

## ADJOURNMENT OF THE HOUSE

### *Special*

**MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Leader of the House)** [3.44 pm] — without notice: I move —

That the house at its rising adjourn until a date and time to be fixed by the Speaker.

Today, we bid farewell to another eventful year—the third year of the forty-first Parliament. I am very pleased to reflect on the triumphs, challenges and experiences of 2023. In moving the motion, just so members are aware, the reason I have not put a date on our return is that we might have a vote with regard to a vacancy in the Senate. That is why a date has not been highlighted in the motion.

In speaking to the motion, as I said, I am very pleased to make some reflective comments on the 2023 year and, indeed, the third year of the forty-first Parliament. As we know, a range of issues and natural disasters have affected people around the world, causing much sadness and devastation. We have also had anguish in our state because of cyclones, bushfires and other emergencies that have impacted communities throughout Western Australia. In reflecting on those events, it is also important that we are reminded of the robustness and strength of the population of this magnificent state. The communities of Western Australia always demonstrate their capacity to rally together. We saw that recently with the bushfires in the northern part of the metropolitan area and also in other places throughout the state. We also see the remarkable compassion and unwavering generosity of Western Australians. I reflect on the record amount, for example, raised by Telethon this year—a record \$77.5 million. As we move towards Christmas and into the new year, I acknowledge our first responders throughout the state for the work that they do for the people of Western Australia. They respond remarkably when required, when emergencies befall communities.

This year, the green and gold was waved very strongly throughout the state of Western Australia. We saw the green and gold in our stadium and across other venues in Perth when the FIFA Women's World Cup came to Perth as a host city. The efforts of the Matildas and all visiting teams were quite remarkable. That competition highlighted for all people the importance of sport to the Western Australian lifestyle and has seen numerous girls and young women take up sport in record numbers, including in AFL and other sporting codes.

On 29 May this year, the then Premier of Western Australia and member for Rockingham, Hon Mark McGowan, announced his resignation and retirement from politics and left this place. We were very proud and pleased to welcome the new member for Rockingham, who was elected in Hon Mark McGowan's place and will carry on the great legacy that he left his community. I acknowledge the legacy of the former Premier.

Today, just prior to question time, we had the announcement from my good friend and colleague the member for Cannington, Minister Bill Johnston, of his retirement from the Cook ministry. We acknowledge the service of Minister Johnston to the people of Western Australia both as a minister and in his representative role as the member for Cannington.

**Government members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** All of the events of 2023 have made for a unique year's work for the house and a rollercoaster of progress, setbacks and remarkable achievements. The first day of Parliament this year was Tuesday, 14 February—Valentine's Day. Today marks the sixtieth sitting day of the year, which included three days of budget sittings. That equates to 19 regular sitting weeks plus one week of budget estimates. During 2023, 45 government bills have been introduced into the house and 37 of those bills have passed. A number of those bills were particularly significant and will play an important role in the lives of Western Australians. We have enhanced community safety with legislative reforms to disrupt the supply of illicit drugs into Western Australia and to target serious and organised crime. The Local Government Amendment Act 2023 was passed to improve the transparency, accountability and efficiency of local governments across the state. We passed tougher casino laws to enhance accountability and transparency at the state's only casino, and legislated to improve the governance of government trading enterprises. Abortion care is a critical component of women's health care, and that is why we modernised our state's abortion laws to make safety, privacy and dignity an absolute right. We overhauled the workers compensation legislation and our ever busy—extremely busy—Attorney General delivered on our commitment to reform WA's mentally impaired accused laws. The Attorney General's portfolios also saw significant reform to the Electoral Act with the Electoral Amendment Bill 2023, which of course will strengthen disclosure requirements for political donations and introduce caps on campaign expenditure.

Statistically, this year, around 289 questions on notice have been asked, and more than 327 questions without notice have been asked and answered, to varying degrees. There have been 18 matters of public notice debated and 378 brief ministerial statements. I am not sure who topped that this year. I think it may have been me; I do not know. That is one statistic I do not have. There have been 18 committee reports tabled this year—including about a hundred today!—and 827 papers have been tabled. Of course, that highlights the work of the Legislative Assembly.

Speaker, I acknowledge you and the tremendous stewardship of this house for which you are now renowned. You have never rejected anybody from the chamber so far in this term.

**The SPEAKER:** I am trying!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Despite some members testing your mettle!

**Mr R.H. Cook:** I think the member for Cannington will push it next year!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** The way you deal with that is with firmness but fairness, as a Speaker should.

**The SPEAKER:** I do remember what the member for Cannington was like as a backbencher!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes! I also want to acknowledge your reforms, which I think all of us enjoy, including the sitting time changes. You have modernised the sitting times in the Parliament, and we will continue those timings next year. As arts minister, I also acknowledge the bringing of artworks from outside in the community into the Parliament, which I think has been a tremendous achievement, and indeed very good for those both working in the building and visiting.

I commend and thank the Deputy Speaker, of course, the member for Forrestfield, and also the Acting Speakers, the members for Kalgoorlie, Carine, Dawesville, Landsdale, Cockburn and Albany. I thank the Clerk and your marvellous staff. Thank you to Kirsten and Scott Nalder, Liz Kerr, Isla Macphail, Thomas Moorhead, Rachel Wells, Denis Hippolyte, Lachlan Gregory, Lisa Bellano, Nikolas Carbone, Darren Seet, Marie Martin, Jesceline Requero—I apologise if I have got that wrong; is that pretty good? Okay—Anne Day and Molly Rogers-Thomson. On my Facebook feed the other day, the infamous final sitting day of 2016 came up, when I was opposition Whip, when I closed the Parliament early. Some members might remember that, those of us who were around.

Several members interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes, the red fox escaped! I also thank the committee staff, who have worked so tirelessly to produce the reports that I referred to a moment ago. Thanks are also most definitely due to the government Whip—a wonderful, wonderful member, who is behind me. I thank you Cassie, member for Belmont, for your wonderful stewardship and work as government Whip, ably assisted by your deputy Whip, the member for Joondalup. There have been a few acting Whips when I have been at an arts or sporting event. I also thank your assistant, Jason Timms, for the work he has done.

I thank the member for Roe, my sparring partner. I thank the manager of opposition business, Mr Peter Rundle, for the good working relationship we have—we do. I also thank the opposition Whips, the members for Central Wheatbelt and North West Central. Thank you for your roles as opposition Whips. I thank the Leader of the Liberal Party, as well.

We acknowledge and thank the Parliamentary Services team. They are headed by Rob Hunter, as we know, and his deputy, Patricia Traegde. The team includes Security and Reception Services, led by Tony Paterson and Stephanie Nguyen. I thank David Boag and all the gardeners; our cleaners; our Building Services team, headed by Hugh McCaffrey; and the welcoming reception team, as well. We also acknowledge the tremendous work of the Hansard reporters, Adrian Beattie and the remarkable team from Hansard, who record our utterances in this place.

**Mr R.H. Cook:** They make us sound meticulous.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I acknowledge the Parliamentary Education Office staff. Again, I think we all are very appreciative of the remarkable work they do. I thank Belinda Corey, Jordy Leavesley, Cherie Toovey, Ben Machowiak, Jacinta Spry, David Cox and Tina Beale. Wherever you are, thank you for the wonderful role that you play in educating and highlighting the role of democracy and the role of this place in our democracy to schoolchildren and visitors to our Parliament. I know that all the education team are very highly regarded.

Gratitude is also extended to Angelo Giaros and the IT team, Elma Ozich, Rachel Germano and the Finance team, Tina Hunter and the Human Resources team, Judy Ballantyne and the Library team, and Dave Embry and the audiovisual crew down there in the bowels of Parliament, a nice hello to you. Marvellous!

**Mr J.N. Carey:** Hello, Clarice!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** Yes, “Hello, Clarice!” Yes!

**The SPEAKER:** He is getting your best side!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** It is him! Ever since he sat next to me, things have changed.

Gratitude also goes to Enno Schijf, Mark Gabrielli and the wonderful staff in the lounges and the dining room, and they are wonderful. A number of them have been there for a long time and they do a fantastic job, so thank you to all those people in the dining and other services in the Parliament. I thank Kate Colleran, Julie Knight, Peter Kennon and Janice Shaw from the Parliamentary and Executive Government Services team. Thank you so

much to all the staff, no matter what role you play. We are very thankful and very grateful for the role that you play and the support you give to all members, their families and guests to this place.

I am almost at the end. I also thank the staff in the Premier's office for your wonderful support. I sincerely thank those in the Premier's office because their role is very, very important.

I also acknowledge, on behalf of all of us, our magnificent electorate staff. I know we are all so appreciative of the work that our electorate staff do. To them and their families, we thank you very much for the tremendous work. In my case, I really want to thank Larissa, Shelley, Matt and Fran, who has been with me since I started in this place in 2001. She is a pensioner now, but she is still there with me. Thank you, Fran; I love you. I also acknowledge my ministerial staff, some of whom are here today. I thank and acknowledge Gary Hamley, who was my chief of staff for my first five years as minister. He retired from the public service after 50-plus years in the public service.

I want to acknowledge Gary for his contribution. He served ministers from both sides of the political fence, and I acknowledge the work of Gary. I thank my own ministerial staff, of course, and my wonderful parliamentary secretary, Samantha Rowe, and all parliamentary secretaries who support ministers. I thank Tarnya Widdicombe, who is here; Rebecca Neilson; Kym Coolhaas; Melissa Kelly; Megan MacLean; Caroline O'Neill; Danielle McKenzie; Bronte McCarthy; Demi-May Renfree—amazing appointments secretary; how she does it, I do not know—Greta Yapp; Heloise Bayao; and Amy Owen, who is on maternity leave and enjoying the birth of her second child.

That is the year. What we have done is have an interesting year. Some exciting things happened. People asked me, "What are you going to sing? What are you going to sing?" I have a little song. It is only short. This year I thought: what was the sort of thing that stuck out that attracted a bit of attention? It could have been the former Premier retiring. It could have been various things happening, but I channelled the Bee Gees for this one. Anyone born after 1980 would not know who they were. They had great attachments to Australia.

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** But we just do not laugh; yes. Here we go. Then, of course, there was that great event at Optus Stadium only recently, which sort of finishes this. My voice is a bit croaky today so I will just try.

**Mr J.N. Carey:** Clarice!

**Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN:** I could have done that as Clarice. Here it is —

There's a light.  
It's not another bloody traffic light.  
We're going to Ellenbrook today.  
But soon there'll be no more traffic pain,  
'Cause now we are building a train.  
Rita is building them a train.

But there's no way,  
That I will get tickets to Coldplay.  
I'm on my phone in the queue.  
I'm customer 96 002.  
And I'm still in the queue.  
And I'm still in the queue.

And in my brain,  
This ticket system is insane.  
I just can't seem to progress and  
I'm in a state of distress.  
I'm in distress.  
I'm in distress.

I'm a fan.  
Can't you see what I am?  
I live and breathe for you.  
But what good does it do,  
If I can't see you?  
If I can't see you?

I tell you, you don't know what it's like,  
I tell you, you don't know what it's like,  
To buy a ticket,  
To score a ticket,

A ticket to Coldplay.

The operator talked to me with some doubt  
She said in all likelihood tickets, they will sell out.  
Now for once in your life you're not alone.  
And my blood then ran cold.  
All the tickets were sold,

So I never got a ticket to you.  
Coldplay, Coldplay.  
Fourteen hours on the phone makes me spew.  
Coldplay, Coldplay.

Then it finishes with this —

Coldplay came to Perth  
Other states weren't chuffed,  
But we don't care.  
They can all get stuffed.  
The Matildas came too with our Sam Kerr.  
Our state of pride!

So, we've been through a year,  
Many highs, no regrets.  
But we live in a state that's as good as it gets.  
There is no other place that we'd all call home.  
The west is best.

Merry Christmas to you.  
Merry Christmas to you.  
Merry Christmas, Speaker, to you.

Merry Christmas, everybody.

[Applause.]

**The SPEAKER:** I see, member for Roe, the member for Moore has left you to speak after the hard act to follow.

**MR P.J. RUNDLE (Roe — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [4.22 pm]: Absolutely right. Thanks, Madam Speaker. As you pointed out, the Leader of the House is definitely, as always, a hard act to follow. Well done again. People look forward to his contribution every year without doubt.

As the Leader of the House said, it is the finalisation of the third year of our forty-first Parliament. I want to acknowledge what the Leader of the House spoke about and the optimism of the green and gold in a year of turmoil around the world. I think it makes all of us appreciate living in WA. The Leader of the House said I was his sparring partner, but I think we generally get on pretty well. We have the occasional run-in, I suppose we could call it, but we make it work and I appreciate our relationship as far as making the chamber work and things running through the years. I think in general terms, it goes very well and I appreciate the work that Leader of the House does.

I also want to acknowledge the government Whip, the member for Belmont, and the work that she does in making the chamber run and making sure that everyone is here ready to speak on time.

Madam Speaker, I acknowledge your role. As the Leader of the House mentioned, you have not moved anyone on at this stage. In fact, I cannot even recall whether some people have been warned that often either, so you have done pretty well to contain yourself. I have heard a rumour that you might need the stopwatch next year given the copious answers that we receive from some of our government members.

**Ms L. Mettam:** They're not real answers.

**The SPEAKER:** Christmas spirit.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** Nonetheless, it is good you handle question time the way that you do and we all appreciate it. Then, of course, there are examples like this morning, when you get called Acting Speaker and the like, but you take that on the chin. That leads me to the Deputy Speaker who also does a great job. We appreciate the working relationship that we have with him. I also want to mention Bec Neilson, who from my perspective makes the chamber run very well behind the scenes. Well done to Bec and her team.

Certainly, as the Leader of the House mentioned, I acknowledge our Acting Speakers, during the year: the member for Kalgoorlie, the member for Carine, the member for Dawesville, the member for Landsdale, the member for

Cockburn and the member for Albany. Of course, the member for Hillarys was in action earlier in the year as well. Thank you to all those members who put in that extra effort to be our Acting Speakers.

I thank our Assembly staff led by Kirsten Robinson. The team does fantastic work to make things happen for us here. I thank Deputy Clerk Scott Nalder; Clerk Assistant Liz Kerr; Clerk Assistant Isla McPhail; and Sergeant-at-Arms Thomas Moorhead, with his authoritative way that he starts each session to make sure that we are up and about. I also thank the Assembly staff who are here day and night, and we really appreciate their work: Lachlan Gregory, Rachel Wells, Denis Hippolyte, Nikolas Carbone, Marie Martin, Lisa Bellano, Darren Seet and Jesceline Requero. We appreciate the behind-the-scenes work that they do.

As the Leader of the House explained, we have many facets of staff at Parliament House, and we have 210 in total. We have 15 Assembly committee staff, who provide great support to our many committees throughout the year; 11 building services staff; 37 catering services staff, who do a great job; and six education office staff. It is great when some of our school students come a long way and our education staff help them out and handle those students. We also have nine finance staff, five human resources staff, 13 IT staff, 10 library staff, 34 Hansard staff and 14 security staff. They all play a great role. I do not want to mention too many names, but I want to mention Rob Hunter, who I think is the glue that holds it all together. I want to acknowledge the job that Rob does for all of us. I think we have all come across him in one way or another, and he is certainly keeping it together at Parliament House.

On the retirements and additions, I want to acknowledge former Premier Hon Mark McGowan, the former member for Rockingham, and the role that he played for our state. I think most of us were as shocked as each other when he departed the scene, but I certainly want to acknowledge him from the opposition's perspective. He was a long-serving member and obviously served through difficult times over the last few years.

I also acknowledge the new member for Rockingham, Magenta Marshall. She has brought the total composition of the house to fifty-fifty male and female for the first time. For anyone who has not seen it, there is a great photo in the corridor outside the Speaker's gallery of all our female members in the Legislative Assembly chamber. I think that is a great milestone.

I also acknowledge Minister Johnston, who I think has departed with his family for the moment. I acknowledge the role that he has played as a cabinet minister in our government. He has certainly had many roles and he has a lot of knowledge. I will miss his contributions. He will probably miss the member for Moore talking about the power in Mullewa or Morawa or somewhere and of course me talking about the power in Ravensthorpe. His one phrase that I will not miss is "You don't understand." That is always the fallback position. I am sure that, as he pointed out, he will make many great contributions from the back bench, so I say well done to the Minister for Energy on his contribution.

I acknowledge the changes over the year and of course welcome our new Premier. Congratulations, Premier, on your new role and well done to you for stepping in. I am sure you will not miss my questions on live export or whatever it might be over the summer period. Congratulations to you on your appointment. Congratulations to the new Deputy Premier and Treasurer, with her large role, and also our new minister, Hon David Michael.

Of course, we have had many changes in all parties. I would like to congratulate our new Leader of the Opposition this year, Shane Love, the member for Moore, and thank him for his leadership of our team. I can assure members that he is a hard worker and does a great job not only representing his electorate, but leading the Nationals WA and the opposition, so well done to the member for Moore.

I also thank the former Leader of the Opposition, the member for Central Wheatbelt, who has now been appointed as Whip. Of course, she has covered nearly every role in this Parliament, having been a member of the Legislative Council, Leader of the Opposition, Leader of the Nationals WA and so on. She has certainly done well and I would like to acknowledge her role.

I also acknowledge another change of course—the Leader of the Liberal Party. I am sure that the Minister for Health will not mind the summer break coming up. Congratulations to the member for Vasse for her role in the leadership of the Liberal Party and also to the former leader, the member for Cottesloe, for the work he did in his role after the 2021 election. I also acknowledge the Whip for the year, the member for North West Central.

Obviously, it is great to see our new crop of leaders in local government in our communities, so this summer break will be an opportunity for many of us to get back to our electorates and catch up with our local government leaders.

I also thank the opposition staff: the staff of the Leader of the Opposition, led by the chief of staff, Heather York; and the executive officer of the Parliamentary Nationals WA, Lisa Logan. I would like to thank my electorate officers, Sally Haslam, Natalie Nicholson, Jill Fitzpatrick and Dorothy Henderson. I thank them for the work they have done over the year in supporting me. As the Leader of the House said, I do not think any of us in this Parliament underestimate the amount of work that our staff do in supporting us in our various roles.

In closing, I hope that all members enjoy their time back in their electorates with their families over the break and make sure that they are safe on the roads. I hope that everyone has their fire plan ready. Let us hope that we do not need to use our fire plans, but we all acknowledge the events of the last week or two. We acknowledge our volunteer staff, who do a great job protecting our communities right around the state, as they well and truly did in the Wanneroo area over the last couple of weeks.

I want to thank my wife, Andrea, for her support and our two sons, James and Sam, for their support. As we all know, this job takes a toll on our families, and we all really appreciate the support we get from our family members.

As all members set out to go to their school graduations, I hope they travel safely. I have 51 schools in my electorate, and of course I will be unable to get to all the graduations —

Several members interjected.

**Mr P.J. RUNDLE:** — but I will do my best! As always, I like to remind the member for Mount Lawley that my electorate is 5 912 times the size of the Mount Lawley electorate. Nonetheless, I am sure that every member in this chamber very much supports all their schools, so get out there and get to as many graduations as you can.

To all the members in this house, whether travelling many miles in the regions or in the metropolitan area, be safe. It is a great privilege to be a member of the Legislative Assembly and I very much look forward to being back here in February next year. I wish everyone a safe and enjoyable Christmas and new year.

**MR R.H. COOK (Kwinana — Premier)** [4.19 pm]: This is an important opportunity for us to reflect on the year, the year in which, once again, we have the very rare privilege of being in this place. I first of all start off by thanking the Leader of the House and the manager of opposition business who have done a great job in capturing the spirit of 2023. I have never understood why we spend so much time debating, for want of a better description, the adjournment motion when we know that just outside that door over there the press gallery is waiting to host us in drinks. I will keep my comments fairly short this year, and I beseech the member for Vasse and the member for Moore that all three of us could perhaps do much the same.

**Mr R.S. Love:** I am going to take a half-hour!

**Mr R.H. COOK:** We know that 2023 has been a year of extraordinary transition. Once again, we see the Western Australian economy and community adapting to life after the pandemic. As we welcome tourists and workers back to Western Australia, we see our economy continue to grow and transition to our renewable energy future. We should really take the opportunity to remind ourselves of how fortunate we are to live in this state. It is an extraordinary part of the world. I do not think a day goes by when I do not marvel at the privilege we have. But not everyone has that, so let us also take the opportunity to remind ourselves that just in 2023 there have been some really tough events such as the Fitzroy River floods, the recent bushfires in east Wanneroo and other events that have impacted people's lives. Let us continue to apply ourselves to creating an inclusive society and one in which we recognise that not everyone has the economic prosperity to which we all aspire and that we have the opportunity to reach back and bring them with us. There is no more important role for a member of Parliament in this place than to understand what is happening in our communities and to reflect it not only in our thoughts but our deeds.

We continue to be privileged to serve in this place, and this year we have seen quite a few changes. At the start of the year we saw a new Leader of the Opposition and a new Leader of the Liberal Party. Then, just a short time later, we saw a new Premier. This has been a period of some change. Ultimately, we see the passage of time as we look back on 2023, and once again reflect on the extraordinary service of the member for Cannington to the Western Australian public and acknowledge him. I also place on the record my admiration and thanks to the former member for Rockingham and the work he did both in this place and his public life, and I wish all the very best to him, Sarah and his family. I welcome with great delight the new member for Rockingham. I am sure she will do an amazing job in this place.

As the Leader of the House said, the Assembly has passed 35 bills this year, and I think it is important to reflect on the work of the chamber. The bills have included completely modernising completely outdated mentally impaired accused laws, new requirements to transfer adults out of juvenile detention when they turn 18, the expansion and strengthening of the banned drinkers register and greatly expanded and increased transparency and accountability of political donations. We have removed abortion from the Criminal Code, reduced red tape to allow for the construction of more homes, and applied drug and alcohol testing for boat skippers, matching road laws.

We have also introduced some important bills, which will be debated next year. One bill will provide more rights for renters, including allowing them to have pets, limiting the frequency of rent increases and prohibiting rental bidding. Another bill will formalise the government's commitment to net zero emissions by 2050. Importantly, there will be a bill to increase penalties for the removal of GPS monitoring devices and further laws will expand the tracking of family and domestic violence offenders. We will also see laws in place to facilitate utilisation and storage of carbon dioxide and other important bills.

The government has had a range of achievements this year, and these achievements are examples of what my government stands for. But we are delivering so much more. In particular, I am proud of our cost-of-living relief for households, including rent relief, electricity credits, and capping public transport fares and regional airfares. In particular, I again thank the Minister for Energy for his work on electricity credits. There has been sensible management of the economy and the state's finances. We continue to diversify our economy and transform WA to be a renewable energy powerhouse. We are investing in roads and schools, making them the nation's best. We are building Metronet with local workers and manufacturing in Western Australia. We are strengthening our health system, delivering thousands of additional nurses and medical staff and hundreds of new beds, and we are delivering on the new women's and babies' hospital now. Importantly, we will always fight for Western Australia. We have protected our fair share of the GST and investment in WA, and we will do it again.

None of this would be possible without the work of our strong Labor caucus and cabinet. All ministers have worked incredibly hard to make a real difference to Western Australia. All Labor caucus members are dedicated to supporting their local communities. I thank the Leader of the House, Hon David Templeman, and the formidable Rebecca Nielson in his office. I also acknowledge the manager of opposition business in this place. We try desperately to create dignity in this place.

[Interruption.]

**Mr R.H. COOK:** But there is nothing less dignified than someone's mobile phone accidentally going off! On behalf of the member for Landsdale, I would like to point out that it was not her on this occasion! I will not draw attention to the fact that it was the member for Fremantle on this occasion!

I thank the government Whip, the member for Belmont, and her Whip assistant Jason Timms, and also the opposition Whip. I thank executive government services from the Department of the Premier and Cabinet, Kate Colleran and Julie Knight. I thank my ministerial staff and my electorate office staff who do a great job representing me both in government and in the community. I particularly want to thank my wife, Carly, and my family. They have had to adapt this year and they continue to provide me with extraordinary love and support.

I thank Geoff Lawn and Parliamentary Counsel's Office.

I thank parliamentary staff, particularly the Assembly clerks, and Kirsten Robinson in particular, and also security, reception staff, chefs, catering staff, the gardeners and everyone who makes Parliament operate. We see on the faces of not only young schoolkids when they come into this place but also those who are not frequent visitors to the Parliament that this place matters—not only for what we do here, but also for the way we conduct ourselves and the authority and respect of this place. People feel that the moment they step on the grounds, whether they are walking through the gardens or the security arrangements, whether they are accompanied by the guides or dealing with administration staff and the people who make them feel welcome, whether they come here for a meal, an educational experience or meetings with government or other members of Parliament. It is important work, and we need to continue to remind ourselves of that. Because we are here all the time, we often take this stuff for granted and we often forget just how important and impressive it is.

I acknowledge the members of the opposition, in particular the Leader of the Opposition and the Leader of the Liberal Party. There is no tougher gig than opposition, but it is a very important part of our democracy, and we thank you for continuing to put us under pressure and holding us to account.

I also thank all ministers and members for their contributions to this place. Never forget, this is a very rare privilege we have and we must always cherish it.

To you, Madam Speaker, as well as your trusty deputy and, of course, all your acting speakers, thank you very much for the work that you do. I think the words of the Leader of the House were absolutely apt in the relation to the way you conduct the debates in this place with authority and dignity. You have our utmost respect for the way you do that work.

I place on the record of Parliament our thanks to everyone, all our great public sector workers, whether they are frontline or emergency workers or people doing important policy or administrative work in our departments. We value greatly the work of our public sector workers. They are integral to not only the passage and production of laws in this place, but also the work of the government once Parliament has authorised us with a budget to go about and do good things in the community. We should always thank them for their great work.

Finally, I thank the Deputy Premier, who is on her way to a Treasurer's meeting, for her support. She is newly minted, like myself, and I greatly appreciate the work she has done. On a personal note I would also like to thank the ministerial drivers and the dignitary protection unit that every day provide us with incredible service and an opportunity to go about our work. As I said at the beginning of my speech, this is an incredible opportunity to reflect now not on just 2023, but on our time in this place and give thanks for the opportunity to do it and pause for a moment—just for a moment—and wish each other a very merry Christmas.

[Applause.]

**MR R.S. LOVE (Moore — Leader of the Opposition)** [4.31 pm]: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I will be giving about a half-hour speech and after that the crayfish will be available!

**The SPEAKER:** I might just point out that there is unlimited time!

Several members interjected.

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** Well there we go! I always wanted to be in the other place and have that privilege of being able to filibuster for hours on end, and now I have the opportunity, so thank you very much for that, Madam Speaker! Thank you also for the way you have conducted the order of business in this house and provided the environment in which we work. I begin by thanking also the leaders of the house—the manager of opposition business and the Leader of the House for their efforts in ensuring that everything goes well and that all the chaos that ensues around this place is hidden underneath the surface. It all seems very smooth but we know that it is not that easy. I will not thank all the other staff here because I have been instructed, have I not, that I am not to waste time and that they would rather there was no thanks and that the crayfish was available. I will not go through the 210 people who I intended to read out and thank so that they can get on and enjoy the festivities.

I thank the Premier for his kind words and for his actions in this place. I also acknowledge his former colleague and former member for Rockingham who had been in this house for almost as long as the Speaker herself and who made a very long contribution for the people of Western Australia. I congratulate the new Deputy Premier, who is not here. It is always very entertaining when she has yet another hat that she seems to have found somewhere on the street, or a picture that she has snapped, but the highlight is probably when she finally finds a horoscope that is particularly awful for me and repeats it to me. One of the idiosyncrasies of this place is that sometimes in debate a lot of fun can occur, even though one might be getting hammered at the same time—and hammered sometimes we are. There are only half a dozen people on this side. Each member on the other side should try sitting here for a day and they would then realise why they do not want to be on this side of the house, and why in 2025 we hope to be over on that side of the house and for them to be on this side of the house! We will be working right through the summer, plotting and scheming, to ensure that happens.

I echo everyone's thanks to all the departments in this Parliament that provide for us—those in the gardens, Security, the Parliamentary Education Office, the Parliamentary Library, the Parliamentary Services Department, the dining room, the chamber staff and also those who organise the wonderful art in the building, because that is something people comment on when they come here. For those on the art committee who organise different pieces of art, thank you very much. It makes it a pleasure to work in such a unique building and one that has a sense of importance. As the Premier said, it is important and it highlights that the work that is done here is important.

I thank all members of the opposition here and in the other place for their efforts. There are not a lot of people to cover the various portfolios. Sometimes we must prioritise the bigger issues that we want to concentrate on. It is a different way of business for the opposition than perhaps in other years. I would especially like to thank my deputy for his role not only in this place, but in the opposition and in the management of what goes on. He is also the most highly ranked member of the National Party ever to have held the position of party secretary. Not only is he the manager of opposition business, Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA and member for Roe, he is also secretary to the Parliamentary National Party, so he keeps the notes at the meetings. He is a very hardworking man.

To my hardworking electorate officers, Shelly, Kylie, who is on maternity leave, Ali, Isabelle and Michelle, who is on secondment, thank you for your work as well. Thank you to the staff in the Leader of the Opposition's office—Heather York and the whole crew. To the member for Cannington, who is not here, every year in the summer the lights go out in the midwest far too frequently and I direct all the inquiries to the Minister for Energy, Bill Johnston. I am going to have to find out who the new person is so I can redirect the inquiries to them. There will be plenty flooding in because it is a perennial problem throughout summer.

Best wishes to all the staff who work for the ministers. I thank them for providing us with briefings and providing the information we are chasing about various portfolios. It is very important to have ministerial staff that we can communicate with and get a bit of an idea about what is going on. Of course, I thank the members of cabinet who organise that for their efforts. To all members of the government who are not in the cabinet who would like to be in cabinet, have a very merry Christmas and spend your time thinking about how you can get into the ranks of power. There are a few there who look as though they might not be there for much longer—they are looking to retire—so you never know when the opportunity might arise! There is one person I want to mention in particular: I am going to make sure that tonight I get a selfie with Yaz Mubarakai. This man has had more photographs taken than anybody else in Western Australia. He could be a professional model. I have not seen a person have so many selfies taken, and I will be sure to have one tonight with Yaz.



If I have missed thanking anybody, I am sorry, but I wish everybody in the house and in Parliament a very happy, safe Christmas break. Enjoy the opportunity to get back into the electorates and enjoy the opportunity to spend some time with family. I wish you all the very best and I hope to see everybody back here in 2024.

[Applause.]

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [4.38 pm]: Madam Speaker, I appreciate that I am perhaps the last speaker and what is between yourself and crayfish, so I will be brief. As we approach the end of another year I would like to extend warm wishes to everybody in this place. As the manager of opposition business, the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition have already stated, it is the parliamentary staff who keep this Parliament running. It is often easy to forget that this Parliament is the very heart of our democracy and that the critical work being done here is essential to the functioning of the government. Despite many robust debates, it is clear that each and every one of the members here are absolutely dedicated to their communities. I appreciate all the hard work that is undertaken in the best interests of Western Australia. We do not always agree, but your passion for your communities and for good outcomes certainly cannot be questioned. It is a goal that we all share.

I extend my best wishes to everyone involved in the operation and management of this institution of Parliament. Your work is absolutely essential in the functioning of our democracy and we are grateful for everything you do. Thanks to the Clerk, Kirsten Robinson; the Deputy Clerk, Scott Nalder; and the Clerk Assistants, Liz Kerr and Isla Macphail. Your hard work and dedication are truly appreciated and we could not do our job without you. I would also like to extend our gratitude to the parliamentary officers who also work tirelessly to support us in our duties. Their hard work and dedication are essential to the smooth running of this place. I would also like to extend my thanks to the Sergeant-at-Arms, Thomas Moorhead, and his deputy, Lachlan Gregory, for their unwavering commitment to ensuring that parliamentary business proceeds smoothly and without interruption.

I furthermore express our appreciation to the entire Parliamentary Services Department team. I would also like to extend a vote of thanks to Adrian Beattie, the Hansard Manager, and the entire Hansard team for their exceptional work in making our contributions sound intelligent. It is no secret that in opposition we find ourselves significantly under-resourced, so to that end I would also like to thank the Parliamentary Library staff and the expertise they put at our disposal.

As we celebrate another holiday season, I hope the Premier, his cabinet, their staff and families have a very merry Christmas, a well-deserved break and much-needed rest and relaxation. Likewise, I extend the same to government backbenchers. I also extend my gratitude to you, Madam Speaker, and to the Deputy Speaker and all the Acting Speakers for their patience. It is clear that, at times, boundaries may be pushed and we sincerely appreciate your fair and diplomatic approach to managing the affairs of the house.

I extend my thanks to the staff in my office and my electorate staff. We are certainly a small team, but we do a significant job and I extend my thanks for all their hard work. I also extend a special thanks to our partners in opposition, the Nationals WA, led by the Leader of the Opposition, the member for Moore. I thank you for your contribution and your support. I also thank Heather York and your team. I thank my colleague David, the member for Cottesloe, and the member for North West Central, as members of the parliamentary Liberal team.

On behalf of the parliamentary Liberal team, to all of you and those you love, I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a safe and happy New Year.

[Applause.]

**THE SPEAKER (Mrs M.H. Roberts)** [4.43 pm]: Members, I thank all those who have contributed to this debate for their excellent contributions. Obviously, I would particularly like to thank the Leader of the House for his once again excellent contribution. As someone who is old enough to remember the Bee Gees, well done! That is not said lightly. People wait to hear the end-of-year contribution from you, and you did not let us down, so thank you, member for Mandurah. Hear, hear!

I would like to start by thanking people for the respect they have shown me. I would also like to thank you for the respect you show each other and our staff here in the building. I think we have just about mentioned every staff member by name by this point, so I am not going to go through the long list I have here, but I do want to thank each and every one of those staff members. I particularly want to thank our Clerk, Kirsten Robinson, and the Assembly staff. I will have the opportunity to thank them personally at an event in the near future, and all of you will have an opportunity to thank our staff or to be with our staff when we have an end-of-year celebration with the staff that you are all invited to. I understand that not everyone can make it; it is a busy time of year, with school graduations and a lot of end-of-year events to go to, and many of you are country members, so it is difficult for you to get here to join in on those thankyou celebrations at the end of the year with our staff, but I know they appreciate it when they are treated so well and acknowledged by you. That is important, and I thank you for it.

I mention respect because just this morning, along with the Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence; Community Services, I was at the Midland March that Matters, which is in its tenth year and has gone from strength to strength. A focus on respectful relationships is certainly part of what we acknowledge when we march against domestic violence. The respect we show for each other is important. I want to underline that I could not be happier with the respect you have shown me as Speaker of this house. It is appreciated.

This is a time to reflect on the events of the year—for me in many senses, because I served with him for his full time in Parliament—and the resignation of the former member for Rockingham after 26 years was, I think, a very momentous occasion. I remember the quite unassuming young man who was elected as the new member for Rockingham. I think he got married maybe the week before and did not yet have any children. I served with him in this house right through to the time he left, many years later. He then had a beautiful wife, three children and an immensely successful career. He led our state as Premier through the most significant event we had faced for more than a century. The pandemic really had the potential to go very, very wrong for us in this state, particularly for some of our Indigenous communities, people who are health compromised and elderly people. Although it was tough on people, to have largely kept COVID out of this state for such an extended time was vastly better than the alternative. That is one of many things that Mark McGowan will be remembered for, and I congratulate him on his exemplary career in this house. I think few political careers will ever match the career of Mark McGowan.

That draws me to another thing I would like to dwell on in these final comments for the year: the fact that we have a majority of women in this house—that we actually have 30 out of 59! That was achieved with the election of Magenta Marshall to replace Mark McGowan. Of course, prior to that, Vince Catania was replaced by Merome Beard as the member for North West Central. That has brought us to this incredible situation. Every day, as I sit in the chair here, I stare at Edith Cowan and reflect on 1921 when she was the only woman in this place. She served only one term. However, at the subsequent election, May Holman was elected and she served for here for many more terms. But for most of that time, she was, again, the only woman in this place. It is one thing to say that women can do things, are permitted to do things or by law are allowed to do things; it is another to lead by example. It is often not until women take up certain roles in certain numbers that a proper example is set. I think that this has been a magnificent outcome and a magnificent example. Prior to Mark McGowan's resignation, we had the reverse. We were 29–30 instead of 30–29, and I often commented that we were half a woman short. Now we are half a woman in surplus, which I think is a momentous outcome. There is no guarantee that women will continue to have a majority in this place, but I think it is a fantastic outcome. As Edith Cowan looks down on us from that photograph up there, I think that she would be absolutely incredulous at this, but I think what she would be even more incredulous about is the women who are serving in senior roles in this chamber and the fact that we have a female Clerk and two female Clerk Assistants. Previously, we had a female Sergeant-at-Arms. I think that would have been beyond the comprehension of just about everyone 100 years ago. It has taken a long time to come this far, but I acknowledge the women in those roles, and I certainly acknowledge the election of the new member for Rockingham.

I want to thank the Premier and the Deputy Premier and congratulate them on their appointments by their parties. I also want to congratulate and thank the member for Moore; his deputy, the member for Roe; and the Leader of the Liberal Party, the member for Vasse. I feel a bit mean leaving two of them out by not mentioning them by name. I also want to particularly thank the Leader of the House. Do you realise that you are the only person who has remained stable in your leadership role?

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** I am a stable man.

**The SPEAKER:** Yes. Although I am saving a little time by not mentioning everyone by name, I think three people here have had a very special celebration this year. I am referring to the member for Cannington, our Clerk Assistant and our Sergeant-at-Arms. Collingwood won the grand final! For Thomas Moorhead, Liz Kerr and Bill Johnston, this is the pinnacle that they will need to celebrate for the next 100 years because Collingwood probably will not get another chance.

I also want to make a special mention of not just Rob Hunter, but also Patricia Traegde. They have been doing an amazing job this year getting the building opposite ready. When you get the opportunity to have a look through there, you will see what a phenomenal facility it will provide to our Parliament. It will mean that some staff here will have suitable office and accommodation space, which they really have not had previously. For our committee staff especially, and for others, this is a really welcome thing. Supervising and preparing this building to be ready to be occupied has certainly been a challenge, so I thank Patricia and Rob especially for that and for all the other work that they do on our behalf.

There are two staff who work more immediately with me. They are Molly Rogers-Thomson, who I would like to thank, and Anna Murphy, who is my attendant. Anna does a sensational job in looking after all our guests to the building. I especially thank those two people. Hopefully, I have not missed anyone.

In closing, I would like to say that you all work very, very hard. You have a difficult job. I know because I have been doing it for a long time. It is the role in here; it is the role in the electorate; it is the role of going to many different

Mr David Templeman; Mr Peter Rundle; Mr Roger Cook; Mr Shane Love; Ms Libby Mettam; Speaker

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communities and organisations. It can be taxing on you, and it can be taxing on your families, so I urge each and every one of you to take some time out to spend some special time with those you hold dearest. I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

[Applause.]

**The SPEAKER:** With that, I put the question.

Question put and passed.

*House adjourned at 4.54 pm*

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