and women, which I am finding is common particularly in regional WA. A lot of the men's sheds are open to women, which I think is of great value. These sheds can be socially galvanising for people who may have lost loved ones or who find themselves at home, late in life, without much to do and without really having a social life. They often use platforms such as men's sheds to reintroduce themselves to a social life, which in turn provides many great benefits, particularly around mental health. Being around people and doing something potentially new can brighten people's lives in times of need. The Laverton Men's Shed was struggling a bit. For many years, its users had many plans that they wanted to build on. Ali was able to secure an election commitment for \$7 000 to build a new kitchenette and buy \$2 000 worth of tools and a marquee and tables to use at markets. They see this commitment as an opportunity to grow the men's shed and provide greater opportunities to attract people. They will be given \$2 000 for tools and funding for a kitchenette, which will provide an opportunity for it to be used also by community groups. The men's shed will potentially be able to sell at the markets not only members' woodwork, but also, I assume, muffins that have been made in the kitchenette, which will help with its fundraising.

I think Pat Hill is a great shire president of the Laverton shire. The shire does a lot of hard work and has a lot of innovative ideas to get itself where it wants to be with funding, particularly for roads. For 35 years, Pat has been pushing the Outback Way. I am sure members of the Mining and Pastoral Region will be well aware of Pat's vision of the world's biggest shortcut across to Queensland.

Hon Darren West interjected.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: I think part of it will have a road called "Pat Hill Road" coming off it. Pat is very passionate about that road. The change that has occurred out there since 2017 has been amazing. When I first went out there with Hon Alannah MacTiernan, we talked about funding, roads, where we were heading and engagement with mining companies. At the time, honestly, the level of engagement with mining companies was very low. Hon Alannah MacTiernan spoke to them of her vision for engagement and working collaboratively—I will not try to say that word again—on outcomes that are great for not only Laverton but also the mining companies. One of the key differences since 2017 has to be the way that mining companies now engage with roads, including sealing roads and trying to get benefits for a town whilst getting infrastructure done. Mining companies are working with towns to close down aerodromes to ensure that people use the airport in Laverton, which is now pumping. Mining companies are applying for extensions on the apron to get a terminal at the airport. These long-term visions are now about utilising mining company resources to invest in local infrastructure. There are always conversations around how mining camps "Shouldn't be built within this far of communities" and how "We shouldn't do this; we should be building houses". I have seen one intriguing model, which I believe Laverton is looking at now. It has been done in Coolgardie. A mining camp was allowed to be built, but there were no services within the camp. All services such as food and drink are accessible in Coolgardie. As an example, sales at the IGA went up 20 per cent

in the first month. That allowed the IGA to internally expand with more products, longer opening hours and more staff. The gym at the council is now used by all the people in the camp because there is no gym at the camp. The camp now funds the gym and gym equipment through membership for the shire. This type of operation, which is agreed to through a lot of hard work and consultation with the mining companies, is integrated into a town. I think that has some value. When we see services and shops, including businesses that are needed for regional towns, remain in business because of investment from mining companies, that is a positive win for regional Western Australia. I think I have said in this place before that, back in the 1970s and 1980s, mining companies had their shoulder to the wheel on building towns because fly-in fly-out workers were pretty much non-existent. That has really changed now. The new type of model—FIFO—has had negative effects in regional Western Australia.

Leonora is just down the road from Laverton. Leonora has also had many things going on. Working with the shire there meant some great opportunities to talk about projects that are beneficial, particularly to do with antisocial behaviour and social issues within the Mining and Pastoral electorate, as Hon Ken Baston touched on. Hon Robin Scott has also touched on these issues many times. There is no one-glove-fits-all approach. Every town is trying the best that it can to find ways to resolve the problems. “Youth” is definitely a keyword that comes up when we are talking about antisocial behaviour, particularly in Leonora. Working closely with the youth centre, we managed to secure new furniture for it and talk about how it will move forward. Right across the electorate, we find that no organisations are available for youth come 6.00 pm. The police and community youth centres do a fabulous job right across Western Australia. They carry themselves very well but one of the key problems is that the police is the only organisation left on the beat after six o’clock. That then becomes an interesting conversation about how youth are engaging. Between 6.00 pm and 6.00 am, youth can engage only with police, rather than youth services. I know there are pockets that run youth services until midnight—for example, a basketball court thing happens until midnight—and they run really well. When programs such as these are running, there is a reduction in a lot of crime. It is about working with these organisations to ensure their internal capacity grows and to ensure they can benefit from the grants available to run these programs. Working with these organisations over the last couple of months has been really good. It also ties in with arts and culture because the architectural history is another thing that I love about my electorate. I do not think the architecture is rivalled anywhere else. Burt Street in Boulder and the theatre out in Leonora are examples. The theatre has seen better days but it is a beautiful architectural experience to see it and imagine what it would have been like back in the day when the theatre was pumping. Working closely with the shire, Ali Kent committed to \$100 000 for a project to look at refurbishing that amazing piece of history, restoring the glory it once had.

I said earlier that roads are one of the key areas in which I have a big interest. It is not just about getting roads sealed, but also thinking in particular about roads on which the state and federal governments spend a lot of money. There are ongoing costs. When I went out to Waroona in 2017 with Minister Rita Saffioti, we asked at a council meeting how many Aboriginal people who lived locally were engaged in the mining companies. The answer was one person. Plenty of people from the community were there but only one person was engaged in the mining companies. We had much discussion about a project that has been looked at for 35 to 40 years—the sealing of the Meekatharra–Wiluna Road. There was an issue with the \$60 million that was chunked at that road in the last days of the previous government. That funding was then taken away. Instead of sitting there and whingeing about it, we thought we should look at the economic and tourism benefits. For some reason, it has not got off the ground for 35 years. It is 120 kilometres that needs to be sealed. Why could we not make this a project about Aboriginal employment? Why could we not make this about outcomes for Waroona? Why could we not make this a project about training and development? As I said earlier, Pat Hills’ road—the Outback Way heading up to Queensland—will see well over half a billion dollars’ worth of investment in the years to come. That road work is on Aboriginal land. There are many Aboriginal groups within that space who could be engaged and trained to work, not just for the jobs but also to create their own roadbuilding businesses. The other add-ons they would get would include all the local government funding for roads and funding for flood damage and maintenance every year. How can we engage with Aboriginal contractors and get them to a point at which they are fighting for and tendering for these works right across their country? In 2017 and 2018 we heavily focused on that, including the project to seal part of the Meekatharra–Wiluna Road—five to 10 kilometres. The mindset around the project was about outcomes, jobs and future jobs.

It takes a special type of person to be able to get into that space, operate at a high level and see the outcomes we have had out of that project. Mac Jensen from the Wiluna Remote Community School trade training centre should be commended for his efforts. He has worked in regional Western Australia for most of his life. He engages so well with traditional owners. He gets in there and understands some of the nitty-gritty issues. For example, when a group gets together, instead of everyone staying in town for the training, he moves them 10 kilometres out to do the training in another area. It is done as a unit, creating a team that supports each other. He first started this approach, not based on road building but the first time he got to the TAFE building. It was full of woodworking equipment. What woodworking jobs are there in Wiluna? There might be a handful, if you are lucky, but probably more contractors come in from Perth anyway. He thought: what is something else we can do? He contacted the

TAFE and worked out a way to clear out the woodwork stuff and bring in car repairing equipment. A lot of people travel in regional and remote Western Australia; there is a lot of migration. What is the one thing people are interested in? It is getting in the car rather than walking. What happened was the community bought into the program, the support provided and the TAFE. People who had not ever done a course before came through to learn how to repair cars. There were so many cars in the community that were able to be worked on, it became a great project. From that, we got together and started talking about road building and how to get it on the agenda. Main Roads had to have a bit of an attitude change and think: “Okay, this road is focused on outcomes for the Mardu people.” Having that mindset going in has resulted in this project being very successful. The project has now been completed, and it was done within a time span that was culturally appropriate. Certain times of the year were set aside for law business and a few bits of sorry business. There was a lot of fluid stuff happening throughout that project and it ended up being a huge segment on national ABC around outcomes for 15 Mardu people, men and women. The elders were there when we opened up that section and they were just so happy with the minister for investing in them. But the first thing they said was, “Where’s the next bucket? Let’s get going again!”

The minister then made this road a priority for the state; \$20 million from the federal government via Infrastructure Australia will now be put towards the Meekatharra–Wiluna road. The \$20 million will not be spent in the first 12 months so that the road is sealed up to a certain point; that funding will be provided to those groups working around the times of year they can work and through a model for getting people in to be trained on those road works. The road will eventually link up with the Outback Way.

Carey Mining is also dabbling in that space; it has a huge reputation. Daniel Tucker started out in Laverton and worked his way up, and he is focused on those types of projects. As I said earlier, it is not just about state government roads; it is about all road infrastructure. If local governments are asking, “Why is there no employment?”, we want to see road building done by locals on those roads, if they can be trained to do so. We also want to see mining companies engaging Aboriginal road contractors in their respective areas, right across the goldfields and beyond.

There is a real opportunity moving forward for road building to become the next ranger program. The ranger program is a great outcome for Aboriginal people in regional Western Australia because it provides jobs on the land, and rangers are seen by the young people as role models. Road building also has that potential, and why not? When we seal these roads we change the numbers of tourists and other people coming into these areas. The lives of local people are changed as a result of sealing these roads, so why not make it collaborative? We need to focus on ensuring that people like the Mardu have opportunities not only to be employed for a couple of months but also to build businesses that can get out there and tender for projects. I think that is what our state dollars should be spent on—local projects, local jobs in that respect.

I am very, very proud to see where that project has gone and that there is \$20 million for a good three to four years of work on that road. There is also maintenance sealing happening at the Meekatharra end; I was speaking to the Shire of Meekatharra the other day. It is exciting to think that we are starting to make our way down that road. I know there are people who are saying that it is not happening quickly enough and that it needs to happen now, but I am focused on ensuring that we get the outcomes we want for that project. That is something that will benefit the town, the people, the shire and everyone else. Again, I think that is important if we are going to spend money.

Like most other members and members-elect, I spent a lot of time on the road during the last election campaign. I am not sure how many kays I covered, but one trip took more than a week and covered 4 500 kilometres; that was a nice drive! I got to see the beautiful electorate of North West Central and I met with some amazing organisations.

I also got to see some bad politics being played out against the Labor Party, including scare campaigns and fake advertising. There were things being authorised by CEOs in small shires saying in effect that things that were not done under the previous government were still not being done under the present government, so Labor was the problem. That was disappointing. When I sat down with shire presidents to have conversations with them, they started to realise that there were influences from certain members of Parliament in the North West Central electorate. It is easy to go out there and promise more than \$200 million in election commitments when you know you cannot deliver them, but it is harder to tell the truth about what projects are going to be funded. It is harder to tell the truth and be positive about where we are heading than it is to be negative, to try to drive down the regions and to constantly tell mistruths—my God! The number of things I had to deal with because a particular member had been there and said things that were just false, all in the hope of clinging onto a seat. If you are getting to that point, you have to ask yourself: what have I done for eight years? That was disappointing.

Cherie Sibosado was the Labor candidate for North West Central, and she was an amazing candidate. She is a very proud Aboriginal woman who took on the campaign for a seat that is geographically the biggest in Western Australia, if not the world. She took it on, head-on, and went out there and met with organisations. She told the hard truths, made some great election commitments, held some great forums and managed to bring Thomas Mayor up there to talk about the Uluru Statement from the Heart, which came to Parliament in the previous term. It provides an amazing opportunity for people to engage in that conversation.

Cherie worked so hard, and in first-past-the-post terms she won, but preferences got her in the end. She worked really hard for the people of North West Central and some amazing projects have been committed to as a result of her advocacy. One of the major ones that I am really looking forward to working on is a new basketball court in the Mangala community.

I have a couple of funny stories from the election campaign. Cherie's partner Ginger is a big man, with broad shoulders, and we went doorknocking in Mangala. There were a lot of dogs around and I said to him, "You're my security guard—make sure the dogs don't get me." I walked up this driveway and he was behind me, and about five metres from the door a pit bull came running out the door, straight at me. I turned around and Ginger was already over the fence and had gone about 20 metres! I stood there and said, "Cheers, Ginger. You grew up here, and you ran away from the first pit bull to come running out of a door!"

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: He only had to beat you!

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Well, let us be honest—he did not have to run 20 metres past the fence! I had not even got five metres, I was stuck! But luckily the pit bull veered off and kept going, so that was good.

One of the key issues in Mangala was a basketball court that had not been touched for about 10 years; it was all cracked and the fences were ripped down. It was in a bad state. Cherie managed to get an election commitment of \$150 000 to get that basketball court rebuilt, and when we went out there to talk about it, the local kids were ecstatic. There are little things that will be implemented in this project that make a lot of sense: solar power for the lights so that they stay on until 10 or 11 o'clock and fencing. I do not know if other members have seen this, but there is a new trend with basketball that involves trampolines and it is a little more exciting than normal basketball.

I will take a punt and say it is called bounce ball or something, but it is interesting and it draws people in and brings people to these small towns for something different. I am looking forward to that project getting underway and, again, that will be focused on Aboriginal contractors and Aboriginal employment in that area, and I think that is exciting.

I will now return to one of the things I touched on at the start, and that is positive campaigning and positivity on the ground from people saying that the leadership of the McGowan government has given them confidence. They wanted to give the McGowan government another term because of what had been achieved in its first four years. When I was up in Karratha in 2017 the feeling about politics almost translated into protest votes, and I think that is why we saw such a high vote for a One Nation. There was a view of, "It's just Labor and Liberal", but there was a real change this time. It really felt to me like strong leadership was something that they wanted to see from their leaders, and they wanted to put faith in a party that would deliver what it said it would, and we did. We delivered on our plans for the Mining and Pastoral Region. We delivered on what we said we would do, and that is something that people respected.

I saw on a certain Facebook page one of the most bizarre campaign techniques that I have ever seen. I am sure that members of the Nationals WA know exactly what I am talking about. Out of nowhere, the Facebook page "Say NO to Labor's Gold Tax" went up. It said that Labor was going to introduce a gold tax. It was interesting to see that it was authorised by A. Clark. I could not understand who A. Clark was. It looked like a bit of money had been spent on it; it had some nice pictures. When I pulled up the page, it invited people to "like" other related pages, and mentioned Rowena Olsen and "Big Nick" Fardell as candidates for the National Party. Nick had made a comment on the page earlier, saying that he supported the gold tax. He took it off once he realised that it was probably not the right thing to do.

Hon Sue Ellery: Is that the same Nick Fardell who wants to abolish the Legislative Council?

Hon KYLE MCGINN: I am getting to that, honourable member; you just ruined my big kicker! Basically, the page went up and no-one could understand what was going on. Then the Liberal Party came out, with Kyran O'Donnell, the then MLA, saying, "There's a gold tax coming, according to this page", and Zak Kirkup came running out to the goldfields. I could not understand what was going on, because I was sitting next to Hon Ben Wyatt when he ruled out that tax. It was a real scare campaign. The page said that it had come from mining companies. I had been talking to mining companies.

I was at a pre-poll booth one day and I saw the Nationals candidate go running off. I thought it was a bit bizarre to leave the pre-poll because everyone had been there every day. I got a call from a journalist who asked me what I thought of A. Clark. I said that I had been trying to work out who that was for a couple of months. I was told it was Rowena Olsen's dad. The dad of a candidate for the National Party had put up that Facebook page and was running this campaign of scare, fear and negativity in the regions, which I have become quite used to from the National Party in the goldfields. I have stood in this place before and spoken about some very unsatisfactory behaviour that was directed at me and other people in the government. It reared its head again on election day, but I will not go there now. It was really disappointing to see a fake campaign put up. What is more interesting is that the authorisation on the Facebook page changed to the campaign manager of Rowena Olsen. A. Clark, Rowena's dad, was taken off, and the campaign manager was put on the site. The journalists asked Rowena Olsen whether she was

running this campaign. She said she knew nothing about it. The journalists said, “You don’t know that your dad’s run a scare campaign on the gold tax and then your campaign manager has taken over?” She said, “No, I know nothing about that. I can’t control that.” But her dad and the campaign manager were handing out information on election day. It was just a purely negative attempt to grab hold of something and throw mud until it sticks—the type of campaign that cost the National Party in that electorate. I think it was close to 14 per cent. When Big Nick ran in the Senate, he halved the vote for the National Party, and I believe he pretty much halved the vote in the upper house, because the Nationals did not end up getting a Mining and Pastoral Region seat. Surely he finally understands that he cannot use fear, loathing and scaremongering in a campaign every single time and expect to get elected. Candidates need to be positive and work with community groups. It was embarrassing to see the lies and fear that the Nationals had spread everywhere they had gone. I was debunking things that had been said, particularly by the upper house candidate. I know that Hon Jacqui Boydell, who is moving on, did not operate like that. It was very disappointing to see the person who was chosen by the party to replace Hon Jacqui Boydell out there running that type of campaign.

I will turn to what Hon Sue Ellery picked up before. Candidate-elect Nick Fardell was on radio yesterday talking about —

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: He didn’t win a seat.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Sorry. I thank Hon Dr Steve Thomas for that. The preselected candidate who did not get elected to the Mining and Pastoral Region, Nick Fardell, was speaking on ABC radio. This is astonishing. First, he threw shots over the bow that were directed at me; that seems to be his favourite thing to do. Then he was asked for his view on upper house reform. He said, “My view is simple. Abolish the upper house.” This is someone who was running for the National Party in the upper house.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Number one on the ticket.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Yes, he was number one on the ticket. He replaced Hon Jacqui Boydell on the ticket. He came out and said, “I really think we should just abolish the upper house because that will save the taxpayer \$50 million.” What I have heard from opposition members in this chamber, and particularly from National Party members, is about the value of the house of review. This candidate, who was unsuccessful, obviously had these views prior to losing, unless it is spilt milk and a case of, “No matter how many times I try, I just cannot get elected, so let us abolish it”. That may be the attitude. He must have held that view prior to yesterday’s radio interview. Why was he running in a system that he did not believe in? I found it absolutely astonishing that he came out with that.

I turn to another thing we saw from that campaign. We were talking about royalties for regions projects and money. The candidate for the National Party came out with an \$88 million saving on stamp duty, which was quite interesting. After the sale of the super pit, stamp duty would be returned to the state. The National Party decided it would be a good idea to hypothecate some more. I am sure that Hon Dr Steve Thomas would have a few things to say about that. The Nationals basically said that they would direct \$88 million of that stamp duty back to the state; it would go into a future fund for Kalgoorlie, which would earn interest et cetera. The candidate, Rowena Olsen, said that she would create a list of what the other \$88 million should be spent on. I think the campaign was called “Add it to the list”. Basically, it was about spending \$88 million of stamp duty. It was bizarre that when the Nationals were asked how they would improve RforR so that we do not see financial mismanagement, they just answered by saying “Checks and balances”. But they were going to hypothecate \$88 million here and another \$88 million there because they were going to give everyone the opportunity to ask for everything they wanted. It was a really bizarre piece of campaigning. The results probably reflect where that campaign was at.

I managed to get out to a fair few remote polling booths. Something that I think is quite interesting, which I will be raising with the minister, is that the timing of the election did not go down very well in remote communities. I am sure that Hon Robin Scott would agree with me when I say that law business was taking place in many areas. I have not had a close look, but judging by the figures that I originally saw, the remote polling was down. I believe that close to 100 people in Warburton voted, down from about 500 in the previous election.

Hon Robin Scott: It was 60.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: There we go. I went out to Mt Margaret and we got a handful of voters. Normally, there are 50 to 60 voters. Again, I had another blooper, which I am not afraid to say in this place. I was heading to the pre-poll in Cosmo Newbery as I had a meeting. I put the name into Google Maps. I was in a remote area. I took a certain road and I was 200 kilometres away from Cosmo Newbery. I turned the phone off. Knowing that I had travelled 200 kilometres, I wondered where Cosmo Newbery was. Then I saw a sign indicating the direction of Coober Pedy. It turns out that I turned off one turn short, and I ended up heading towards Coober Pedy. I found out from the remote pollers that 10 people had showed up there, which was disappointing because they were expecting closer to 50 or 100. But I am not afraid to let members know that I do make mistakes. I did actually have a moment

where I got out of the car and did the whole, “No!” I tried to find a bush track to take across but it did not quite do it. However, going out to those communities gave me an understanding that we need to do better in the space of giving people the opportunity to vote. In this three-week pre-polling conversation, tied in with remote polling, I think there is a lot of opportunity to grow and change.

I rang the Western Australian Electoral Commission before the cut-off of renewals and said, “Look, can you give us a thousand renewal forms? I’m going to go out to the remote communities as a lot of people aren’t enrolled.” The WAEC said, “Oh, it’s all online now.” I said, “I just told you I’m going out to remote communities. There’s no internet in half the places I’m going to.” The WAEC said, “Oh, well. No, we can’t print them for you.” Surely we should be giving people every opportunity to vote that we possibly can. If somebody is going to go out to the remote communities, the WAEC should be saying, “Yes, okay. Here’s some resources. Off you go!” At the end of the day, it is not about who they vote for; it is about democracy and the opportunity to vote. I really feel that there were missed opportunities. I heard from the remote pollers out in Warburton that nobody could land on the airstrip on one day because the airstrip was not kept up properly. On another day there was sorry business, so nobody was at the polls—that means: come back next week! I know that is hard to do, with planning and everything else, but we have to get better at it because that was a missed opportunity for people to engage in the democratic process, which was disappointing.

Regional affairs have been heavily on the agenda for many years. We saw an inquiry into regional airfares during the last term of government. Because of a commitment by the McGowan government, we will now see a capped airfares program that is going to work in two zones. This was very well received. I think it will be by no means a silver bullet for regional airfares, but it is a start. People are seeing this as a great opportunity. We will be capping airfares at \$199 or \$299, rather than people sometimes paying \$600 or \$700 one way. People will know what the price of airfares will be during that program. By working with other airlines, we should be able to see a lot more come on in that space.

It always interests me when we talk about airfares and fly-in fly-out. I do not feel as though some of the leadership, particularly in local government, understands how, as the inquiry showed us, some of the FIFO fares actually offset some of the cost of the other airfares, and that airfares could be even more expensive and there could be even fewer flights without FIFO. Therefore, when people out there say, “No more FIFO from Perth to the regions”, they really need to understand how that is going to affect the cost of other airfares as well and the other flow-on effects. Hopefully, we will be able to investigate that a bit further.

Another great commitment made by the McGowan government and Ali Kent out in the goldfields was \$2.1 million for a youth hub. Something that the goldfields has been looking for for a while now is a central area where the youth of Kalgoorlie can gather and where organisations can set up and put their resources to work. The Lord Forrest Olympic Pool, which does not even have a pool, is in a great location in Kingsbury Park. The government will work with the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder to create a hub for goldfields youth, at which all organisations, from health to education, will come together to assist the city to run programs and events. It will bring our youth together and galvanise them.

I have spoken here a few times about my intern, Amy Astill, whom I have had since 2017. She has done it again! Late last year she went out and held a youth forum, and it was phenomenal to see the youth come in and speak about their issues and put them in front of Minister Dave Kelly, who listened. It was amazing to see that when we give a young person an opportunity, the outcome is endless. We do not know where they will go with it. The youth of the goldfields will flourish a bit more if they are given more of that type of engagement, particularly with their own hub and their own place.

I am excited about Carey Mining’s Aboriginal mining employment program, which will be run through the WA School of Mines. Daniel Tucker had the great vision of putting in place a training and education program for Aboriginal mineworkers. Instead of companies saying that it is too hard to engage with Aboriginal people and having just a tick-and-flick operation, there will be somewhere for Aboriginal people to go. To add to that—this is how exciting it is in the goldfields and everywhere else at the moment—Rowena, an Aboriginal lady out in the goldfields, has created the Goldfields Aboriginal Business Chamber. It is such an amazing opportunity to have that tied in with a new training opportunity and Aboriginal small businesses in the goldfields right now. We have full economic growth. We have projects steaming ahead. We have had a constant history of people saying that it is too hard and they do not know where to find workers, or they wonder which businesses are Aboriginal businesses, but now we have a collaboration and a base from which to start. The government is working closely with Daniel Tucker on bringing that program to fruition and—I will say it again—it ties into that road project idea just beautifully.

Lynas Rare Earths is about to undertake huge construction in the goldfields, with about a half-billion dollars’ worth of investment into a leaching and cracking plant. There will be great opportunities for Aboriginal businesses to get engaged early in some of the long-term projects out there. Carey Mining started —

Hon Peter Collier interjected.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Sorry, mate?

Hon Peter Collier: Why did you close the Aboriginal Workforce Development Centre?

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Look, I cannot hear you; you have a mask on.

Lynas Rare Earths has projects coming on, and we are working closely with it to engage and put on workers. When Carey Mining first started, it got one contract, and from that contract it worked its way up. It had one start-up, but now it is almost at the point at which it is going to have its own mining venture. That is really exciting to see. Carey Mining is not just sitting back and focusing on its business; Helen and Daniel are focused on trying to get Aboriginal people engaged throughout the mining industry, which I think is a real benefit to the goldfields region. This, in turn, will see better outcomes throughout the goldfields, and I think Daniel Tucker and his team should be commended for that. I look forward to working with them across this term of government to see that program grow even bigger.

Lastly, I make mention of all the volunteers and people who assisted me throughout the campaign, particularly in the North West Central electorate and the goldfields. It was a tough campaign. There was lots of travel to do. But everyone was there because they wanted to see a better outcome for the goldfields and they believed that a McGowan government could deliver that. We now have plans in place that will be delivered over the next four years, and I believe that Ali Kent, the member for Kalgoorlie, will do an amazing job delivering her plans for the goldfields and working with the community on building a bigger and better goldfields region. It will be an interesting four years for North West Central. We are lucky enough to have had four Labor Party members elected in the Mining and Pastoral Region, including the soon to be Hon Peter Foster out in Tom Price. The results that came in from Tom Price were pretty amazing. The vote was really good. A project was announced out there for Tom Price Hospital, which was very well received by the community.

The PRESIDENT: Member, I am just going to do you the courtesy of letting you know that you have three minutes left on your time, in lieu of us not having a clock.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Thank you very much, Madam President.

Also, \$13 million in funding was announced for Meekatharra Hospital, which we all know is getting on and is quite dilapidated—I am not going to try these words anymore! It is rundown—dilapidated. Planning needs to happen now, but having \$13 million there to work through it provides a great opportunity.

Hon Simon O'Brien: The whole hospital system is going down the tubes.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: Let's just get negative again! Let's not talk about some of the good projects out there and some of the good things that are happening, which is what I am trying to achieve. I am trying to talk about some of the good stuff. But, anyway.

The organisations that we work with in the North West Central electorate have some great programs. A particularly good one that we have been working with is Yulella Incorporated —

Hon Simon O'Brien interjected.

Hon KYLE MCGINN: It is just a constant drone. It is just brrrr!

Yulella is a great organisation in Meekatharra. It is looking forward to doing some good projects. The Yulella community garden project, working through the community development program and engaging locally, is a great project to watch over the next year or so as it rolls out. Yulella works very closely with the CDP, which has had some great outcomes in Meekatharra. I look forward to working with it in the future.

It was an interesting election. I think the result reflects the campaigns more than anything else out there. People were engaging at a level that I have not seen before in politics. I know that I am young and have been in only a couple of elections, but the engagement with and interest in politics I witnessed was very, very surprising. Thank you, Madam President.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 58.]