



Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTY-SECOND PARLIAMENT
FIRST SESSION
2025

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday 11 December 2025

Legislative Council

Thursday 11 December 2025

The President (Hon Alanna Clohesy) took the chair at 10:00 am, read prayers and acknowledged country.

ENERGY SUPPLY

Notice of motion

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

- (1) That this house notes the government's failures to deliver a realistic Western Australian energy policy and an adequate and reliable energy supply to the state, including its failure to:
 - (a) deliver the required *Whole of System Plan* on time, secretly delaying it for years;
 - (b) provide electricity to Western Australian businesses in the contestable market at a reasonable price;
 - (c) provide any real additional renewable energy offtake agreements;
 - (d) connect businesses and homes to the integrated power network in a timely manner and at a reasonable price;
 - (e) maintain electricity supply without repeated interruption of service; and
 - (f) provide enough reliable energy into the interconnected system to meet the needs of the Western Australian community.
- (2) That the Legislative Assembly be acquainted accordingly.

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE—ANSWERS

Notice of motion

Hon Neil Thomson gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move:

That this house:

- (a) notes a significant deficiency in the standard of answers provided in 2025 by ministers and parliamentary secretaries when representing ministers from the other place;
- (b) observes that this deficiency has manifested itself in evasive and uninformed responses to questions without notice;
- (c) calls on government representatives to do much better by providing frank, transparent and accountable answers to opposition and crossbench members in 2026;
- (d) foreshadows that if there is no improvement, the Legislative Council will consider holding a special inquiry into their failure to respect the role of Parliament; and
- (e) sends a strong message to ministers and parliamentary secretaries that they will be held to account in 2026 if they do not improve their performance.

EXTENDED SITTING HOURS

Standing orders suspension

On motion without notice by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House)**, resolved with an absolute majority:

That so much of standing orders be suspended so that the Council can continue to sit beyond 5:20 pm on this day's sitting and take members' statements at a time ordered by the house

PUBLIC HEALTH AMENDMENT (BORN EQUAL - CARE AND PROTECTION) BILL 2025

Introduction and first reading

Bill introduced, on motion by **Hon Maryka Groenewald**, and read a first time.

Second reading speech

Hon Maryka Groenewald (10:06 am): I move:

That the bill be now read a second time.

I rise today to introduce the Public Health Amendment (Born Equal - Care and Protection) Bill 2025. It is the first of its kind in Western Australia. This bill means a lot to me and the people who have followed this issue with

heavy hearts for more than a decade. Many in this place from different sides of politics have laid the groundwork for this bill. It seeks to achieve one thing—basic equality. It asks the questions: Do we as a society believe that all human beings possess equal worth? Do all human beings have the same human rights or just some?

I will start by making clear what this legislation will do. First, it will recognise the legal status of any baby born alive as a human person, regardless of the circumstances of their birth. It will give babies who survive termination the basic recognition of human intrinsic value—a value that is intrinsic to us. Second, it will establish that any baby born alive as a result of a failed termination must receive the same level of care as any other baby would if they were in that same position. This bill is not controversial—at least it should not be. A vulnerable life is a vulnerable life. Third—this is critical—it will abolish an ominous clause regarding reporting and investigation. It will require that the death of any baby born alive after a termination must be reported to the coroner and for the coroner to make the call for further investigation. As many members in this chamber are aware, reporting these deaths to the coroner is no longer required in this state, and this bill aims to rectify that wrong.

Let me be clear, because this matters; it would be a far stretch to try to find any justification for opposing the concept of this bill. There are many in this place who spend hours talking about equal rights and protecting the vulnerable and the voiceless, which is a good thing. I simply ask members this: Do they believe that an innocent human being does not deserve medical care simply because of the circumstance of their birth? If babies who survive termination cannot be saved, can we justify not giving them palliative care? If members do not, we need to look at their definition of "equal rights" and "human rights". Members might angrily respond, "This doesn't happen. That is a myth and misinformation." Unfortunately for anyone in this chamber reinforcing that view, we know for a fact that this has happened and continues to happen in WA. Why? It is because the Labor government told us so. In fact, we have known this for over a decade. It was not a Liberal, National or crossbench member who first brought this to light; rather, it was former Labor MLC Hon Ed Dermer who first exposed this issue.

In February 2011, Mr Dermer asked question on notice 3211, forcing the admission that between 1999 and 2010, 14 babies had been born alive after an abortion procedure. He followed this up in May 2011, asking whether any of these children received medical treatment. The answer was a stark no. Hon Nick Goiran followed that up, revealing through further questioning in 2012 and 2015 that that number had in fact risen to 20. Again, we were told that not one baby had received medical intervention. When we talk about this issue, let us remember it was a Labor member who first blew the whistle on this issue and the fact that Western Australian babies were born alive and left to die without clear care protocols.

Sadly, we know this is not a thing of the past. The government's answers to questions on notice to the Minister for Health have confirmed this time and again. That is why this bill is so important. In response to my question on notice 193, I also learned that 39 cases of terminations resulting in a live birth have been reported to the WA Government. That is 39 babies surviving an attempted abortion and receiving no medical care—39 lives, every single one as important as you and me. We saw this horror before in the Northern Territory in the case of baby Jane—a pseudonym—an Aboriginal baby girl born after an abortion attempt. The coroner found that despite showing clear signs of life, she was left in an empty room for 80 minutes until she passed away, receiving no medical care. His finding was damning. She was born in a fully living state and had an independent existence that demanded a duty of care that we failed to provide.

I was sitting in this gallery during the 2023 debate when the bill was scrutinised and debated. I found a lot of things in that debate deeply troubling. I want to particularly thank the Australian Christian Lobby for its work on this. I saw a video published on its social media that uncovered what I and many others knew to be true. In the video, Hon Sue Ellery was responding to questions during Committee of the Whole House on 19 September 2023. In the clip, the minister is being asked about babies who show signs of life following a termination. The minister was asked a question by former Labor member Hon Martin Pritchard about the cause of death of these babies. The minister provides an answer, begins to sit down and, as she does, the microphone picks up on something that an adviser whispered to the minister, seemingly as an addition. The Australian Christian Lobby caught that exchange when turning up the volume. It appears that the adviser whispered that the baby can survive for up to seven hours. Apparently, babies born alive can survive for up to seven hours before passing away. I want members to look at their watches and phones. If a baby survived a termination now, they could be left without care until question time. I do not want to be grim; that is not my intention. I want to impress upon members the reality and seriousness of our inaction on this issue. If a baby passes away, why not entrust the coroner to decide whether to investigate the circumstances of their short life? It is unacceptable that we are allowing this to happen in our state. I am not the only one who thinks so.

During the most recent state election campaign, another candidate picked up on the issue. When asked whether WA's abortion law should be changed, he said that babies born alive after an abortion should not be left to die. It is a simple statement. I cannot imagine anybody taking issue with that. However, WA's former Minister for Health Amber-Jade Sanderson responded by calling the statement complete misinformation and dangerous. She claimed that such cases are exceptionally rare and occur only when parents make the difficult decision to have their unviable baby born alive to say goodbye. We are clearly not referring to that in this instance. It should trouble

every member of this house that the minister was defying the government's own information that she gave to Parliament. I bring members' attention to question on notice 491 asked of the then newly minted Minister for Health Amber-Jade Sanderson on 24 March 2022. I will not read the entire thing, just the relevant parts.

I refer to the cases of babies who show signs of life after an abortion procedure, and I ask:

- (a) what is the total number of these cases between 20 May 1998 and 31 December 2021;

The answer was 31. Granted, I am new to this place, so perhaps members can help me out. Did the question ask how many unviable babies were born naturally or did it specifically ask about babies showing signs of life after an abortion? I want to acknowledge that, of course, in some cases, parents choose to say goodbye when the baby is in a condition incompatible with life. I grieve with them. We know how difficult that is, but we cannot conflate these two issues.

Respectfully, this bill is not addressing the cases of babies who will not survive long after birth and whose parents choose to hold them. Frankly, it is unacceptable to use those tragic situations to detract from the core issue that viable babies survive termination attempts in our state. Again, I point to the Committee of the Whole House on 19 September 2023, when it was pointed out that we know of at least three babies who showed signs of life despite not having a condition incompatible with life. In 2012, there was a trisomy 21 case at 21 weeks and in 2002 a case at 34 weeks. In 2010, there was a case of fetal alcohol syndrome at 27 weeks. These were all examples of babies born alive and left to die. It seems the former Minister for Health, with full knowledge of the information she presented to Parliament, called her own data misinformation. She called factual information presented by a member dangerous misinformation. It is politics at its worst and blatant gaslighting calling someone a spreader of misinformation when citing statistics given by the minister. We know the government is aware of this issue. What did it do when confronted with the knowledge that babies find themselves in these situations without medical intervention? Did it pass legislation to address this issue? It absolutely did. It was not to save babies or at least put some clear protocols in place but to hide the fact that it happens—out of sight, out of mind. The government cannot answer or face questions when it is not keeping records.

As of 2024, if a baby survives an abortion, it is left to die and reporting that death to the coroner for investigation is actually no longer required. When a law simultaneously acknowledges an ethically sensitive issue that affects the most vulnerable and removes the reporting mechanism that adds transparency and eliminates independent review, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that the reform does more harm than good. Let me be clear that this is not about a lack of reporting; it is about a complete vacuum of clarity in our obligations. I reviewed Western Australia's legal and clinical framework. Firstly, there is not an explicit statutory duty of care in these specific circumstances. Secondly, no clinical guidelines deal with these specific scenarios. Thirdly, the government has admitted as such during estimates. The Minister for Health confirmed that there were no specific protocols—clinicians follow general and neonatal guidelines and exercise clinical judgement. We have removed the coroner's oversight and we have no explicit clinical guidelines and, as of 2024, no statutory reporting requirements. We have created a legal and medical black hole whereby these babies and the data simply disappear.

What does this mean for us in this Parliament? Do we just ignore it? Clearly, other jurisdictions do not. In fact, they have responded very differently to these survival cases. In Canada, federal reports have repeatedly documented babies born alive after procedures, prompting calls for clearer reporting and investigation. In the United Kingdom, its Care Quality Commission requires strict documentation and oversight for any of these babies showing signs of life. In the United States, several states have enacted explicit protections and reporting requirements for infants who survive abortions. WA is seemingly the only jurisdiction to respond by removing reporting. This is absolutely a departure from international norms of transparency and accountability.

All I can do is appeal to members' humanity. We in this place have different views on abortions; that is clear. I am not talking about abortion in relation to this bill at all. Once a baby is outside the womb, the issue is no longer about termination; it moves beyond the realm of choice. Once a baby is born alive, the pregnancy is over, and we must step in with compassion. We are now discussing the rights of a living person. The justification for this bill is simple and based on four principles, which I will conclude with. The first is equality before the law. We may not agree when life begins, but surely we should all agree that by the time someone has been born, they are a living human being and, as such, deserve basic protections. The second is equality when it comes to transparency. Western Australia seems to lag behind the rest of the world and has chosen minimal oversight and reporting, including not giving the coroner the power to investigate. The third is equality when it comes to accountability. Without external reporting to the coroner, there is no independent body to review the cause of death. However, when it comes to this state, it is not just that it is not a requirement to report the issue. When section 3B of the Coroners Act was introduced, it stopped this mechanism altogether.

The fourth is being born equal like any other West Aussie; every newborn in the state is entitled to medical care regardless of the circumstances of their birth. Once born, they legally have personhood. If they cannot be saved, they are entitled to palliative care. If their death is unexpected, they are entitled to coronial oversight. Babies surviving terminations should not be treated differently, yet, sadly, they are.

When this bill is debated, President, members will have the opportunity to choose yes or no. Is every human being created with basic human rights—yes or no? Should every baby born alive be entitled to palliative care—yes or no? Should cases of babies born alive after a termination be reported to the coroner, allowing them the power to investigate?

This bill is about recognising that every human being is born with rights and deserves protection. It is about basic humanity and how we treat our most vulnerable. The fact is that WA lacks explicit neonatal obligations for these babies. I simply ask for this to be addressed and rectified. Every human being, regardless of how long they survive, is worthy of our care, and embedding that level of care in our law is the right thing to do.

I commend this bill to the house.

The President: Honourable member, is there a part on your contribution that starts with "pursuant to standing order"?

Hon Maryka Groenewald: There is; thank you, President.

Pursuant to standing order 126, I advise that the bill is not a uniform legislation bill, as it does not ratify or give effect to any bilateral or multilateral intergovernmental agreements to which the government is a party; nor does it, by any reason of a subject matter, introduce a uniform scheme or uniform law throughout the Commonwealth.

I table the explanatory memorandum.

(See paper [907](#).)

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

GENDER DYSPHORIA—PUBERTY BLOCKERS

Motion

Hon Maryka Groenewald (10:23 am) without notice: I move:

That this house:

- (1) notes that systematic evidence reviews undertaken in the United Kingdom, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and New Zealand have found *low-certainty evidence* for the benefits of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones in children, and ongoing uncertainty regarding their long-term safety;
- (2) acknowledges that these jurisdictions have subsequently restricted or discontinued the routine use of these interventions, and now place primary emphasis on psychological assessment, family-based support, and addressing underlying mental health needs;
- (3) recognises that the Albanese Labor government has commissioned a federal review of the national clinical guidelines for the treatment of minors with gender dysphoria; and
- (4) calls on the state government to:
 - (a) review Western Australia's clinical protocols in light of the emerging international evidence and the ongoing federal review;
 - (b) suspend new prescriptions of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for children until updated evidence-based guidelines are established; and
 - (c) ensure that the primary clinical approach to childhood gender dysphoria is a watchful-waiting model, supported by comprehensive psychological care and early family involvement.

Obviously, this motion is no surprise, and it follows on from some important discussions we have been having throughout the year about the need to raise awareness and bring transparency and evidence to caring for children and young people. I want to start by acknowledging what I understand to be true, and that is that young people experiencing gender dysphoria are experiencing real distress and they deserve evidence-based care. I have never said anything otherwise. I say this because I know it generates strong feelings and I want to be clear about where I stand. I reject statements made in this house that I somehow want to politicise the issue, and I hope this comes through in my motion today.

This motion asks for review and consideration. What is the evidence base for the clinical approaches we are using to treat young people with gender dysphoria in Western Australia? Young people absolutely deserve support and access to mental health services, psychosocial support and clinical involvement. The question we are considering is not whether we should support these young people. Of course, that goes without saying. The question is what the evidence says that support should look like. We know that global medical consensus on this issue has been shattered recently. For years, we were told that the affirmation model, giving puberty blockers and hormones to

distressed children at any cost, was the gold standard. For years, medical services assured families that these medications were a safe, fully reversible way to pause puberty and that gender-affirming drugs were life-saving health care. But over the past 18 months, that standard is starting to collapse under the weight of evidence. The countries that pioneered these treatments—the socially progressive democracies of Northern Europe—have looked at the data and pulled the emergency brake. In fact, I recently met Dr Rita, who was the architect of the model they use in Finland. The research and the longitudinal stories coming through now have really had an impact on me, and I am blown away by the fact we are still sticking our heads in the sand here in Western Australia.

Let us start with the landmark Cass review. The review, led by Dr Hilary Cass, is the most comprehensive independent review of gender identity services ever conducted. It is also backed by professionals globally who refer to it as the most comprehensive assessment of paediatric gender medicine to date. President, I seek leave to table the Cass review commissioned by the United Kingdom government.

Leave denied.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: Thank you, President. I seek leave to table the United States Department of Health and Human Services report on paediatric gender medicine.

Leave denied.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: Thank you, President. I seek leave to publish an open letter to Australian health bodies regarding gender-affirming care put together by the Australian Doctors Federation.

Leave denied.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: That is okay; they can look it up.

Dr Cass and her team spent four years examining the evidence. They commissioned systematic reviews from the University of York and, ultimately, her team found the evidence for the use of puberty blockers and hormones was remarkably weak. We were told for years that puberty blockers were a pause button, a harmless way for children to buy time to think and, if the child decided he or she was not transgender, they could discontinue the treatment and carry on with puberty as normal. Now, the Cass review has actually debunked that myth. It found that these drugs do not, in fact, buy time and lock children into a medical pathway. The data showed that 98% of children who started on puberty blockers proceeded to cross-sex hormones. They are not a pause button; they are the first step on a pathway to lifelong medicalisation.

But the concerns go far beyond that pathway; they go to the physical safety of the drugs themselves—something I have raised in this place on multiple occasions. The Cass review found that puberty blockers compromise bone density. Adolescence is the critical window in which people build bone mass. If puberty is blocked, that process is blocked. We are now seeing young people with the bone density of senior citizens, putting them at risk of osteoporosis and fractures for the rest of their lives.

Dr Cass also raised serious concerns about fertility. We are initiating treatments on children that may leave them permanently sterile before they are old enough to even comprehend what it means to be a parent. Unfortunately, the concerns go beyond the healthy development of sexual function. There are red flags for brain development too. We know that the adolescent brain undergoes massive restructuring during puberty. We simply do not know what the long-term cognitive effects are of chemically blocking the hormones that drive that crucial development.

The report concluded that we are operating in an evidence-free zone. As a result of this review, the National Health Service has stopped routine prescriptions of puberty blockers for children. The Conservative government actually initiated the ban, but it is the left-wing Labour government that has continued on with the ban. It is not just the United Kingdom; the Scandinavian countries, the very birthplace of progressive social policy, have moved first on this critical issue. Sweden conducted a systematic review in 2022. Its National Board of Health and Welfare concluded that the risks of puberty blockers and gender-affirming treatment are likely to outweigh the expected benefits. It has restricted those treatments to exceptional cases within a very clear research setting. Finland reached the very same conclusion. The Council for Choices in Health Care review found that the evidence was very weak and that medical transitioning should not be the first line of treatment. Finland has shifted its entire model of care away from drugs towards psychosocial support. Perhaps the most dramatic reversal has occurred in Denmark, which established a centralised gender clinic in 2016, modelled on the affirmation approach—the very same one that we have here. In 2018, that clinic was medically transitioning about 65% of children who were referred to it. As it watched the patient cohorts change—more teenage girls, more complex mental health issues and no clear reason for the dysphoria—it became incredibly alarmed. It decided to review its practice, and, by 2022, the number of referred children receiving those prescriptions fell from 65% to just 6%. Think about that shift from two-thirds of children being medicated to one in 20. That is what happens when following the science and the evidence instead of the ideology. That is happening not just on the other side of the world. New Zealand has just initiated a ban on puberty blockers that will kick in later this year and Queensland, right here in Australia, has announced a pause on new intakes for puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones.

The world is taking note, the evidence is piling up and the so-called medical consensus in favour of the affirmation model at all costs is starting to crumble, yet in this state the government treats the prescription of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for children as settled medical consensus. Furthermore, those of us who are sounding the alarm over these treatments are being treated as if we are engaging in some kind of combative politics. In fact, we are merely reflecting the policy of an increasing number of developed nations and research. Even the federal Labor government has ordered a review of Australia's approach to treating young people. Even it has seen the evidence that this state seems to ignore and, as a result, is ordering a review.

I know that some in this place, particularly those with a medical background, might argue that this house has no business interfering in clinical approaches, say that it should be left to the doctors and may even claim that some of these reviews are problematic, but history provides a chilling answer against that blind defence. The morning sickness drug prescribed to women in the 1960s and 70s, thalidomide, was widely promoted as safe but caused catastrophic birth defects in more than 10,000 babies worldwide, including in Australia, by the way. That was trusted as a mainstream product and trusted among the medical fraternity for decades. Even after thalidomide was removed from the shelves, another product took its place, and even it was removed eventually because there were widespread concerns that its continuing use would open the door to litigation. We know that there are harmful medications. The medical fraternity should not always be supported at all costs. Every one of those was defended by experts right up until the evidence finally caught up with them.

When that consensus harms vulnerable people, whether it is women or now children, Parliament does not just have a right to intervene and investigate; it has a duty. It is not just us raising the alarm. The medical profession itself is waking up to this scandal. The Australian Doctors Federation, representing clinicians from across the country, has released a public statement calling for an end to the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgery for children under the age of 18 years. It has endorsed the Cass review, highlighting the unacceptable risk of harm.

Given the potential risks of these treatments, what is the alternative? It is called watchful waiting, and the evidence for it now is overwhelming. Critics will say that without drugs, these children are doomed, but the research and stories tell a completely different story. Multiple long-term studies spanning decades have followed children with gender dysphoria who did not receive medical intervention. These studies from researchers like Dr Kenneth Zucker and the Dutch pioneers themselves consistently found the same thing. When supported with watchful waiting, allowing puberty to take its natural course, while providing psychosocial support, between 61% and 98% of the children naturally grew out of that dysphoria by adulthood. The watchful waiting model works. It protects the children's future, their fertility and bone health and allows the vast majority to work through their distress with sufficient support. That is why this motion calls for this approach to be adopted as the standard approach for young people. It is a responsible approach with a well-documented track record of success.

While the world moves to this evidence-based model, what is WA doing? In this state, it seems that we are still keeping the blindfolds on. For months I fought to get the release of the gender-care model. When it was finally released, it confirmed the concerns, not mine but of medical practitioners who have been involved in this issue for many, many years. Many red flags were raised. It comprises 13 pages to guide complex medical treatment for children and has only eight references, three of which are from advocacy groups. It explicitly refuses to provide intensive psychotherapy or any formal assessments for autism or ADHD. In fact, it actively endorses the affirmation model, meaning that a minor's identity is immediately accepted and the only question becomes how to approach it. Medical standards for diagnoses and treatments are entirely lagging behind those in the rest of the world. I would love to know how often the WA models of care standards have been amended since these findings and recommendations were put in place.

That brings us to the fundamental issue of consent. The child and youth model of care fails to adequately and independently assess a child's capacity to consent to these life-altering interventions, running afoul of the Cass review's core recommendations. In what other area of medicine would we offer such invasive treatments without first validating that the condition is persistent and not the result of other underlying causes? The architects of this model talk about informed consent, but they ignore the duty of care that adults and medical professionals owe to a child. It is unprecedented in modern medicine for doctors to prescribe such powerful and irreversible drugs to children not only with the evidence in question, but also a complete absence of longitudinal studies to see whether they work, yet my good friend Hon Pierre Yang claimed that these guidelines were grounded in clinical excellence. That could not be further from the truth. Our children deserve better treatment and treatment based on the highest clinical guidelines and excellence, which is why I have brought forward this motion. Reviewing WA's outdated standards of care and pausing new prescriptions is the bare minimum we can do, given what we already know.

That brings me to the other side of this debate—those who might claim that we are attempting to deny care. That is false. Stopping harmful experimental medical treatment is not denying care. I am simply asking for better care. We are asking for holistic psychosocial support and assessment, which is something that many of these children need and that many of the de-transitioners have told me they need. We want to treat the whole child and their experiences and address any comorbidities. We do not want to just chemically alter their bodies. The young people

and parents navigating this journey deserve compassionate evidence-based care from professionals that is bound by care, not ideology.

The case before us is clear. We have the Cass review, which is the most comprehensive independent analysis ever conducted into this, and Sweden, Finland, Denmark and New Zealand—all democracies—are pulling back from this approach and shifting to watchful waiting. We have research that shows that 61% to 98% of children with dysphoria naturally resolve this distress without the need for excessive medical intervention, and we have Western Australia, the richest state in the country, operating on a 13-page document with eight references from three advocacy groups while explicitly refusing to provide psychosocial support or any intensive therapy. Explicitly endorsing this affirmation model at all costs is highly unusual in diagnostic medicine. This is not a close call. The evidence is overwhelming. The direction of the world is unmistakable and the responsibility now rests on us. Even the federal Labor government has ordered a review of this very issue. If it can see the evidence, why can the Cook Labor government not see it? Members, we must demand that our state's children receive proper care. There can be no higher priority than looking at what other jurisdictions are raising red flags about. That is why this motion demands that we align ourselves with best practice.

As I conclude, all I am asking and all this motion is asking is for us to review Western Australia's clinical protocols in light of the evidence, suspend the prescription of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones for children and ensure that the primary approach to childhood gender dysphoria is a watchful-waiting model supported by comprehensive psychological care. In fact, these demands, these calls for action, are the opposite of radical. I am calling for us to take note of the standards of the British NHS, Sweden's health authority, Finland's health authority, New Zealand's health ministry and, increasingly, international medical consensus. The world is waking up to the reality of the situation. The question is: Will Western Australia act decisively in the face of this mounting evidence? Thank you, President.

Point of order

Hon Nick Goiran: I have two points of order. I will deal with the first one. Standing order 59(1) obliges the member to identify any document quoted during the course of the debate. I tried to follow the debate quite closely; there was a lot of information being provided. I ask that the member identify each and every document that was quoted during that debate.

The President: The honourable member is quite correct regarding the requirements of standing order 59(1). I was under the impression, through the member's contribution on her second reading speech, that she had clearly identified the documents as she spoke to each one of them. However, for the sake of clarity and, I assume, reference to the general public, I will ask the honourable member to again identify the three documents that were mentioned in her second reading speech.

Just one moment while I check something. Sorry, member; I was confusing your bill with your motion, so I do not have some written reference to refer to. Just for the sake of clarity, I ask that you name those three documents, please.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: Thank you, President, and I thank Hon Nick Goiran for that. The first document is *The Cass Review: Independent review of gender identity services for children and young people*. The final report was released in April 2024. The second one is called *Treatment for Paediatric Gender Dysphoria: Review of Evidence and Best Practices*, put together by the Department of Health and Human Services. The date for that one is 19 November 2025. The third reference is an open letter to Australian health bodies regarding gender-affirming care and interventions. That is a freely accessible open letter that can be obtained through the Australian Doctors Federation.

The President: Order, member. I was just asking for the names of the documents, thank you.

Your second point of order, Leader of the Opposition?

Hon Nick Goiran: I wish to exercise my rights under standing order 59(2) and ask that those documents be tabled.

The President: Hon Maryka Groenewald, I just want to check that the documents that the member seeks tabled are not confidential documents.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: They are not confidential.

The President: Okay. I am relying on your information on that. The member has requested that the documents be tabled. Under standing order 59(2), those documents are tabled.

(See paper [908](#).)

(See paper [909](#).)

(See paper [910](#).)

Proceeding resumed

Hon Pierre Yang (Parliamentary Secretary) (10:44 am): Thank you, President, for the opportunity to make a contribution and provide a government response to this motion. From the outset, I wish to indicate that the government is not supporting this motion.

The Child and Adolescent Health Service aims to improve the quality of life of young people who identify as transgender or gender diverse and their families. The honourable member used words such as "scandal" in her contribution to describe this matter in terms of gender-reaffirming treatment. I think it is important that we all pause and reflect on the language we use, because language matters. It has a real impact. It is important that while we are debating a very important matter—I understand this is a very important matter to many members—we reflect on the kind of language we use. I want to say to these young people and their families that I am sorry that this house is putting you through this once again. On this side of the house, we appreciate what you are going through. We value you and we stand with you.

The Gender Diversity Service was first conceptualised under the Barnett Liberal government in 2015, as I stated a few weeks ago during debate on the honourable member's motion on notice. That was when the Mental Health Commission provided funds to CAHS, the Child and Adolescent Health Service, to initiate such a service, and we thank it for its foresight and for putting health care before ideology. This move was in recognition of the gap in services available to young people at the time who were experiencing problems relating to gender identity. Fast forward a decade and the Child and Adolescent Health Service Gender Diversity Service is the only public provider of gender-reaffirming medical treatment for young people under the age of 18 in WA experiencing significant gender identity concerns, including gender dysphoria. It is an accurate reflection that the GDS is a patient and family-centred specialist outpatient service that is delivered by an experienced multidisciplinary team, as I stated a few weeks ago, that considers holistic health care and the development of young people.

The government and all members of this place have a duty of care to these young people and their families. We need to safeguard the very real risk of a negative impact that public discourse often has on this cohort and to protect their wellbeing. Some of these young people are already facing significant societal challenges when accepting and promoting their true self and identity. Negative public discourse can have a real impact and pose an unsafe risk to these young people and put unnecessary pressure on their families. I ask members to be mindful when we debate this matter today and think about the kind of pressure and stress the language employed will have on these people.

The families actively involved in GDS have expressed their serious concerns about the impact of any abrupt changes to the delivery of care on their children's mental health and wellbeing. To be clear, all young people who wish to pursue gender-reaffirming medical care undergo a comprehensive mental health assessment and multidisciplinary team assessment. The care pathway is comprehensive and thorough and requires written informed consent from the young person themselves and both parents or legal guardians. The process to meet all the required steps of the full assessment could take up to five to six months from referral to consent to treatment.

The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service: Gender Diversity Service Model of Care was tabled in this place a few weeks ago and details these steps. It was developed and informed by a broad range of both national and international expertise and literature, as well as Australian health policies. I want to reiterate that the model of care is evidence based. That is not questionable or debatable—it is evidence based. Some of the literature used to inform the development of the model of care includes the *Better Choices. Better Lives. Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015–2025*; the *Western Australian Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex; Health Strategy 2019–2024*; the World Professional Association for Transgender Health's *Standards of Care for the Health of Transsexual, Transgender, and Gender-Nonconforming People*, version 7; the *Endocrine Treatment of Gender-Dysphoric/Gender-Incongruent Persons: An Endocrine Society Clinical Practice Guideline* from 2017; and the *Australian standards of care and treatment guidelines for transgender and gender diverse children and adolescents* from 2018.

As the member's motion alludes to, the Australian Government has commissioned the National Health and Medical Research Council to develop national clinical practice guidelines for the care of trans and gender diverse people under the age of 18 years. It expects that the new guidelines will take three years to develop, with interim advice regarding the use of puberty suppression expected around the middle of 2026. As appropriate, Child and Adolescent Health Service clinicians will review and consider the advice when it becomes available.

The dedicated clinicians at the GDS used evidence-based care to get the best outcomes for these young people and their families. They documented long-term clinical outcomes. The University of Western Australia and the Keys Research Internship have established an ongoing study for periodic follow-up of gender diverse young people. CAHS also undertakes comprehensive monitoring and evaluation of the patient care experience, which includes survey tools, wait-time monitoring and clinical questionnaires. All young people and families accessing GDS are informed and invited to participate.

The honourable member also in her contribution made mention of the international research *The Cass Review: Independent review of gender identity services for children and young people*, known as the Cass review. It makes

a number of recommendations, many of which are not aligned with, or applicable to, the Australian or Western Australian context. The Cass review has been widely criticised for significant shortcomings on the methodology on which its recommendations rely, including a selective interpretation of evidence, failure to evaluate the harms of withholding care and imposing an unusually high threshold of evidence that is not required in other areas of medicine. Despite recognising that incidents of regret and detransition are rare, the Cass review prioritised speculating about harms and it established barriers that would effectively deny access to established treatments. The Cass review also described social transition as an active intervention that was a cause of concern for many people, despite acknowledging the long-term and cross-sectional evidence of good mental health outcomes in children and adolescents supported to socially affirm their gender. Although some recommendations in the review are more aligned with best practice, including comprehensive multidisciplinary assessment and attention to coexisting conditions, it remains the case that gender-affirming care is best practice, as is set out in national and international guidelines.

We heard the honourable member outline words in her second reading speech of the Australian Christians Party's view earlier this morning, and I quote these following words:

... yes or no. Is every human being born with basic human rights—yes or no? Should every baby born alive be entitled to ...

Health care—

This bill is about recognising that every human being is born with rights and deserves protection. It is about basic humanity and how we treat our most vulnerable.

Acting President, I ask all members to reflect on these words said by the honourable member earlier this morning and reflect the true nature of the tapestry of this motion before us. What is the true intention of this motion before us? If you support human rights, you have to support it all the way. It cannot be selective. If you are being selective, you are not true to your words.

The state government is choosing to support vulnerable young people in the community with gender diversity concerns and their families. The government is choosing to listen to the highly skilled clinical workforce who are telling us it is essential that we continue with the current evidence-based model to protect the health outcomes of these young people. On this side of the house, we do not play politics with this very important and sensitive issue. We support vulnerable children and their families in our community to access the care they need when they need it.

Hon Michelle Hofmann (10:57 am): Before I begin my substantive remarks in support of this motion, I will just address a few points raised by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Health, who has apologised for the fact that we are having this debate. If we are really serious about trying to always do what is in the best interests of our kids, if we really care about kids, yes, it is absolutely critical that we speak with compassion on these issues, but we need to speak about them. When there are differences of opinion and differences of view as to what is in the best interests of children, particularly looking beyond just this moment and looking at it holistically and in the long term, we need to be open to having debate and discussion about this. It is critical that we raise, debate and speak about some of the concerns in this space in order to do what is in the best interests of children. The wellbeing of children extends beyond what we say and what we speak to them about, but public discourse is also essential when there are disputes in medical practice. The reality is, always has been and always will be that medicine evolves. No evidence is ever above review. Science is always evolving, undertaking more research and finding outcomes, which sometimes confirm our current beliefs and sometimes flip them upside down. Therefore, we should always be open to having proper debate and a proper review of research, and if we refuse to even consider alternative views, we do a great disservice to our children and future generations. This is a relatively new area of medicine, particularly in Western Australia, but other jurisdictions have been dealing with it for longer and they have some evidence that we should be considering when we talk about public policy that is in the best interests of our children.

I rise to support the motion before the house, and I come to this with a very pro-child lens. I am speaking up about this in the best interests of kids. That is what is motivating me to contribute to debate today. I will start with an outline of the policy in this space that the Liberal Party took to the last state election. We supported a balanced approach in this area, and that means supporting the health and wellbeing of transgender and gender dysphoric individuals, while ensuring that interventions are based on safe medical practices in both the short and long term. Although the long-term impact of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormone therapy in children is still largely unknown, there is increasing evidence of potential permanent side effects. These can include infertility, obesity, heart and liver disease, blood clots, changes in cognition, reduced bone density and sexual dysfunction. The position that we took to the last state election was that we would ban the use of puberty blockers, cross-sex hormone treatments and surgical intervention for children under the age of 16 years for the purpose of gender transition until a comprehensive review of these treatments and their suitability is undertaken. I raise that because it is really important that we take a balanced approach in this debate and in this area of medicine.

Around the world, there have been a lot of changes in this space. Other jurisdictions have undertaken large amounts of research, and not just the UK with the Cass review. Sweden decided in February 2022 to halt hormone therapy for minors, except in very rare cases, Norway has limited the use of hormonal interventions in favour of psychosocial support and other jurisdictions like New Zealand have also put in place measures in this space. Just last month in the US, a comprehensive review of the scientific literature regarding the provision of gender-transition procedures was released by the US Department of Health and Human Services. This review focused on findings that there is very low quality evidence underpinning treatment approaches. It has extensive descriptions of potential or plausible harms associated with certain treatment options—that is, hormonal interventions and surgeries. Some of the concerns raised in that review are the unknown or potentially harmful effects of suppressing normally timed puberty on adolescent physical and mental health. Particular areas of concern include bone mineralisation, brain development, sexual maturation, fertility and psychosocial development. Some of the risks associated with hormonal interventions can lead to infertility and impaired sexual function, and surgical risks are also present, with complications in some cases. In addition, it has been highlighted in this review and others that permanent sterility is not something that a child can truly understand at a young age, and this is an issue that needs to be factored into the discussions we are having about treatments that have permanent, lifelong impacts on our children.

The Swedish review that has been spoken about and was published in 2023 but brought about changes in 2022 raised some real issues about this area of medicine, and particularly concluded that different treatments in children with gender dysphoria should be considered experimental treatment rather than standard procedure. The issue is that there are substantial limitations on gender dysphoria research and a few longitudinal studies are hampered by small numbers and high attrition rates. This is something that has been highlighted in the Cass review, and I will mention a few of the comments made by Dr Hilary Cass. This highlights the need to continue to discuss and explore the developments in this space. One of her concerns and disappointments is the lack of evidence on the long-term impact of taking hormones from an early age. Her message is:

... research has let us all down, most importantly you.

Here she is talking to the children who are in these situations. She also focuses quite strongly on the issues with the evidence that we have. She says in this particular space:

This is an area of remarkably weak evidence, and yet results of studies are exaggerated or misrepresented by people on all sides of the debate to support their viewpoint. The reality is that we have no good evidence on the long-term outcomes of interventions to manage gender-related distress.

It is of concern that we are allowing children to go through significant treatments with no good evidence about the long-term harm that it may cause. That should be of concern to all of us today.

As a result of the Cass review, the UK stopped the sale and supply of puberty blockers via private prescriptions for the treatment of gender incongruence and/or gender dysphoria for under 18s, taking the approach that children should be given the time to properly work through their experiences and really be supported to make sure that they understand the long-term potential impacts of treatment options. The attempts by many to stop discussion in this space and say that there is only one viewpoint and only one right way is quite a disturbing trend in our society. Dr Hilary Cass says:

There are few other areas of healthcare where professionals are so afraid to openly discuss their views, where people are vilified on social media, and where name-calling echoes the worst bullying behaviour. This must stop.

We have seen this particularly in Queensland in the situation faced by Dr Jillian Spencer, a paediatric psychiatrist who lost her position after raising concerns about gender interventions for minors and has been pilloried and punished in this space. Medical practitioners should be able to raise concerns when they are worried about what is in the best interests of our children. Our children are precious.

Hon Maryka Groenewald (11:07 am) in reply: I appreciate that this is probably not the first or last time that we will speak about this issue. I find it encouraging that, despite Hon Pierre Yang not addressing what I asked, he said that the federal review will form the basis of perhaps looking at gender guidelines and best practice and how it operates, so I will keep my eye on that as well.

As Hon Michelle Hofmann pointed out, this is not settled; this is not black and white. We need to be mindful and open in having these discussions to ensure that it is best practice in clinical care. I would like to reiterate that and thank both members for their contributions.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

LIQUOR CONTROL AMENDMENT BILL 2025*Committee of the whole*

Resumed from 18 September. The Deputy Chair of Committees (Hon Andrew O'Donnell) in the chair; Hon Stephen Dawson in charge of the bill on behalf of Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment).

Clause 1: Short title

Progress was reported after the clause had been partly considered.

Hon Julie Freeman: It has been quite a big recess between when we started clause 1 debate and now. I will attempt to pick up from where we left off. My first question to the minister is this: How has the government determined that the sunset clause should be removed rather than extended for the banned drinkers register and that it should become permanent?

Hon Stephen Dawson: I am told that we did some consultation and 80% of people who were consulted were in favour of extending the banned drinkers register.

Hon Julie Freeman: I am thinking about the equipment that businesses that are required to implement the banned drinkers register will have to use. I wonder whether the minister can explain what kind of equipment and technology is required by those businesses.

Hon Stephen Dawson: They are not required to purchase it; it is provided by the government. An iPad is provided. They are required to scan the driver's licence and type in the details just to check whether the person is on the banned drinkers register .

Hon Julie Freeman: My follow-on questions are: If the government provides the equipment, is there any cost to the business to install or use the equipment? Who is paying for all this infrastructure?

Hon Stephen Dawson: No, there is not.

Hon Julie Freeman: Is any of the data collected by Scantech used to inform agencies about the frequency of banned drinkers attempting to purchase alcohol in the banned drinkers area?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Data is collected by the department, but it is not used for that purpose, so it is a yes and no answer.

Hon Julie Freeman: Is the data not used in any way to detect any patterns of behaviour that could inform the chamber of the efficacy of the banned drinkers register?

Hon Stephen Dawson: They can see the raw numbers, but individuals' details are not tracked, so they cannot see the details. They can see the collection group together, but not an individual's details, so they cannot track the number of times an individual has been refused.

Hon Julie Freeman: Forgive me; I am trying to get my head around the point of the technology. If people are coming in, the business is scanning their ID, and the technology is determining whether they are on the banned drinkers register—all they are coming out with is a yes or no. We are just collecting that there were 20 yeses and two noes today, but there is no further depth to that data collection and no use of that data to detect patterns across a banned drinkers area.

Hon Stephen Dawson: They can detect how many have been refused, but the point of the banned drinkers register is that individuals who are on the register are not served. Once the scanning takes place, the proprietor, the licensee or, indeed, the staff member who is serving the person at the register simply can see whether, yes, they are banned and they should not serve them or, no, they are not banned and they can serve them as they would normally.

Hon Julie Freeman: If the data being collected at the point of sale is not being used in any way to determine the efficacy of the banned drinkers register, is there any other data about the demographics of the individuals who are on the banned drinkers register, and is that being used and analysed, perhaps to give us some understanding of basics such as gender and age? This could help members understand who is being targeted by this valuable tool.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I think we heard different things in the member's question. Would she mind asking that question one more time for me, please?

Hon Julie Freeman: I suppose what I am trying to get to the bottom of is this. We are not using the information gathered by the retailer at the point of sale, which is just getting either a yes or a no. We clearly have a list of individuals who are on the banned drinkers register. For the banned drinkers register more generally, I am curious about whether we are collecting any other demographic information about those individuals, even if it is as basic as gender and age, so we understand which members of the community are being targeted by this valuable tool.

Hon Stephen Dawson: We do have gender and age, but we do not have race. That is just for the member's information.

The Deputy Chair (Hon Andrew O'Donnell): I just take the option here to note the supplementary notice paper 29, issue 1.

Hon Neil Thomson: We have had a change of minister. Maybe I missed some preamble at the beginning. Hon Matthew Swinbourn was the person I was speaking to.

Hon Stephen Dawson: He is away on urgent parliamentary business this morning but will be joining us imminently. It is my pleasure to answer questions in the meantime.

Hon Neil Thomson: Thank you, minister. I know that we work so well together! I must say, by way of reflection, that we were last on this in September, and I have attempted to note and go through what I had asked because I did not want to duplicate it. It is some time ago and it is very hard to recall.

Hon Stephen Dawson: You get a gold star!

Hon Neil Thomson: A gold star! Excellent.

I want to reflect a bit, because we talked about consultation and the unions and Aboriginal groups involved. We discussed a range of issues on 17 and 18 September. I want to focus on the sunset clause. Effectively, the banned drinkers register trial will end and it will become permanent. Normally when these things come to an end, there is the opportunity for parliamentary oversight of the effectiveness of the scheme and a report is made to Parliament. That is the normal procedure and why we include sunset clauses for these things. I must say for the record that I am a little disappointed that we have got to this point and we have really seen only the summaries of the reports that were carried out by consultants. I am not sure why those reports were not provided. Why have the full reports on the effectiveness of the banned drinkers register not been submitted to this Parliament?

Hon Stephen Dawson: The executive summary of the Deloitte evaluation report, which provides a clear overview of the evaluation's key findings, has been released on the department's website. The report contains commercial-in-confidence information and operationally sensitive material related to complex community safety and wellbeing issues that require careful consideration. It is not our intention to release the report at this time.

Hon Neil Thomson: That is a plausible response, but it is disappointing. We know that in some ways, the banned drinkers register operates quite differently from, say, the Northern Territory's banned drinkers register. Some improvements have occurred in recent times. There seems to be more people on the banned drinkers register. I cannot recall whether the question has been asked—it could have been asked while I was away on urgent parliamentary business—as to how many members of the community are currently on the banned drinkers register.

Hon Stephen Dawson: While my advisers find that information for me, I think it will be helpful to add some extra information to the member's earlier question. The department engaged the University of Western Australia to conduct independent evaluations of the initial trial of the voluntary BDR. The reports on these evaluations are available on the department's website. The first is the May 2022 *Banned Drinker Register: Interim summary report: Pilbara*. The second is the February 2023 *Banned Drinker Register: Interim report—Kimberley*. Hopefully that might be helpful for the member.

As of 5 December 2025, there were 1,074 people on the banned drinkers register.

Hon Neil Thomson: I thank the minister. For the purpose of *Hansard*, can the minister explain whether the banned drinkers register provided a net benefit for both the health and social wellbeing of the community?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Yes, there is a clear correlation. Presentations to hospital and crime numbers have been reduced; there is a direct correlation between those and the banned drinkers register.

Hon Neil Thomson: I assume that the recommendations made in those reports have played a part in the design. Are there any changes in the extended banned drinkers register? Have changes been made to the banned drinkers register in the Pilbara and Kimberley as a result of the recommendations in the Deloitte report?

Hon Stephen Dawson: To be clear, no recommendations in the Deloitte report require legislative change. However, at the moment, we are consulting on tranche 2 liquor reforms. A number of the considerations or issues on which we are consulting resulted from feedback received in the Deloitte report.

Hon Neil Thomson: I assume that I have a copy of the same report that is on the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety's website from February 2023 titled *Banned Drinker Register: Interim report—Kimberley*.

Hon Stephen Dawson: No. The member has the report that I referred to earlier—the evaluation by the University of Western Australia. I have referred to the Deloitte report. It is still under consideration, but the executive summary was released.

Hon Neil Thomson: There are a few reports. I want to look at the rationale for using targeted rather than whole-of-society policies, which is in the report I mentioned earlier, not the Deloitte report. The February 2023 report on

the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety's website, *Banned Drinker Register: Interim report — Kimberley*, contains some interesting comments:

The first class are moderate drinkers, whose consumption imposes no negative externality cost on society. The second class are heavy and or binge drinkers whose consumption does impose an externality cost on society, referred to here as 'problem' consumers.

There is a different impact of policies such as the BDR and TAMS versus generic policies such as taxes.

The key paragraph states:

In contrast, targeted policies such as TAMS and the BDR—

TAMS refers to the total alcohol management system—it is the identification of people from their driver's licence because, for those who are not aware, people have to show their driver's licence—and it is connected to the banned drinkers register, because that is the process for identifying whether a person is a banned drinker. It continues:

by contrast have no impact on moderate consumers. Further, these policies aim to shift the demand curve for problem consumers so they can generate the same level of net society gain from reduced consumption without imposing a loss on moderate consumers

That is a very good summary of what the policy aim should be. The legislation has been amended to extend trading times for people in Margaret River, Busselton and other areas south of Perth during Christmas, Easter and so forth. However, we have not seen a targeted policy for those people referred to as problem consumers. The essence of the banned drinkers register is to target problem consumers to achieve the benefits that were mentioned earlier—a reduction of presentations to hospital and the ability to follow up with people who have a problem with alcohol—not first-class moderate drinkers whose consumption imposes no negative externality cost on our society, as per that report.

I turn to the situation for people in my part of the world in the north of our state. Carnarvon probably has the most onerous restrictions on alcohol in our state and, to this day, I do not know why Carnarvon has been picked on more than, say, a place like Broome. More onerous restrictions are in place in Fitzroy Crossing and Halls Creek, but in terms of major regional centres, Carnarvon has the most onerous restrictions.

The policy's aim is basically to shift the demand curve for problem consumers so that they can generate the same level of net society gain from reduced consumption without imposing a loss on moderate consumers. That is from the report I mentioned earlier. I think it would have been much better to come into this place with a more detailed plan and more data on the effectiveness of the banned drinkers register so that we could look at the volumetric restrictions, which are not referred to in the bill but which are related. Takeaway alcohol restrictions stop people from purchasing alcohol of any kind from an alcohol takeaway establishment on a Sunday and Monday in Carnarvon. They restrict the first-class moderate drinkers, we could say, from purchasing alcohol throughout the week when they would be limited to purchasing two bottles of wine in some towns and the cheapest bottle they could purchase is \$15, so they could not purchase packaged liquor or anything other than two bottles of wine and/or one bottle of spirits. That is a lot of alcohol, but the point is that it creates some frustration for people who do not necessarily have a problem with alcohol in any overt way and it creates an issue for our towns and the way they are treated by the community. For example, there have been complaints by a lot of retailers in Carnarvon—I think this is legitimate—whereby shoppers such as grey nomads will drive straight through the town and move on to Exmouth where they can load up their car with alcohol. They can back it up and throw in as much as they want in Exmouth, but in Carnarvon if they are there on a Sunday or Monday, they cannot buy anything other than possibly two bottles of wine for \$15 each on a Tuesday through to a Saturday. A lot of people have put up with that. As someone who lives in the regions, I know that people live with it because we know that it is doing some good. However, it also has a long-term impact. We would like to see the policy goal, as outlined in this report, achieved through the banned drinkers register, which we are expanding. If we improved the banned drinkers register and it had greater scope—I will go into that in further detail later—we might be able to ease up on some of the volumetric restrictions on takeaway alcohol and some of the affordability issues for alcohol. People might not accept that. They might ask why people should buy affordable alcohol. It is because it is simply unfair. People living in Perth can buy two litres of wine out of a box for \$15 but for a retiree living in Carnarvon, the cheapest 700-millilitre bottle they can get costs \$15. That might be a first-world problem, but it is an issue for a lot of old people in those communities living on a pension. They feel aggrieved because they believe that they are paying the price for the misbehaviour of a small minority in our community—or not misbehaviour; they have compassion and understand that those people need to be helped and should not have access to alcohol.

I promise the minister that I will not go into long 10-minute speeches on these things, but I thought this was an opportunity at clause 1 to say that, because it is an issue that has not been properly addressed today. This bill does not address it. It is unfair, or there is a perception of unfairness. People in the South West in Margaret River will be able to purchase alcohol on public holidays. A lot of the establishments there will be pumping. The music will be on and people will enjoy themselves without restriction. Meanwhile, in the north of the state there will be no real way to address it. I understand that these are complex issues and I respect the challenges the department faces

and I very much respect the challenges in the health sector in dealing with these issues, as well as our police and emergency services. I am not making light of it, but I make the point on behalf of the constituents I represent and who talk to me on a daily basis about these things in my region. They are slightly frustrated by it, to varying degrees, and wish that this could have been addressed properly. Is there anything in the bill or that the government is planning that will make the banned drinkers register more effective? There might be an opportunity to standardise, to some extent, the volumetric restrictions across the state and have a more targeted approach to the people who need our help.

Hon Stephen Dawson: That is a matter for the Director of Liquor Licensing and it is done on a place-by-place basis depending on alcohol-related harm and the crime associated with it. I would be happy to organise a briefing for the member with the Director of Liquor Licensing at an appropriate time if the member wants me to.

Hon Neil Thomson: Yes, please. Early next year. Let's do it.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I am happy to organise that for the member.

Hon Neil Thomson: Thank you.

Hon Stephen Dawson: More broadly, the BDR orders target behavioural change and the government's policy targets the problem consumer through BDR as a tool. Other targeted harm-minimisation tools are available in the Liquor Control Act, and these tools are meant to work together. I know that the member spoke on behalf of his constituents, particularly in the North West of the state. He mentioned that Margaret River does not have the same restrictions. That is because the number of presentations for alcohol-related harm per head of population is different from Carnarvon, Derby and Broome. At this stage, there are differences in different areas around the state because of the incidence of alcohol-related harm. That relates to alcohol-related admissions to EDs and hospitals. They are very different in different areas of the state. As the member indicated, I hear his frustration and am happy to facilitate that briefing for him.

Hon Tim Clifford: How many people have opted to go on the banned drinkers register by choice and how many have been put on it as a mandatory measure through the court system?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Ten people put themselves forward to be on the register. I think the member was away from the chamber on urgent parliamentary business earlier when I said there are 1,074 people on the register. If 10 put themselves on the register, that means there are 1,064 others.

Hon Tim Clifford: We have been contacted about concerns with the banned drinkers register and the way it is implemented, specifically in areas of the state when it comes to First Nations people being discriminated against by being put on the register. Have any concerns been raised directly with the minister about the nature of the banned drinkers register in regard to discrimination?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Orders are only issued when people have been charged with alcohol-related offences. Earlier on, questions were asked about the data kept and whether we know a person's age or their gender. We have no understanding about people's race or ethnicity. We simply do not know. This is not about attacking a particular race or ethnic group; this is solely about dealing with people who have been found to have problems to help them address those problems. As I indicated earlier, as a result of the banned drinkers register, we have seen a direct correlation in presentations to hospital but also crime. It is not about race or ethnicity. I am not suggesting the member said I said that, but I state clearly that it is not about that; it is about people with problems that we need to try to fix.

Hon Neil Thomson: I would like to talk in a bit of detail about the banned drinkers register, if members do not mind. I thank the minister for the answers so far and the offer of a briefing. I will take that up early next year. It is an ongoing issue and I hope that the minister, acting on behalf of the Minister for Racing and Gaming, and I can continue to have a constructive dialogue across the chamber about improving alcohol management in our regions.

A comparison of the Northern Territory's banned drinkers register with the Western Australian banned drinkers registers shows some quite big differences. Did the Director of Liquor Licensing undertake any assessment of the effectiveness of the Northern Territory BDR versus the Western Australian BDR?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Obviously the two jurisdictions are different and have unique circumstances, but there was certainly engagement with the appropriate department in the NT when we were putting together the banned drinkers register in around 2022–23. The department provided feedback on how its equivalent register was going in that Territory. As I said, we engaged with the NT. As a result, bearing in mind the feedback is for a different jurisdiction, we took a number of learnings into what we have in WA.

Hon Neil Thomson: It is good to hear that the government did engage. The minister is right that the jurisdictions are quite different, but some parts of our state are probably quite similar. I suggest that the Kimberley and the Northern Territory face almost identical issues, and maybe even some other parts of our state. One of the differences with the NT BDR is that it prohibits a person from keeping or drinking alcohol anywhere in the NT. It is a statewide ban. Is it correct to say that if one of those 1,074 people moved to Perth, they would not be banned?

Hon Stephen Dawson: The member said "statewide" but it is Territory wide. People are still banned. If a person is on the banned drinkers register, they are banned, but the equipment is available only in particular areas around the state.

Hon Neil Thomson: Has there ever been any consideration—I am sure this will tear into every liquor store in Perth—of requiring the technology to be implemented statewide? Has there been an assessment from a health perspective? That is one of the challenges, as the minister would know, with being a representative of the Kimberley. Some remote communities, for example, have chosen to become dry communities—it is terrific when they make that choice and the community leadership makes that decision—but people then sometimes move to regional centres to seek alcohol. There is probably anecdotal evidence suggesting people chase alcohol in parts of our state where there are fewer restrictions and that that may have a much more negative impact, in that it takes people away from their family connections and support structures they might have around their communities and so forth. People who may have an issue with alcohol go to towns or parts of our state that have fewer or no restrictions, in the sense that the liquor outlets do not have the technology or other measures to assess people at the point of sale and stop them, and they can effectively go into a store and purchase alcohol. I think that can have a more deleterious effect on their health and wellbeing than maybe staying in situ in their community where they might be able to be treated or where they have family support. Has there been any assessment at all of the regime across our state?

Hon Stephen Dawson: No, there has not been. It would be very costly to roll out the equipment across the state. The BDR is in areas where we know harm is occurring. If there is evidence that it is occurring in an area, the banned drinkers register is put in place. There is no evidence to suggest that people are coming to Perth. If that evidence were provided, perhaps it is something the government could consider at the time. The evidence shows that in places where we have the register the number of alcohol-related admissions to emergency departments and hospitals has been reduced and we are not seeing a corresponding spike in places around the state that do not have the register.

Hon Neil Thomson: Has there been any assessment in, say, metropolitan Perth, of the variation between suburbs in the number of presentations for alcohol-related harm? I assume there are parts of Perth with alcohol problems. They are not the exclusive domain of our regional communities. I assume there is a level of alcohol-related presentations in our health services here. Has an assessment been made?

Hon Stephen Dawson: We certainly monitor alcohol-related presentations in the metropolitan area, particularly because we have the register in place in the regions, to check that there is no corresponding lift as the issue subsides, to a degree, in the regions. The honourable member is correct that there is alcohol-related harm right across our state; it is not just the domain of regional or remote communities. The western suburbs of Perth, the areas with the best socio-economic status, can have these issues, too. But the number of incidences we are seeing in some of our remote communities is significantly higher per head of population, hence the need to trial and put in place something to deal with the issue.

Hon Neil Thomson: Of course, this also applies to other alcohol-related harms, particularly around family violence because alcohol is often a factor—it is probably one of the key factors—in presentations, particularly when violence is involved. I think it is reasonable to say that there is variation. For example, we know that a person living in the Kimberley is 30 times more likely to suffer from family violence than a person living anywhere else in Australia. That number can vary a bit. That data is based on information available on the Western Australia Police Force website. I think WA has a higher rate than the national average; I think it is twice the national average. The numbers I read the last time I looked at the website showed that a person in Kalgoorlie is something like 15 times more likely to suffer from family violence. There are some very hardworking community members supporting women in the community with women's shelters. Women are often the subject of that incredibly terrible behaviour—family violence. We know it is not the sole domain of men, but it is largely men who are the perpetrators of alcohol-related violence. I think that is fair, but it would be good to have some sort of detailed assessment of that, given that there are probably better ways to do it.

That leads me to my second point in relation to a comparison with the Northern Territory. If members do not mind, I will run with this line of comparison because I think it will be useful. I congratulate the government, by the way, on adopting the banned drinkers register. I have been a strong advocate of a BDR for many years, even prior to coming to this place. I know that the Kimberley zone shires played a very big role in the promotion of it. The Shire of Wyndham—East Kimberley was the first local government jurisdiction to put in a takeaway alcohol management system (TAMS), which it did through the accord. I thought that was a very good initiative. The liquor stores were able to purchase those machines with some government support, including local government support. People can usually put their licence into those machines. That was good work.

We have had many debates in this place about the number of pathways for people to get onto the BDR. After a bit of a slow start, there are now over a thousand people on the BDR. I think it probably would be good to have more, but we also then need the supports to follow up with those people. I think we can talk about that in a minute. In terms of pathways, there seem to be more pathways to go onto the BDR under the Northern Territory system. We

have similar concepts to the Northern Territory's police banned drinker orders and court or parole orders relating to alcohol prohibition, but my understanding is that more third parties can make referrals in the Northern Territory, including carers, guardians and authorised persons. I understand that the authorised persons list is much bigger in the territory than in Western Australia. I will put the question this way: Is it fair to characterise our system as having fewer pathways? Why do we not have a wider range of authorised persons who can put people on the register in Western Australia?

Hon Stephen Dawson: The honourable member is correct that there are currently fewer pathways in Western Australia in relation to getting somebody onto the register. As he knows, we do have a number of the pathways that he mentioned in Western Australia. I mentioned earlier that we are consulting on the tranche 2 liquor reforms. One thing that we are consulting on relates to further pathways.

Hon Neil Thomson: I support the government in that work. I will be here to congratulate the government if it is able to do that. One thing we can do as a follow-on from that is to increase the number of authorised persons or professions. I make the point that I know there is some resistance from the medical profession on this because it sometimes does not feel that it should be making referrals to the BDR.

Hon Stephen Dawson: As you probably know—I am trying to be helpful by way of interjection—we do already have a medical worker pathway in WA, as we do a social worker pathway. I say that just in case you didn't know. This will be broader than those things.

Hon Neil Thomson: Broader, yes. There is also professional concern that medical practitioners do not necessarily want to be the person to put someone who has presented to them on the BDR, because that person might then not present again. There is always that tension in medical practice. Maybe it would be an easier decision for social workers to make when obvious harm is being caused within a family. That relates to the police pathways and triggers. I think I know where the Leader of the House's answer might go to—that it might be in tranche 2—but if we compare the Northern Territory model with the Western Australian model, my understanding is that there are fewer police and court triggers in Western Australia or there are more mandatory triggers in the Northern Territory. My understanding is that it includes crimes relating to alcohol, including even minor crimes—for example, alcohol-related infringements. I think there is an automated process within the Northern Territory. Maybe the Leader of the House could make some comment on that. For example, if someone is done for driving under the influence of alcohol in Western Australia, they are not automatically put on the BDR. Maybe that is something that the government could explore. I would have thought that if someone were charged with drink driving, they might also be put on the BDR for a few months.

Hon Stephen Dawson: We already have most of the things that the honourable member just raised, if not all, in our system in Western Australia. If someone is charged with an alcohol-related offence, they can go on there. If someone has been issued with two alcohol-related infringements, they can be issued with a BDO. We have them.

Hon Neil Thomson: It is not automatic, though, is it?

Hon Stephen Dawson: It is not automatic. In saying that, the honourable member's earlier comment that there are more pathways in the NT is correct, but we are consulting at the moment on what else we can add to ours.

Hon Neil Thomson: Will the government be looking at that as part of phase 2—

Hon Stephen Dawson: Yes.

Hon Neil Thomson: —and maybe make it tougher? I think we would possibly agree that if there was a family violence circumstance in which alcohol was a causal factor, that person should probably be on the BDR for a period of time.

Hon Stephen Dawson: If police attend a disturbance now and there is evidence of alcohol-related violence, they can issue a police order and they can issue a banned drinker order as well.

Hon Neil Thomson: In summary, we are going to possibly look at those. When are we likely to hear from the government on phase 2? Is there some sort of timeframe that the government is considering?

Hon Stephen Dawson: I am advised that consultation will continue during the first half of next year, with the drafting of legislation to commence in the second half.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am not holding the government to a specific time, but what are we looking at in terms of the likely delivery of the phase 2 changes? Is there a timeframe that the government is thinking of? Will it be 12 months or 18 months? What are we looking at?

Hon Stephen Dawson: Again, the honourable member is asking me to suggest something that is cabinet-in-confidence. It is a priority for the department. It is a strong priority for the minister. The consultation is happening. The intention is to seek drafting, as I said, in the second half of the year. It is a priority for the minister, but the minister has to go through the process. I cannot hypothetically state anything. I reaffirm that it is a priority.

Hon Neil Thomson: It is good to know that it is a priority. As the Leader of the House knows, I am sure we will have all next year to ask questions in Parliament about how it is going and to get updates as that work is ongoing. The government can be encouraged about the opposition's point of view. Obviously, the shadow minister is in the other place, but I think we are on a unity ticket here.

Hon Stephen Dawson: By way of interjection, your enthusiasm is noted!

Hon Neil Thomson: Thank you. We are not going to criticise the minister for doing more on this. This banned drinkers register is not a silver bullet. We know that it is a complex issue, and, yes, it has risks. I read out the goal of the policies earlier from page 5 of the *Banned Drinker Register: Interim report — Kimberley*. I will provide a copy of that report to Hansard so that it will have that. The goal is:

... to shift the demand curve for problem consumers so they can generate the same level of net society gain from reduced consumption without imposing a loss on moderate consumers.

I think that is a very important goal that we are going to try to achieve. I think the minister might be relieved. This is an interesting new experience for me. We are playing musical chairs. It is always a delight to work with both ministers.

Several members interjected.

Hon Neil Thomson: That is right; it is true. I will continue while I am on my feet. We have gone through the different pathways—I am sure the minister has had a bit of a briefing about where we are at—looking at the comparison between the Northern Territory—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Are we on clause 1?

Hon Neil Thomson: We have plenty of time today. We did such a good job last night.

A member interjected.

Hon Neil Thomson: I do not know.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I don't want to get between you and your crayfish.

Hon Neil Thomson: Can the minister tell me when he wants to finish? We will work towards it.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Christmas.

Hon Neil Thomson: By Christmas. Thank you. I think the short-term immediate bans in the Northern Territory are a very good process. I have talked to publicans and liquor store owners. We know that every licensee can ban a person from their premises. That can happen across Perth now under the act. I understand that a licensee can ban a person from their own premises if certain behaviour, like the abuse of staff, leads them to believe that the person is not suitable. That is already in place. I note that from 11 December 2023, Northern Territory police must issue a seven-day banned drinker order for certain events, such as being taken into alcohol-related protective custody, getting an alcohol-related infringement notice, getting issued a banning notice or drinking in a prohibited public space. If any two of those events occurs, the BDO applies for three months. I do not believe that happens in Western Australia. Maybe we could get some understanding on why there is a difference. I do not think we have the seven-day arrangement, but I think a three-day ban can occur. Could the minister explain why we do not have those short-term bans? Those very short-term bans sometimes have an immediate sort of—I am trying to think of the right word—calming effect. I think that is the right word. People settle themselves down when they think that they could be told they cannot get anything, not just at the liquor store down the road but the store next door to the pub at the next town. This is important and should be looked at. Can we have an explanation of why it is different in Western Australia?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Why the what, sorry?

Hon Neil Thomson: Can we have a bit of an explanation of those short-term banning orders in Western Australia and why we do not have seven-day banning orders in Western Australia?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Western Australia has three, six and 12-month bans. As the member has indicated, we do not have a seven-day ban, as the Northern Territory has. It is important to note—the member noted this in his contribution to the second reading debate—that a licensee has the power to exclude someone from their licensed premises. That is probably more where the seven-day ban comes into it. We already have a sufficient head of power for licensees to exclude someone from a licensed premises for a shorter period of time. However, as indicated by the Leader of the House, there is now the stage 2 reform process, which will require further consultation, particularly with industry, regarding what the nature and time for bans might entail. Obviously, as part of that process, comparisons will be made with other jurisdictions, including the Northern Territory, on what works well and what does not, and what could work better for Western Australia. Alcohol-related protective custody orders are available to Western Australian police as well.

Hon Neil Thomson: Alcohol-related protective custody orders remind me that I have had complaints from family members who have been in situations in which there is alcohol-related violence in the home that they felt that the police were unable to act upon. These things are always very technical. I am not an expert on this; I have some knowledge, but not much in some respects. Are there any circumstances in which police might impose some sort of alcohol ban on the perpetrator when attending a place where it is clear that alcohol-related crimes have been committed or alcohol-related harms are occurring?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: In the kinds of circumstances the member described, if alcohol-related harms or apparent offending was occurring, police would issue a police order, which could include something along the lines of an order to separate the parties for 72 hours. That would then provide a trigger for the police to issue a BDO in addition to the order that they are able to issue in that particular circumstance. Of course, when people come to the member about their circumstances—I am sure they do so earnestly—the member is always getting only one version of it. It is difficult to make an assessment about what was appropriate in a particular case without actually hearing both sides. Police tend to be in a better position to do that because they are there and talk to both sides. They do not always get it right, and they recognise that. As I say, they have the capacity when that kind of conduct is underway to issue an order that would separate the people and to then issue the banned drinker order.

Hon Neil Thomson: That kind of explains one situation I had referred to me not long ago in which there was a 72-hour separation, and then the person was back on the grog again and problems occurred. BDOs sometimes take time to go through. Do those BDOs require going to court or can they just be issued?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: By way of interjection, the police can issue them.

Hon Neil Thomson: Can the police issue them straightaway?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes.

Hon Neil Thomson: They are for a minimum of three months. Is that correct?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes.

Hon Neil Thomson: My recollection is that a concern was raised that police were reluctant to issue a banned drinker order even though there was a desire for a BDO to be issued by other members of the family. As a member of Parliament, I am not an expert on this subject, but maybe there could be a shorter term version, as we mentioned earlier, whereby a five-day order could be issued. Maybe that could be done with a lower threshold requirement. But the minister is saying that there is no threshold and the police can just issue it for three months; is that correct?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes; once they have issued the police order in the first instance in relation to the conduct, they can issue the BDO following that.

Hon Neil Thomson: Is the minister satisfied that enough BDOs have been issued when the family, for their relief, would like a BDO to be issued? Does he think that police are erring on the side of caution with this or should they issue them more often for protection? Is he satisfied that BDOs are being issued in a way that is maximising the benefit to families that have been affected by alcohol?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As the member knows, I am here only in a representative capacity. In my everyday job, I do not have much intersection with these issues. I am advised by advisers at the table that the lack of banned drinker orders being issued by police has not been raised as a systemic issue, but, as indicated to the member previously, another tranche of reform is going to proceed. Of course, he is more than welcome to make submissions on behalf of members of the community or encourage them to make submissions to give greater insight into their experiences of alcohol-related harms in our society. Obviously, if there is a sufficient weight of evidence to suggest that alternatives are required, that can be further explored through that process.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: My questions are particularly about the banned drinkers register data. Is that data shared with specific agencies or departments?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The agency that has responsibility for this area does not share individualised data outside its area. De-identified data such as numbers and things like that may be provided to external agencies. If there was a question in Parliament, that would be provided as well. But the individual's personal circumstances are not shared. For example, the inquiry I made at the table was between the Department of Health and this department. It would not share information in that regard.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: The reason I ask is that I am also mindful of the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education report about harm minimisation. If we know that roughly a thousand people are on the BDR and that information stays quite localised, how do those people receive support or how do agencies or service providers in the area meaningfully help those people if there is no information sharing?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We need to understand that the way this works is not that somebody gets a banned drinker order and then the state intervenes in that person's life. The effect of the order is on their entitlement to access licensed premises. When the person is issued with the order, they are provided with information about the

services available to them to help them address their problematic drinking and other behaviours. Often their GP or a medical practitioner has applied for an order, so the medical practitioner would undoubtedly also be having conversations with them about the additional services they can access in order to address their problematic behaviours.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: If someone has an alcohol addiction, they are not rationally going to take a pamphlet and go, "Wow, I'm going to try to access this service of my own will, given that I am dealing with an addiction, and try to put my life back together." I am not saying that the government should intervene and trace these people and hound them, but is there a way in that process that some information could be shared so that when the person is in a rehabilitation or other specific facility, support and intervention could be provided earlier and the onus would not be on the person to go, "Thank you for this pamphlet", and then it is left at that? I wonder whether there is any way that that process could be improved. It seems to be a little like "Here's a pamphlet; off you go", when we are dealing with people who are already addicted.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Although I understand where the member is coming from in that these people have an identified issue and that wraparound supports, which I think is the term that is often used, should be put around them, we have to understand that, in many instances, these orders are issued against people who have not been convicted of any particular offence. They have obviously come to the attention of their medical practitioner or the police through some of their behaviour, but we also have to respect their autonomy to make decisions about their own health, because, as the member indicated, they may have an addiction and they need to address those kinds of behaviours. If, for example, they had entered the criminal justice system—

Hon Maryka Groenewald: The BDO?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The BDO is not a criminal sanction; it is a community protective mechanism. It is a mechanism to protect the person as well. The balance is in how far we go with that. Reasonable minds will disagree on how much the state should intervene in the person's life and how much support should be provided. There are supports. It is not just a pamphlet. There are supports and people are encouraged to use them.

If they are involved in criminal activity, undoubtedly part of their sentencing or those sorts of things could include elements about the compulsory participation in certain programs of that kind. The state is in a strong position to do that because the person has broken a criminal law, and that would be imposed by a court. However, the police or other parts of the state imposing health-based therapeutic services on people is probably not quite the right balance we want in these circumstances. If people are being pushed into these services rather than accepting that they have an issue and then taking it on, we are not likely to get the kinds of outcomes that we genuinely want, which is a recognition of their problem. It is a fine balance. Generally, the purpose of this legislation is the protection of the community and the protection of the individual from having access to alcohol and, therefore, the involvement of alcohol in their life.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: I was not implying that we are removing their autonomy. When I mentioned the banned drinker order or instances like that, I supposed that people who are on the banned drinkers register and have a history with police et cetera may be in quite a specific cohort and that may constitute grounds for service-provision people to come alongside them. I am mindful of that data being available. Can we look at the overlap between the super-vulnerable people who have been part of the Criminal Code and a BDR, if that is part of the tranche 2 considerations? Can feedback be given or, will there be reporting of some sort for the BDR?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Broadly speaking, it could be involved with the tranche 2 process. To be clear, we are trying to deal with tranche 1 here, and the department is still consulting at a preliminary level with other departments, including with the Department of Health, and seeking input from them about ways they can do that. The department that is responsible for this legislation does not have access to those kinds of services. It is not what they provide because they are not a therapeutic department, which would be the experience of the Department of Health or even the Department of Communities and things of that kind. There will be consultation in the tranche 2 process, but I do not want to overstate it and say that it will go further than it will. This bill and the department that is responsible for it have limitations for some of the broader social and health issues that we are talking about.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: This is my last question on that. As part of that bill, will there perhaps be some reports or progress reports? I suppose that numbers will be continually kept on the increases or changes in the BDR? Will that be done as part of the process?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: There is no kind of ongoing formalised reporting process; however, through, for example, parliamentary questions, a member could periodically ask questions about how many BDOs have been issued and in which regions they were issued. There will be a limit on how much detail we would go into because, obviously, the more granular the information, the more likely it is that a particular individual could be identified. I do not think that anyone would do that through this process. Generally, there is no reason that information such as how many BDOs there are would not be available. Obviously, if another area is declared—I do not think that is the right word—a banned drinking area, that would be a matter of public knowledge and public debate. As I say,

a parliamentary question either on notice or without notice could be asked about those numbers, and that information would be provided through that process.

The process of how tranche 2 will be designed and how the development of that might look is not yet settled, but we have indicated that it would include consultation with industry. It would include internal consultation with the government departments that are affected, including the Western Australia Police Force, the Department of Health, the Department of Communities and the sorts of agencies that are affected and interested in this particular area.

Hon Tim Clifford: This leads to one of the questions I had about data collection before the second tranche of proposed changes. I note the increase in time and the extra two hours between 10:00 pm and 12:00 am. This is coming in advance of one of my amendments, which is a bit later. In New South Wales, when the time of access to purchase alcohol was increased from 10:00 pm to 11:00 pm, it resulted in an additional 1,120 domestic violence assaults. Is there a mechanism for this? The minister noted the departments with which the government will be consulting. Are these departments proactively taking data to inform tranche 2? Are they taking data and numbers on the extra domestic violence matters between the times of 10:00 pm and 12:00 am?

I also note that people will be able to access and purchase alcohol through an app. Will there be any mechanism to track any issues that spill out from ordering alcohol? For example, when that has happened when there has been a domestic violence matter at a house and the police have come out to address it, they might ask the person whether they have purchased alcohol using the app. If they say yes, the police might ask whether they have purchased it once or multiple times within a certain timeframe. That is the sort of data I am trying to get at. Is that the sort of stuff that will be recorded to inform the second tranche of amendments and reforms?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: One of the issues with the kind of data collection that the member is talking about is its reliability. He mentioned a conversation about the police essentially surveying people who are involved at the time about whether or not they have purchased alcohol via an app. If a person is subject to a police action, including arrest, they would be warned that they do not have to make any disclosure. The problem is that we will not get a very complete dataset about those particular circumstances, because individuals will not be obligated to provide that information to police. If data has been collected—for example, through research that might be conducted by a health organisation or a university—and we are quite confident about the veracity and reliability of that data because they have taken into account variables, such as a representative cohort, absolutely that information would be there because we are interested in minimising alcohol-related harms.

This department and these advisers are not the Western Australia Police Force and so cannot say what information police collect. Police are obviously very busy and preoccupied when they are dealing with an incident, so they may not even contemplate asking questions about the manner in which a person purchased the alcohol at that particular point in time. As I say, if it then proceeds to a criminal investigation, detectives might get involved and that person is probably going to be legally represented. Because they are not required to assist the police's prosecution, they may or may not then disclose the circumstances of how that kind of offending came about. I think that is where that is. But we are interested in alcohol-related harms and that kind of information. As I say, to the degree that it is relevant to the tranche 2 reforms—if it gets to that stage—that information could be relevant to that investigation.

Hon Neil Thomson: Following on my line of questioning, the minister mentioned "reasonable minds" when he was talking about—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Sorry, what did I mention?

Hon Neil Thomson: Reasonable minds having different points of view in relation to the level of data sharing that might occur—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I think that was more in relation to the level of state intervention.

Hon Neil Thomson: Yes, I was going to get to that. Basically, it was in relation to the intervention by social workers or others when someone is on the BDR. I encourage the representing minister in this place, and maybe his colleague in the other place, to consider this as part of tranche 2 because I think there is a very strong case in the public interest for more data sharing. For example, when a caseworker or family support officer working with the Department of Communities interacts with a family, are they able to access the banned drinkers register to understand whether somebody at that premises, or someone they might be interacting with, is on the register? Is that information shared with the Department of Communities?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Only if the social worker was involved with the person being placed on the BDR in the first place. They would not otherwise have access to who is on the BDR. Licensees do not have access to the BDR list. When a banned person goes to purchase alcohol, licensees would obviously understand that that person is banned and they must act on that information, but they do not have a unified list of those sorts of things. Of course police would know, because who is on that list is part of their records. Again, in those circumstances that information is not shared more broadly with other government agencies. A person could, of course, choose to disclose that they are on the BDR and there is a banned drinker order against them, and obviously other members

of the family might be aware of their circumstances, but if a social worker contacted the police and asked, "Is Joe Bloggs on the BDR?", police would not confirm whether or not that person is on it. They would not provide that information.

Hon Neil Thomson: It is a challenging area. I encourage the minister responsible in this space to look at that within an evidence-based framework, because we all know there is a web of connection between government agencies, non-government agencies and support services for people who have alcohol-related issues and are experiencing related matters. We know that happens. Often those people still then do not get the support and the wraparound services that they need because, as the minister has explained, the caseworker—or the family support officer, the social worker at the school or even the health practitioner—will not necessarily know, unless that case referral originally came from a BDO action. In my mind, I think we need to see more work done. We are certainly looking forward to tranche 2 and some sort of report from the government on how it will address these sensitive issues. I understand the issues of privacy and compulsion have to be maintained, but I think the overarching public need is for more wraparound services to effectively work for the long-term benefit of these individuals who have problems. I think, if it is my reasonable mind versus maybe the reasonable mind of someone else, I would err on the side of more information sharing rather than less, if the minister understands what I mean.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes, I do.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am saying that by way of encouragement, because one of my big complaints is there are no wraparound services. Everyone talks about it. As politicians, we all talk about needing more wraparound services, but it is pretty hard for wraparound services to wrap around that individual if they do not actually know the individual has a problem and do not have information about it. These issues are complex and challenging, and there is maybe a level of shame and there are some privacy issues, but someone being on the BDR is not at the higher end of confidentiality. I hope I am making sense. There are other privacy-related issues that we might want to protect that individual from. I think more transparency is a good thing, and I would encourage the minister to do that at tranche 2, if he can. That is not a question; that is a statement.

I will, if the minister does not mind, ask a couple of questions about the transportation of alcohol. The transportation of alcohol, the impact of sly grogging as it is commonly referred to, the black market and the relation to drugs, and Australia Post, are also big issues. Firstly, is it still possible for somebody—I think Hon Tim Clifford mentioned someone using an app—who is on the banned drinkers register, or in a banned drinker area, to purchase alcohol via Australia Post?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As the member no doubt knows, the postal service is the Commonwealth's area of responsibility, so the state's capacity to place limitations on an Australia Post service is extremely limited as we do not have the jurisdictional basis on which to do it. Having said that, Australia Post cooperates with the department in relation to alcohol going into a banned drinker area. If Australia Post becomes aware that alcohol is going into that area, it will liaise with the department and the police, because it is still an offence for that person to have alcohol in a banned drinker area—the sly grogging the member was talking about.

It is also the case that those who are selling alcohol online should have regard to whether the final destination of that product is into a banned drinker area and not sell that alcohol into that banned drinker area. Of course, the laws here apply to the jurisdiction of Western Australia. If somebody were, for example, to buy alcohol on the internet from interstate or overseas, there is a limitation on how we can deal with those sellers of alcohol. But the receiving of alcohol in a banned drinker area is still a matter that is dealt with by the police and the department.

Hon Neil Thomson: I understand this is a complex area, but it does not fill me with confidence when the minister says it is the Commonwealth's responsibility; however, I understand the challenges. I understand that when people in WA purchase alcohol from a liquor store on the internet, there are restrictions. I have done it myself when I click the box to say I am not in a restricted area or whatever. I think the minister is right that that may not apply to sales on the internet from operators either interstate or potentially overseas, so there is less restriction on that internet sale.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: By way of interjection, the common law is probably more interested in the duties that apply to the alcohol being imported, which is what they would be concerned about at the border, to make sure there was a disclosure and the necessary duty was paid.

Hon Neil Thomson: I guess the challenge for us in WA where we have these laws, and the Northern Territory, which has this law as well, is: Where do we tackle the problem? I still hear that a lot of alcohol is going via Australia into these areas and these communities and into the hands of people, when it should not be. It may be an issue that is being magnified by disaffected bottle shop owners, who are saying they are under all these restrictions as they have to use the Takeaway Alcohol Management System and the BDR to check whether people are on the BDR when they purchase alcohol and there are all the volumetric limits. I can understand that small-business owners based in Carnarvon or Kununurra might be feeling a bit aggrieved if they know alcohol has been coming in through Australia Post.

Does the department have any visibility of the extent, by way of volume, of sales coming through Australia Post into these restricted areas given that it is going to be difficult to control? Is there any visibility at all and, if there is, how much alcohol is coming into these communities?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The best way I can describe it is the old Donald Rumsfeld way, which is that it is a known unknown. We do not know the volumes of that kind; that is the known unknown part of it. Again, the department and the police work with local Australia Post places. They might become aware of packages coming through the system that are, or appear to be, alcohol and are going into banned drinker areas, like a particular Aboriginal community and that kind of thing, and will contact the police to make them aware. The department, when it becomes aware, will also investigate to try to understand the source of that alcohol. The example given to me was that if the alcohol has come from New South Wales, the department will contact its counterpart in New South Wales to let it know that a licensee in NSW is supplying, or appears to be supplying, alcohol into a banned drinker area in Western Australia. Then their version of our department in New South Wales will counsel that licensee to say, "You should not be engaging in this particular behaviour because it is a breach of the laws of Western Australia." There is no capacity for us to effectively prosecute that particular individual, but that feedback is being given in the system.

We also have to recognise that people who are not licensed are providing the alcohol to those communities. They are selling their alcohol in an unlicensed black market manner. If we were able to get evidence to the authorities in the other states to enable them to deal with that—I do not know whether there have been any prosecutions—it could be the case that there would be sufficient evidence to satisfy the burden of proof that those people have broken the law.

Hon Neil Thomson: Are any Australia Post franchisees in those banned drinker areas on the local accords? They could be anywhere from Broome through to the Pilbara, right across the major towns in our region. I think Kalgoorlie is a BDA, and so there are no volumetric restrictions.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: To the best of our knowledge, we are not aware of them being involved. The accords are fairly informal, so groups can go in and out of a particular accord. I do not think anything would prevent a local Australia Post franchisee from engaging with it if they so desired and were inclined to do so, but we are not aware of any being formally involved at this stage.

Hon Neil Thomson: It might be something to think about going forward in terms of reaching out. Normally, the secretariat of the accord is managed by local police. Is that how it works or is it the department of racing and gaming?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It could be the licensees or it could be the local government. There is not really a strict structure.

Hon Neil Thomson: Maybe the government could look at making the governance of accords more consistent and the ability to provide more support as part of tranche 2. That would obviously be in consultation with the liquor industry. I am not telling the liquor industry how to operate because, by and large, its members work very hard, but there is scope to include other suppliers of alcohol, such as Australia Post. That might be a good thing. The minister mentioned prosecutions. To the government's knowledge, has there been any prosecution of an Australia Post franchisee in relation to the secondary supply of alcohol to either a banned drinker or for going beyond the volumetric carriage limits or restrictions that apply to a local area?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: From the agency that is giving me advice at the table, no, but we do not know in relation to police. To be honest, unless the franchisee was a willing participant, I doubt they would be prosecuted because they would just be delivering the post. It is the same if someone sends drugs through the postal system; unless the franchisee was an active participant in that process, they are not likely to have had the necessary criminal intent—

Hon Neil Thomson: They do not necessarily know.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes. As I said, if they were running a racket to deliver alcohol into a banned drinker area using the postal service and other methods, they could be subject to prosecution. I doubt very much that that would happen because they are almost always very upstanding citizens in their community.

Hon Tim Clifford: I have a quick follow-up on that. Outside Australia Post, if someone on the banned drinkers register purchased alcohol through, say, the Uber app and that went directly to Liquorland, for example, would there be a mechanism for either Liquorland or Uber to be notified that the person was on the register? If that person walked into a local bottle shop or local pub and tried to order alcohol, they would be told, "Sorry; you're on the banned drinkers register." Does that mean that someone could order as they like, with no checks or balances? Will checks and balances occur only if they physically walk into Liquorland or their local pub?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: If someone buys something through an app, they have to identify themselves via the app, particularly for the purposes of payment. It has to be connected to a person's bank account, so they will be

identifiable. The obligation is on the licensee—the Liquorlands of the world—because the transaction is between them and the purchaser. The Ubers of the world are the carriage service. The obligation rests with the licensee to ensure that they are not selling alcohol to people who are on the banned drinkers register or into a banned drinker area. Their obligation continues to exist notwithstanding the method of procuring the alcohol.

Hon Neil Thomson: Has the department done any assessment with the police of the impact of alcohol restrictions in a general sense and the use of drugs? I am raising this issue because one of the problems with alcohol restrictions generally is that they create an illegal logistics supply chain for alcohol. They encourage it. That is probably just a fact. As soon as some prohibition is imposed, it basically encourages enterprising felons to get involved in the business of selling alcohol in places that they should not. We have seen the progression of alcohol restrictions over the years, starting with Fitzroy Crossing—that was really the beginning of it all—then out to Halls Creek, Kununurra and Broome, and now expanding right through to Kalgoorlie to some extent, but the biggest impact is probably on Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction. The problem is that this has created an illegal logistics supply chain, whether that is an 18-year-old kid who might be selling a few bottles of vodka to his mates or someone who is a bit more organised and is selling hundreds of litres of alcohol. These illegal logistics supply chains are a natural fit for some of the more organised crime gangs and drug distribution networks in Western Australia. They will infiltrate that network and use it as a way to turbocharge their drug distribution. I just think it is a natural problem that will involve both small-scale alcohol sales through to small-scale drug supply, which probably already occurs.

Young people are probably making a few bucks by selling illicit substances like cannabis and then they move into hard drugs. Has any research been done by the department, with the support of the police, on data on drug substitution? This is something I have raised in this place before. For example, people can purchase a bottle of vodka for \$60 or \$70. That is a lot of vodka; one can get very drunk on a bottle of vodka! I am told that people can purchase a needle preloaded with methamphetamine. The Fitpacks that are given out are allegedly taken by gangs and preloaded with concentrated meth. My understanding is that it costs \$10, \$15, or \$20—I am just guessing. I have been told that people can purchase a needle preloaded with methamphetamine for a lot less than a bottle of vodka, which, as I said, costs \$60. If it is illegal, people would probably pay \$120 or \$200 for that bottle. I heard that, during the pandemic, cartons of beer were not going for \$50, which they can be purchased for at BWS, but were costing several hundred dollars. That is what I have heard. That seems to be a real problem. I am wondering whether the department has done any research with the police on the extent to which liquor restrictions are driving consumers into damaging illicit substances such as methamphetamine.

Sitting suspended from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Before we broke for the luncheon adjournment, Hon Neil Thomson asked a question, effectively, about whether there was a connection to organised crime. I think that is what he was getting at.

Hon Neil Thomson: Drug distribution and alcohol.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Yes. This department is not aware of any such connections. It may be a matter that would be more appropriately asked of the police. I recognise the possibility that people are engaging in unlawful activities in conjunction with other things. We have a police force to put energy into doing that. There is always the perverse outcome in many areas of public life when we try to place prohibitions of people's behaviours that they look for ways to get around it, and we try to address those unlawful behaviours. We are not aware of any particular correlation between those other unlawful activities and sly grogging activities and things of that kind. It is worth noting that alcohol is legal and those other matters definitely are not. I am not sure whether the same cohorts are involved in those activities, given that the penalties for being involved in drug distribution are significantly higher. It may be that they are not worried about it. I do not know about the profit margins and those things. I cannot take it much further because, as I say, I think it is really a question for the police because it is their job to enforce those kinds of behaviours.

Hon Neil Thomson: I thank you, but I would like one minor clarification. The distribution of alcohol in some of those regions is illegal.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I understand that, but the sanctions against drug trafficking is much different from what we are dealing with here.

Hon Neil Thomson: The number of breaches for a whole range of activities will increase under this bill, and, whilst we are on clause 1, I assume that includes an increase in the penalties for the secondary supply of alcohol.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am happy to go into that.

Hon Neil Thomson: If the minister does that, I will not go into that in great detail later in the bill.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I can go through each of the penalties in the bill and indicate the change. Under section 109(1), the current maximum penalty for the unlawful sale of liquor is \$20,000 and two years imprisonment, with a minimum \$2,000 penalty. That maximum penalty will be increased to \$50,000. We are increasing it by one-and-a-half times, or 150%; that is another way to skin the proverbial cat. The maximum penalty for carrying, offering

or exposing liquor for sale unlawfully, which is also under section 109(1), will increase from \$10,000, with a \$1,000 minimum penalty, to \$25,000. The maximum penalty for selling liquor to a person that the seller ought to have reasonably believed intended to sell the liquor unlawfully will increase from \$20,000 and two years imprisonment with a minimum penalty of \$2,000 to a maximum of \$50,000. There are no changes to the carrying limits under section 109A. However, there will be an increase in the maximum penalty for exceeding the carriage limit. That will increase from \$10,000 to \$40,000. I think they are all the penalty increases under the sly grogging arrangements that we are talking about.

Hon Neil Thomson: I will go to the issue of who is impacted by the BDR. I quickly note that we did not get the full Deloitte report. Apparently it is commercial-in-confidence and other material in it was unable to be distributed. Has the department been able to provide detailed data from the BDR on the demographics and the nature of the persons who are on the BDR in order to help develop a new health and public health policy?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Sorry, to provide to whom, because you said to "provide"?

Hon Neil Thomson: Who owns the BDR data? I assume it is the department of liquor, or whatever it is called.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The department owns the data, for want of a better word.

Hon Neil Thomson: Has that been utilised in any way to help tailor health responses in our community?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As I indicated to the member, the data is with the Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety. Because of the personalised nature of the data, it is not shared outside of its system. It is possible that the department could share depersonalised data about the kind of cohort information that the member is talking about, such as the age ranges, locations, gender and those sorts of things, but not in a way that could potentially identify an individual. There are quite strict limits on how the Director of Liquor Licensing can use that information beyond the purpose of what is provided for in the act. At this stage, for example, it is not fed into the population health data for the Department of Health that collects that kind of thing, but theoretically it probably could be provided in a de-identified manner.

Hon Neil Thomson: I will change tack and look at the impact of the extended banned drinkers register on retail liquor outlets. What feedback has been received from industry associations—I think I asked this question during the briefing—such as the Liquor Store Association and the Australian Hotels Association about the cost and staff impacts as they relate to the management of the banned drinkers register?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: There is no direct cost for retail liquor outlets because the infrastructure is provided to them by the department. The only cost that is hard to calculate is the additional time it might take them to process that, but that is a fairly low-level activity in the sense that they have to receive and enter the information into the system. It is not a heavy burden on them. As organisations that want to be responsible providers of alcohol in the community, that part of it is not particularly onerous.

Hon Neil Thomson: I have received feedback that there are some costs. In saying that, there has been generally positive feedback about the system now that it has been in operation for a while. There were some teething problems when it was first implemented, but those have largely been dealt with as a result of software improvements. Has the department received feedback on the cost of retail prices in regional areas as a result of the imposition of the banned drinkers register and alcohol restrictions generally? I think there might be price constraints in terms of minimum pricing, which might have nothing to do with the act—it might be due to liquor accords decisions—but can the minister provide feedback on that as well?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We do not have any data that indicates there has been a consequential increase in the retail cost of liquor in areas in which there are banned drinker areas. Given the areas in which Hon Neil Thomson spends his time, in Carnarvon, a \$15 minimum price floor was applied to bottles of wine through the liquor accord. It was not imposed on them; rather, they proposed it through the liquor accord process and it is now in place as the minimum floor price.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am thinking of the retirees who like to buy cheap wine. Noting the volumetric restriction is two bottles of wine or a bottle of spirits or a carton of mid-strength beer in the case of Carnarvon, has consideration been given to the amount of alcohol that is sold and making it a bit more consistent across the north of the state? It always perplexes me why people cannot buy boxed wine, for example, which is a lot cheaper and has a lower alcohol percentage than one-litre bottles of spirits. That seems to be a lot more damaging than one carton of wine. Has an analysis been done as part of this review or will one be done as part of tranche 2?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I draw Hon Neil Thomson back to the bill, which does not deal with liquor restrictions. I am conscious of the fact that it is the last sitting day of the year, and we want to make progress. Some of the future policy ideas the member is proposing are not appropriately directed to me because I am only the representative minister. I have been informed that the kind of consistent rules that the member was talking about are not being considered in tranche 2. There are also problems in having a consistent approach across every BDA because when the department makes inquiries as to whether a BDA is appropriate, it has to consider the

circumstances of the area in which it is seeking to potentially impose a BDA. In those circumstances, the factors that relate to problematic drinking can be different in different areas—the different kind of liquor that might be available, the capacity of people to pay for liquor and a range of other things are taken into consideration. That is why a uniform approach is not taken across all areas. There are differences between Carnarvon, Kalgoorlie, Port Hedland, Derby and Broome. There are obviously different aspects involved with that.

Hon Neil Thomson: I understand that I was probably stretching it a little bit in terms of what is in this bill, but I do not often get an opportunity to talk about liquor control, which is important; it all interacts. I will not waste time.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am not trying to quibble with you, member. I am just trying to keep us on track.

Hon Neil Thomson: No. The minister has been very generous with his responses; I am not upset.

I go back to the compliance of retailers. I speak to pretty much every owner when I visit a bottle shop to buy a bottle of sauvignon blanc or whatever I buy; I will not go into details for *Hansard*, but I frequent those venues from time to time and I always have a chat with the licensee or the retailers. They have varying degrees of frustration with the rules. It would be fair to say that some of them feel that the level of scrutiny they have to put on some of their customers is too high and should be directed at those customers who are problematic—who come into their stores and walk out with things without paying for them. They report such theft to the police, but those issues are not properly addressed. They feel that sometimes the response is not as good as it could be. It is a tough job selling alcohol, but that is the responsibility that comes with selling a substance that can cause people harm. Going back to the costs of this system—Hon Julie Freeman mentioned IT costs—who will pay for the management of TAMS and the BDR going forward? Will the state continue to bear the cost or will it be funded by retailers?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The cost of the banned drinkers register system is currently met by government and the plan is for government to continue to meet the costs of the BDR.

Hon Neil Thomson: I thank the minister for that. My last set of general questions are about support services and drying out facilities across our north. I cannot go through town by town, but do we have enough support services across those areas with the banned drinkers register at the moment, minister?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, it is a hard question for someone like me, who is not in that particular space, to answer. We have worked and do work with both other government agencies and private organisations, but, again, the department here is not in that particular space. It is a health issue and a social issue and a number of other things. The member asked whether there are enough of those services. To be honest with you, it is a "how long is a wet piece of string" kind of question. I am sure an argument can be made for more services, greater quality services and a greater number of services, but I cannot answer that as a general, overall policy question. I am sure that the member can drill down with more questions directly to this minister and to the Minister for Health about the kind of services that the state provides when we get back next year. But as I say, the question is really beyond me today.

Hon Neil Thomson: I thank the minister for that. I remember that I do actually have one more question someone asked me to ask and it can only be asked at clause 1, but the minister may not be able to answer it. I believe the national tourism conference—I think that is what it is called—is happening in Carnarvon next year. I know there is some concern that we will have all these people coming to Carnarvon and it has restrictions on the sale of alcohol on Sundays and Mondays. I wonder whether there are provisions within the legislation that will allow for the lifting of those restrictions during that conference. The minister may not be able to answer and I might ask it as a question without notice next year, but someone did ask me to ask.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Ask it with some notice, though.

Hon Neil Thomson: I will with some notice. I wonder whether there is any scope to ease those restrictions in Carnarvon during peak periods of tourism intensity?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, whether or not that happens in Carnarvon for that particular event is a matter that will get determined. Technically, the Director of Liquor Licensing can provide, for want of a better term, relief on restrictions for a period of time, but the Minister for Regional Development made the point to me that he would prefer that people do their drinking in licensed premises, not their hotel rooms, because that is much better for the businesses and for the community.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am just going through my paperwork here.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: You keep saying it's your last one and then you find another.

Hon Neil Thomson: I know, but I am making sure it is because I have been sent a few questions from other people. They ask me, "Could you ask this? Could you ask that?" They are all good questions, by the way, minister. I have crossed out a lot that I have already covered, but I have missed one here. This is verbatim: Can you ask the house what the system of referral is between the department of racing and gaming and the Department of Health, the Mental Health Commission, the Department of Communities and the Department of Housing and Works? The

minister may not be able to answer that question and we did sort of cover it a bit, but I just want to make sure I have covered it off.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Between this department and those other departments, there is not a system of referral per se. I mean, this department is concerned with the regulation of alcohol and those other departments have other responsibilities when it comes to the wellbeing of our community. A medical practitioner, for example, whether they are within a public hospital or community health provider and those sorts of things, obviously is able to refer people to be put onto the banned drinkers register. There is obviously an interaction at that particular point, but the focus of the department is not on, you know, those other areas. It is focused on the BDOs and the BDR and the management, or regulation, of licensees.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 put and passed

Clause 4: Section 3 amended

Hon Julie Freeman: How accessible will business continuity orders be to small regional licensees—your family owned pubs or cellar doors—facing a temporary hardship, such as a natural disaster or an illness?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: What I will do is read this out, hopefully, to give the member a better understanding of what the business continuity orders are and what we are doing here.

Under the current act, licensed premises may continue trading for up to 28 days under a protection order if the licensee dies or becomes unable to carry on the business due to circumstances such as illness or accidents. The interim authorisation can be exercised only by a prescribed person, ensuring that only individuals who meet specific eligibility criteria are permitted to carry on the business during the interim period, and 28 days is also the time allowed for an application to be made for an authorisation to sell alcohol and carry on a business under the licence. How does the bill strengthen the supports for the business's continuity? It extends the time the licensed premises can continue to operate by increasing the time to apply for the authorisation to continue to operate from 28 days to three months. Effectively, all we are doing is changing the timeframe. We are not introducing a new concept or provision. We are just providing for the 28 days to be extended to three months. Obviously, one of the very specific circumstances in which we contemplate this will be appropriate is when a licensee passes away. I am sure that the member can appreciate that 28 days may be quite a burden on a business and on a family if they have lost an important person. I suspect that these circumstances are usually unexpected because, obviously, if a business understood that a person was going to pass away, it would have put measures in place to deal with that. These are the sorts of circumstances in which a person has passed away unexpectedly and people therefore are in a bind. They are in grief. As I think appropriate, we are extending the time from 28 days to three months, and I think that would be welcomed by most of those small organisations.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5 put and passed

Clause 6: Section 87 amended

Hon Maryka Groenewald: I have a quick question about annual reporting. Why was the time for the director's report to Parliament extended from 28 days to three months?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We are a bit confused about the member's question because this clause really relates to the business continuity provisions that already exist under section 87 of the Liquor Control Act. I do not know whether the member has a copy of the blue bill, but if she were to have a look at it—

Hon Maryka Groenewald: "Section 87 amended" is amending the annual reporting of the Liquor Commission. It talks about the key changes. There is the extension of the deadlines from 28 days to three months.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: That may be another provision. What it says here is that the title of section 87 is being changed from "Protection orders, grant and term of etc." to "Grant and term of business continuity orders". It says:

(1) Where —

...

- (c) a person, being a person who is authorised to carry on the business of a licensee under section 86 but who wishes to carry on that business for a period in excess of ...

There it currently says 28 days, but that will be amended to three months—

applies within that period of 3 months ...

I am not sure where we are at.

Hon Maryka Groenewald: I will look at the bill. Apologies, minister.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 7 to 12 put and passed

Clause 13: Section 60 amended

Hon Tim Clifford: I have amendments to clauses on the notice paper. Is it okay to give an explanation before I move the new clauses?

The Deputy Chair (Hon Simon Ehrenfeld): You can speak as you wish.

Hon Tim Clifford: Thanks. Sorry, I am a bit tired after last night. The clauses and amendments that I am about to move are a bit of a no-brainer. They relate to the Foundation for Alcohol Research and Education, a body that sent the letter in front of me to the minister about amendments that it would like to see put forward to protect the health of the community from the impacts of alcohol and from access to alcohol. I would like to read a couple of points from the letter, which will go some way to explaining why the amendments are important. I quote:

Unfortunately, the measures in the tabled Bill increase alcohol availability and accessibility, by increasing trading hours, venue capacity, and deregulating licensing provisions, without introducing any of the needed restrictions on delivery timeframes and advertising.

In December 2023, the former Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries proposed to the Harm Minimisation Working Group on Liquor Reform, (of which FARE was a member), a 2-hour safety pause between alcohol order and delivery. This Bill is a sadly a significant backwards step from that proposal and will not meet the Premier's National Cabinet commitment.

It is critical to ensure that the Bill is amended to incorporate the following measures:

- Adopt harm minimisation as the paramount object in the Liquor Licensing Act and include gender-based violence in the definition of alcohol harm. This helps to clarify the prioritisation of community wellbeing over commercial interests.
- Amend delivery timeframes to between 10am and 10pm. This reduces the risk of alcohol-related violence and suicide, which increase later at night.
- Prevent the rapid delivery of alcohol into homes by establishing a 2-hour safety pause between order and delivery. This prevents impulsive and higher-risk alcohol use.

Of course, I flagged some statistics before during debate on clause 1 of this bill, and they provide some of the reasoning behind this amendment. In New South Wales, from what they could gather, the delivery of alcohol between 10:00 pm and 11:00 pm results in an additional 1,120 domestic violence assaults. This really goes to the heart of why it is important. I understand that a second tranche of reforms has been foreshadowed, but I think it is important that we move these amendments today. In the lead-up to the debate of this bill, we repeatedly asked for access to the Deloitte report, which we have not gained access to, so we have not really seen the recommendations. Some of the background information contained in that report might help to inform some of this debate. Who knows—we could have read that report and it could have inspired other amendments, or we could have worked with the government on some of the findings in the report, and the government probably could have moved its own amendments to ensure that all measures could be in place to protect the community from the harms of alcohol. I seek leave to move the amendments standing in my name en bloc.

The Deputy Chair: The member is seeking to move his amendment to clause 13 and new clauses 13A and 14A—everything.

Hon Tim Clifford by leave: I move:

Page 8, after line 3—To insert:

(da) delete paragraph (d);

New Clause 13A

Page 8, after line 33—To insert:

13A. Section 65 amended

After section 65(1)(a) insert:

- (aa) that if the liquor is delivered from, but not on, the licensed premises, the liquor sold—
- (i) must be delivered at least 2 hours after the time the order is placed for the liquor; and
 - (ii) must be delivered only between 10 am and 10 pm;

New Clause 14A

Page 9, after line 6—To insert:

14A. Section 5 amended

- (1) Before section 5(1) insert:
 - (1A) The paramount object of this Act is to minimise harm or ill-health to people, or any group of people, due to the use of liquor, including gender-based violence caused by the use of liquor.
- (2) Delete section 5(1)(b).
- (3) In section 5(2) delete "primary objects of this Act and also to" and insert:

paramount object, the primary objects and
- (4) In section 5(3) delete "primary objects referred to in subsection (1) and the secondary objects referred to in subsection (2), the primary objects take precedence." and insert:

objects of this Act—

 - (a) the paramount object takes precedence over the primary and secondary objects; and
 - (b) the primary objects take precedence over the secondary objects.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: As has been indicated to the member, behind the Chair, the government is not supportive of his amendments, and I will go through a response for him so that we can get some important points on the record. The member has, firstly, proposed changes about liquor delivery requirements through an amendment to clause 13 and the insertion of new clause 13A. The amendment to clause 13 would remove the existing late delivery requirements for liquor stores relating to extended trading permits under section 60(4)(d) of the *Liquor Control Act 1988*. New clause 13A would impose a new requirement of a two-hour delay between ordering liquor and its delivery and restrictions on delivery times to between 10:00 am and 10:00 pm for deliveries from a licensed premise.

In relation to a two-hour delay, the government delivered reforms in 2022 introducing requirements that any same-day delivery of alcohol must be made by a person who has undergone responsible service of alcohol training and that the person must deliver the alcohol to a person not affected by alcohol. With respect to restricting delivery times, as the opportunities for lawfully delivering alcohol after 10:00 pm are already limited, we do not think legislative change at this time appears to be warranted. I am informed that although liquor stores trade until 10:00 pm, if they apply for a late delivery extended trading permit, the sale must occur before 10:00 pm and the delivery made before midnight. I am advised that, as at the end of August 2025, only around 20 licensed liquor stores of about 680 across Western Australia hold this extended trading permit, which is about 3% of all liquor stores. I am further informed that over 700 hotels and taverns are authorised to sell packaged liquor and may offer a delivery service, which may be up to midnight. However, it appears that this trading model is generally done by a minority of that cohort. Importantly, appropriate consultation with industry and other key stakeholders on any proposed changes to these longstanding trading arrangements would be required.

The member's other proposed amendment, to insert new clause 14A, is to make minimising harm from the use of liquor, including gender-based violence, the paramount objective of the *Liquor Control Act 1988*. Harm minimisation is already one of the primary objects of the act relating to the minimisation of harm or ill health caused to people or any group of people due to the use of liquor. For example, the Director of Liquor Licensing is obliged to, and does, consider harm minimisation in her decisions and takes this responsibility very seriously. The act also has other primary objects that aim to balance harm minimisation with the appropriate regulation of liquor and catering for consumer requirements having regard to the proper development of liquor, tourism and other hospitality industries in this state. Including gender-based violence as an object of the act would also need detailed policy consideration of how to practically apply it across the duties and powers contained within the act.

The Liquor Control Amendment Bill 2025 is the first tranche of the government's liquor amendments, and the bill will introduce proposals to reduce red tape and create efficiency, while strengthening harm-minimisation measures such as substantial increases in penalties for sly-grogging offences, enhancing compliance and enforcement provisions and making the banned drinkers register permanent in the regional areas where it is operating and already making a positive impact. Importantly, the banned drinkers register provision in the act provides for the Western Australian police to issue a banned drinker order if a person is charged with an alcohol-related offence, a police order is issued due to alcohol-related family and domestic violence or the person has been taken into protective custody or issued several alcohol-related infringement notices. In addition, the Director of Liquor Licensing can issue a banned drinker order on the application of a medical practitioner or social worker. These protective orders stop a person who is experiencing significant harms or is causing harms to others, such as an unborn child, from getting access to alcohol.

In the WA Government priorities that were launched recently this year, the government has given a public commitment to continue working to end family and domestic violence. We acknowledge that alcohol is often a

contributing factor to domestic violence, and we will continue to look at ways to tackle this complex issue. I am pleased to advise, as we have previously discussed, that a second tranche of liquor legislation reform is already in the policy development stage. The department is engaging with key stakeholders with a view to implementing further legislative amendments. These stakeholders, including harm-minimisation advocacy organisations, have been providing input about possible changes to the act that would best serve our community.

On that basis, we do not support the amendments, not because we do not agree with the spirit of what the member is trying to achieve, but because we think a process should be undertaken prior to further change of this kind. The second tranche has already commenced, so I think there are opportunities for what the member is talking about to be considered and for consultation to occur.

Hon Julie Freeman: Although the opposition commends the intent behind the amendments, we do not support the amendments.

Amendment and new clauses put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 14 put and passed

Clause 15: Section 103 amended

Hon Julie Freeman: Is the insertion of "in writing" intended to formalise notifications that were previously permissible verbally? What is the practical shift that this will bring?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It is to formalise the process to make it clear so that there is, in effect, an evidence trail of the notice. It is just to tidy up that particular thing.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 16: Section 107 deleted

Hon Julie Freeman: The section on the loss of lodger's property will be deleted due to redundancy. Can the minister please explain what this is and why it is being removed?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: A hotel licensee's insurance policy should cover the matters contemplated by section 107—that is, the hotel licensee should ensure that their policy covers the loss of a lodger's property. The cost to the licensee is the insurance cost and any excess payable. The act's liability amount is currently set in regulation at only \$200 per item, which would not cover most losses in those circumstances.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 17 put and passed

Clause 18: Section 126 amended

Hon Julie Freeman: Western Australia does not have a digital driver's licence yet, so I am curious to know what forms of digital identification will be acceptable in the interim. What forms of digital ID will people who come from the eastern states and overseas be able to use?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Member, this is an enabling provision. According to the advice I have received, people from interstate are presenting digital IDs currently. There is no provision for them to be accepted in that format, so we are just effectively enabling a licensee to accept a digital ID as proof of identity. Honestly, whether or not we get digital IDs for drivers' licences and that sort of thing in Western Australia is not an area I have any knowledge of and neither does the department; that is for the Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure. In time, I suspect we will have such documents available to us here. It seems inevitable as we get more and more wedded to our smart devices.

Hon Julie Freeman: Would the Australia Post digital ID or the Services Australia digital ID be acceptable in the interim?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: This will create an opportunity for regulations to be made that would prescribe which digital passes would be acceptable. Currently, the forms of ID that are acceptable are a current Australian driver's licence with a photograph, a current passport from any country or a current WA Photo Card. The following ones have regulations: a current Australian learner's permit with a photograph, a current hardcopy of the Keypass issued by Australia Post, a WA proof-of-age card and a current card issued by another state or territory that is equivalent to any of the above. The Services Australia identity that the member talked about is not currently recognised. I suppose it is within what is possible when those regulations are made if it is considered appropriate. I am not sure whether there is a photographic part to that ID. That is likely to be a key requirement so that somebody does not present somebody else's phone as their identification. It will be possible as time and technology progresses to regulate which of those things are actually acceptable forms of proof of identity under these regulations. I was also

told by the advisers at the table that apparently this Keypass ID, which is issued by Australia Post, is being phased out anyway, so that is going to fall off the list in time.

Hon Neil Thomson: I will just clarify. Do we not yet have digital ID in WA for our motor vehicle licences?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Not that is recognised under these provisions.

Hon Neil Thomson: When we do have it, which I hope happens soon, this provision will enable the use of that—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: That is correct.

Hon Neil Thomson: Are we the only state that does not have a digital ID?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I do not have the advisers at the table who can answer whether we are the only state without it. It is not their area of speciality. That would sit with the Office of Digital Government or something else, not this particular department. It may be the case, but we do not know, and I am not going to be able to get an answer to that for the member.

Hon Neil Thomson: It is a pretty sad state of affairs. I have stood outside the liquor store and seen people go into the shop. It sounds like I frequent those stores a lot. I have been giving a lot of examples, but I am just telling the minister from firsthand experience that poor, old travellers from across the state arrive and they cannot buy anything, or they have to go back to their car or find some other ID. It is good news that we are getting this here. Are we going to do any advertising interstate to let the grey nomads know that they will be able to come and use the digital ID in WA or are we going to just let it happen?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I do not think we have any plans to advertise: "Come to WA and flash your digital ID around. We are such a great progressive place." I think what will happen is the circumstance the member described. When people furnish their digital ID, it will now be accepted and they will not have to go and dig up some other form of ID. I think those grey nomads, whom I know the member—

Hon Neil Thomson: Talks to.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: No. I was going to say the member relates to them. Those grey nomads are going to be able to get on with their relaxing. My dad is one of those grey nomads. I do not even know where he is most of the time—some caravan park somewhere.

Hon Tim Clifford: I just have a really quick question regarding the digital ID. I have heard rumours that there may be a trial going on in the background. Has there been any interaction between that proposed trial and the drafters of this bill in case, going forward, that will become a mechanism folks will use? Is that something the minister can table? I think I have asked a question about this before, so I just was not too sure.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am reluctant to respond to rumours. This clause allows for the regulation of identity documents to be an acceptable proof of identity. There are efforts to develop a digital driver's licence for Western Australia, but I cannot give the member any more information about that because it is a matter for the Department of Transport. Once it is fully functional, it can be added as one of the digital IDs that can be accepted by the promulgation of regulation.

Hon Neil Thomson: If this bill passes today without amendments—it does not have to go to the other place—when will this provision take effect in terms of using digital ID at our local—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It will be the day after royal assent, which will be Saturday. Under the Interpretation Act, it will be Monday, but that is fine.

Hon Neil Thomson: It is coming soon. Excellent.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 19 put and passed

Clause 20: Section 152YK amended

Hon Julie Freeman: This clause has been amended from the Commissioner of Police "must give" to:

... must —

- (a) ensure all reasonable steps are taken to give the banned drinker a written notice stating that the order is revoked;

What does the clause mean by "all reasonable steps"? Can the minister describe what steps this would include? Is there any issue with tracking down these people to give them a written notice?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: This is one for which the member should have the blue bill. I am not trying to be condescending by the way. It is actually really helpful when doing this because it puts the really obscure way that this is written in context, which is a bit different from some other bills we have been dealing with recently which will become new acts in time as opposed to amendments to existing acts.

If the member looks at section 152YH of the blue bill, it is a change of format; it is not changing the meaning at all. It currently reads that the "Commissioner of Police must ensure" and then (a) and (b), and the drafters in their infinite wisdom have decided to write that the "Commissioner of Police must" and then, (a), "ensure", and, (b), "ensure". In fact, I will show the member.

Hon Julie Freeman: It's all good.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It is all good. It is just the infernal Parliamentary Counsel's Office drafters and their wicked ways!

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 21 to 31 put and passed

Clause 32: Section 115 amended

Hon Simon Ehrenfeld: Briefly, I will not read the introduction of section 115, but I ask whether the minister could tell us how a licensee would know of the person's criminal status?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The amendment we are dealing with relates only to the penalties; it does not create a new offence. This is an existing provision. If the member reads the clause, he will see the language used is somewhat antiquated. The member's question about how a licensee would know is a bit outside the scope of what we are dealing with. I might add that in some respects, licensees have obligations to make themselves aware of certain colourful personalities. Some people are so notorious that they are not to enter onto a licensed premises. If a licensee ought to have known, or knows, and then serves that person—I am not going to say any names, but we can contemplate the kind of people we are talking about—they commit an offence under their licence and will have these additional penalties imposed on them. Depending on the kind of licensed establishment, some of these licensees will have very good knowledge about who and who is not a notorious individual.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 33 to 40 put and passed

Clause 41: Section 98 amended

Hon Julie Freeman: This clause will increase hours on Good Friday, Christmas Day and Anzac Day, but not for takeaway alcohol. I am wondering why no takeaway alcohol? Can a licensee apply for a licence to sell takeaway alcohol on those days?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It is probably better to understand this from where we have come from in this regard. Essentially, under current practice, there are a multitude of applications to trade or extend trade on those particular days. Effectively, we will remove the requirement to make that application and therefore reduce the administrative burden on those licensees to trade for that extended period. In effect, we already have extended trading on those days. Licensees just have to go through a process, which obviously places some burden on them. We did not want to go further than that and have takeaway alcohol included because of the solemnity of the days. Obviously, the licensees we are contemplating might be places that are serving alcohol in—how would I describe it?—a relaxed, comfortable environment that is good for social cohesion and all those sorts of things as opposed to people buying considerably larger amounts of alcohol and then taking it away and drinking it in a separate location. In terms of whether or not a licensee could make an application to sell takeaway alcohol on these days, they can, but the practice is to refuse them.

Hon Julie Freeman: Just to follow that up, what about a cellar door, for example, for which a big part of the business model is for people to come and have lunch and wine and walk out with a box of wine. Are they able to do that on Good Friday, Anzac Day and Christmas Day?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: It is not the case with takeaway alcohol. Restaurants could continue and still have the tastings and all those sorts of things, but people could not then buy however much alcohol they might choose to buy on those particular days.

Hon Simon Ehrenfeld: Being of a non-Christian background, I certainly do not want to be saying how people of Christian faith should be celebrating Good Friday and Christmas Day. I am not a veteran either and do not want to be lecturing on how veterans should be celebrating ANZAC Day et cetera. What consultation has there been with relevant church or veteran groups on this change?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We covered off on consultation in quite a lot of detail during consideration of clause 1. A number of groups that have an interest in those particular days were consulted. They include, for example, Catholic and Anglican organisations and the Returned and Services League of Australia. As the member can imagine, there is a diversity of views on it.

As a non-secular government, or is it a secular government? I can never remember which one we are. As a non-religious government, we make laws for all Western Australians. Those two days are incredibly important to

certain individuals in our community, but we have to recognise that for others they are not. Anzac Day is a day of solemnity and not of celebration but of commemoration for the contribution that was made. It is also part of the Anzac tradition, and it used to be part of the military service, that people would get an alcohol ration, so alcohol on Anzac Day is not generally a matter that is inconsistent with the traditions of our servicemen and women.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 42 to 69 put and passed

Clause 70: Part 2 replaced

Hon Julie Freeman: This clause deals with abolishing the Liquor Commission. It transfers powers to the State Administrative Tribunal and gives significant power to the director. Is the minister satisfied that the position of director can shoulder the responsibility without the Liquor Commission?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am told that it will not have a practical impact on the director. The director is already undertaking those functions, and so the abolition of the Liquor Commission and transferring that administrative power to SAT is consistent with what the government has been doing with all sorts of things as it gets through the statute book. In fact, we had a debate about some of that during the course of the Assisted Reproductive Technology and Surrogacy Bill. Matters can be directed to SAT instead of the Reproductive Technology Council because we are abolishing that council. The member will see that, across the years, these things have been done slowly, but they are ending up in SAT. SAT is a specialist administrative tribunal that has a range of members sitting on it who have different experiences and typically work in areas with the skill set they bring to the tribunal.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 71 to 103 put and passed

Clause 104: Section 152YT amended

Hon Julie Freeman: Apologies, Deputy Chair, I am starting to feel the effects of late finish last night. I am getting slower and slower in my reaction times.

This relates to the banned drinker order being applied for by a medical practitioner or social worker, for example. This requires the director to provide written notice to the applicant of a banned drinker order, but the amendment will delete this. If someone, particularly a medical professional or social worker, applies to put someone on the BDR and the director approves the application, why would the applicant not be notified in writing of the outcome of the application?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: We are trying to get down to the brass tacks of what is happening here. We are removing the Liquor Commission and some of these provisions relate to that bespoke process. In the decision-making, the provisions of the State Administrative Tribunal Act will come into force and effect. That includes section 20 specifically, "Notice of decision and right to have it reviewed to be given by decision-maker". The director is a decision-maker in this circumstance. Section 20 provides:

- (1) If this subsection applies to a reviewable decision, the decision-maker is to give any person who has a right under an enabling Act or section 44(3) to have the decision reviewed by the Tribunal written notice of —
 - (a) the decision; and
 - (b) that right.
- (2) Subsection (1) applies to any reviewable decision unless —
 - (a) the decision does not adversely affect the interests of the person who has that right and ...

The provision goes on. I do not think I need to read it all out in detail. What it is not doing, effectively, is removing the obligation on the director to provide written reasons and information about the decision. One of the key principles of administrative law is that a decision can be considered—I am trying to think of the right word—appealable if a decision-maker has not given sufficient certainty and reasons for making their decision. Not only do those administrative law principles apply, but also the provisions of section 20 apply. Effectively, what we have here will become redundant, so the drafting has been tidied up to make it focus more on the obligations on the director that sit outside the section 20 process.

Hon Julie Freeman: Just to follow up on that, it came to mind while the minister was talking that if all these things will go through State Administrative Tribunal processes and the majority of the people who are on the banned drinkers register and who are likely to be given one of these orders live in regional and remote areas, because that is where these things are in place, will there be anything in place to make sure that they can access the State Administrative Tribunal and those processes with some level of fairness and equity, given their remoteness?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: There are much lower hurdles to get over to access the State Administrative Tribunal than to perhaps access a court. I can only speak generally in terms of the impact for regional people. The tribunal has the power to hear matters via video link and things of that kind, which can help people in remote areas, particularly if they are able to present at a courthouse that has those facilities or the local community resource centre and those sorts of things. There is considerably more flexibility around the SAT processes than might apply to the District Court, the Supreme Court or some other jurisdiction. The other issue is that SAT is a full-time, ongoing administrative tribunal, so its resources and practices are much better than having this bespoke Liquor Commission, which, in effect, is a single subject matter body with limitations in terms of how many people can sit on it, who can deal with it and where it can sit. I suspect it probably uses the facilities of the SAT if it needs to run hearings in any event—it has just been confirmed that it does. Those additional considerations for regional people are already part of the core business of the SAT. I think the member can be assured that even though we cannot remove the tyranny of distance and poor internet and those sorts of things that many regional people face, it will hopefully make access less of a barrier for them.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 105 to 135 put and passed

Title put and passed

Report

Bill reported, without amendment, and the report adopted.

Third reading

Bill read a third time, on motion by **Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment)**, and passed.

STATE DEVELOPMENT BILL 2025

Third reading

Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House) (3:25 pm): I move:

That the bill be now read a third time.

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt (3:26 pm): I was not planning on going first. I am going to have to wing it now because someone had to stand! Let me just pull up my notes; I really did not expect that.

I want to make a brief contribution on the third reading of the State Development Bill and outline the key reasons that I cannot support this bill and why my colleagues will not be supporting this bill either. At the heart of this is the inadequate consultation on the bill. We heard many times during Committee of the Whole that this bill was about the government asking the government about government processes and that there was no significant or adequate broader consultation on what this bill would look at. When a very significant bill will make very significant changes, we would expect the key groups that will be impacted by it to be consulted during the construction of the bill. We heard again and again that they were not. We also heard that the first groups to be engaged, interestingly, were not key renewable energy and decarbonisation peak bodies and industry groups, but were more traditional industries that are not particularly involved in the decarbonisation and renewable energy space, including the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies and a range of property companies. In fact, it was not until days later that the non-government organisations were engaged, and it was very hard to see how their views were incorporated into the legislation that is before us.

Although they were not consulted, we certainly heard a wide range of substantial critiques. Fundamentally, those critiques provide strong evidence for why this bill cannot be supported. At the heart of the critique that we heard again and again is that this bill heavily concentrates power in the hands of the Premier, without robust checks and balances. In fact, one key commentator and journalist in this space labelled this as, "The Premier can do whatever he wants bill". Even after this long discussion, I still get a very strong sense that at the heart of the bill we have a Premier who will consult with himself to do whatever he wants—that is what this bill does—alongside his hand-picked Coordinator General. That should give us all very grave concerns. The more the Committee of the Whole unpicked this bill, the more problematic it became. Going through it, there was no sense of it becoming more supportable, and the more my colleagues and I asked questions, the less supportable it became, and that is particularly worrying. It would be fair to say it was a long night and a long two days of debate. This is a substantive bill, and it is important to quote from key groups like the Law Society of Western Australia and others who said that these are some of the most substantial changes to the approvals process in our state. We dealt with this bill very quickly over a couple of days. Unfortunately, no matter how much work we have done, once we are approaching three o'clock in the morning it is not humanly possible to ask good questions and get good answers. When we have a bill of this magnitude, impact and scale, that is particularly disappointing.

I will highlight one more thing. There were some questions in the very early hours of the morning that my colleagues were answering, and the more I heard the answers to those, as tired as we all were, the more I thought I certainly could not support this bill. Unfortunately, here at the third reading stage, I feel no more confident in the impact of those key changes, including around the priority project designation, direction notices that can be given to public authorities, modification orders and the timeframe clause. All those things will fundamentally change how we make good decisions in the public interest, with good information and transparency, and whether, when we are doing so, our key organisations and institutions are capable of such.

The other thing we learned, for which there was agreement across the chamber, even from those who support the bill, was the acknowledgement that the key aspect of speeding up projects and approvals was unlikely to work anyway. Not only was it unlikely to work in that regard, but those approvals may not be quicker. We certainly saw that in previous reforms in the planning space whereby we have taken away the frameworks, safeguards and community engagement and have not got better outcomes. Now we will see that scaled up to projects of any kind across this state, where we probably will not have quicker approvals. What we will have is less community engagement, less transparency, less checks and balances and most likely suboptimal outcomes that do not protect the environment or serve the broader interests of Western Australians. That is why at the third reading of this bill, I remain, sadly, all the more convinced that this bill should not be supported and should be voted down at this last stage.

I must say this is not over. The standing orders are quite clear: a bill can be voted down at any stage. I hope members were listening last night. If members understood and reflected on the debate last night and the day before, they would vote down this bill at the third reading stage. The Parliament would do its job, and we could ask the government to bring back something else that actually addresses those concerns. I think that, frankly, is the only option at this point. If the bill does not get voted down, then we will be marking today, and its likely passing in the lower house next week, as a key moment in this state. We will look back and go, "What did we do?"

We had an interesting debate last night about uranium. The Labor Party's side of the chamber was very clear that it does not support uranium mining or such projects. It would be fair to say, and I was thinking about this last night when I got home, that we have a government that has been in power now for almost nine years. That time has flown. In nine years time, we can almost guarantee this government will not be in power and we will have another government—one that has publicly said, through debate, that it supports the fast-tracking of uranium mining. Therefore, in a blink of an eye, as a result of a decision we make today, we can see that will very likely happen. I often think it might not be just on uranium mining and it might not be just on nuclear power. The decision might be on issues like fracking, our northern jarrah forest, Alcoa or critical minerals—all the things that deserve good, robust decision-making and a well-considered process. We will look back on this moment and realise that, actually, we did not put any of those protections in place because we gave all the power and all the framework for that decision-making into the hands of one person: the Premier; Minister for State Development. I suspect we will look back on this moment and go, "How did we do this? How did we make those mistakes? How do we undo this?" Members have to reflect upon that; that is not where we want to be.

Remember, what we are undoing today is many years, in fact many decades, of work by Parliaments that have put in place legislation to make improvements. This bill, in one fell swoop, will undo the Parliament's work on 40 acts. In one quick week of debate we will have rushed through a huge change to all that work that those Parliaments have done. As we mark this time, on 11 December 2025, I hope I am wrong. I will only be wrong if, for some unusual reason, the legislation does not get used or is not effective—of course that will make it absurd in its own kind of weird way. If it is used as intended, we will be right and that will not be a good thing because our environment and many of our communities will be all the poorer for it. We might have a whole bunch of shiny, big, new projects, but they might not necessarily be the kind that we would have seen had we done the hard work and made sure we did the good planning, invested in the right infrastructure and actually enabled those projects rather than going around 40 pieces of legislation and pretending that planning and environmental approvals were the problem. It is for those reasons that at the end of this long debate on the third reading I still cannot support this bill.

Hon Rod Caddies (3:39 pm): The debate on this bill has been quite an experience. One Nation was accused by Hon Dr Steve Thomas and others of being in an unholy alliance with the Greens to delay the bill.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I am glad to see you came out of it. That's very good.

Hon Rod Caddies: Yes. Hon Dr Steve Thomas went on to use up a huge amount of time listening to the sound of his own voice and, along with the Greens, kept us here until 3:00 am. Our position at One Nation was that this very significant bill should be referred to the Standing Committee on Legislation. It showed merit but there were good reasons to send it to committee. There were a lot of unknowns and the Greens asked a lot of questions.

One Nation is the only party that has been consistent on the need for proper review of matters in the Legislative Council and the progression of the State Development Bill illustrates this very clearly. The Greens wanted to send

the bill to the legislation committee for proper review, which I agree with, but refused to do the same thing with the surrogacy bill. Therefore, it is very clear the Greens do not really go on principles when it comes to the bills—
Hon Dr Brad Pettitt interjected.

Hon Rod Caddies: The Greens will only send things to committee if they are in the party's interests or support its ideology.

Another amazing thing during the debate was the dynamic between the government and the opposition. I thought at times that Hon Dr Steve Thomas had joined the Labor Party. Talk about an unholy alliance! I thought the minister had morphed into the body of Hon Dr Steve Thomas.

Several members interjected.

The Acting President: Order, members! It is going to be difficult for Hansard.

Hon Rod Caddies: It seemed like Hon Dr Steve Thomas was answering the Greens' questions directed to the minister for him. It was like he was in government.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas interjected.

Hon Rod Caddies: Talk about an unholy alliance! That is what I saw there. Maybe it was a glimpse of the future. Maybe we will see a formal Labor–Liberal allegiance going forward, like the one in Germany. Its version of the Liberal Party, the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), is in a formal alliance with its version of the Labor Party, the Social Democratic Party (SPD). They were forced to unite because the highest polling party in Germany is its version of One Nation, the Alternative for Deutschland (AfD).

Point of order

Hon Simon Ehrenfeld: I am sorry to raise a point of order on my learned friend, but we need stick to the third reading debate, as much as I personally am interested in what he is talking about.

Several members interjected.

The Acting President (Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur): Honourable member, the scope of the third reading is narrow and needs to focus on debate on the bill. Please keep within the scope of the third reading, thank you.

Proceeding resumed

Hon Rod Caddies: I will do my best, Acting President.

As I was saying, after the committee stage last night, maybe the Liberal and Labor Parties should merge. They should stop pretending they are not one and the same; they did not really convince me during the committee stage last night. I mean, they could call themselves the "uni party", but everyone else does. To borrow from Hon Anthony Spagnolo's contribution to my motion yesterday, they could mix their colours.

Point of order

Hon Stephen Dawson: I appreciate this is humorous. The honourable member as the leader of a party will get to make an end of year contribution when we get to members' statements tonight, but the task at hand, Acting President, is the third reading on the State Development Bill, and the honourable member is not giving a third reading speech.

The Acting President (Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur): Hon Rod Caddies, when another member rises to speak, you need to sit down and take your chair. Can you please keep your speech within the scope of the third reading, thank you.

Proceeding resumed

Hon Rod Caddies: Yes. Thank you, Acting President. I will skip past the humorous parts I was throwing in between—

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Tell me later. The Christmas grinch.

Hon Rod Caddies: Yes. I am just checking some notes here because I want to make sure I am keeping on track for the third reading.

I said before that we are unlikely to support this bill, and the way debate on the bill has progressed has not really changed my mind. This bill can indeed be referred to as the "let's get around existing laws" bill. I think that was mentioned by members here.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: The unholy alliance is back.

Hon Rod Caddies: Obviously there was not much of an alliance.

Several members interjected.

The Acting President: Order, members!

Hon Rod Caddies: Despite not agreeing with a lot of what the Greens members said as they dragged out debate on this bill to the early hours, I support their right to do so. I note that they were able to prepare a huge number of questions. I guess that could be, you know, the extra staff they have got. It might have helped with that.

The State Development Bill is not in the best interests of Western Australians. The debate did not change my mind on that, and, as such, we will not be voting in favour of this bill on a matter of principle.

Hon Ayor Makur Chuot: You just said you would support it two minutes ago.

Hon Rod Caddies: No, I did not.

My notes have a bit of humour, and I am not sure I can keep completely on track for the third reading, so I will sit down and finish my contribution there.

Several members interjected.

Hon Rod Caddies: Actually, I will continue a little bit more now that I am getting interjections.

Hon Kate Doust interjected.

Hon Rod Caddies: Pardon? Would you like to repeat the comment?

Hon Kate Doust: I am happy to get to my third reading contribution to talk to you about how to deliver a third reading speech, if that that assists you?

Hon Rod Caddies: You seem to always have a go at me, so I am happy to continue.

Hon Kate Doust interjected.

The Acting President: Order, members! Can you please deliver your speech within the scope of the third reading debate and please put it through the Chair and not directly engage with members.

Hon Rod Caddies: Yes. Thank you, Acting President.

Last night, the Greens asked a lot of questions. There was no cooperation from the opposition. We saw that, obviously, deals had already been done. You know, the true alliance was going on. One Nation did go across for one amendment. I thought that debate was quite a good one and Hon Dr Brad Pettitt put forward a very good argument. Hon Dr Steve Thomas debated him on the point and it looked as though there was a good convincing argument and the amendment should be supported. I was not going to support any of the amendments. I looked at them and then listened—that is what we do—to the debates going on. I thought that was a very good debate. The returns from the opposition member explained why he did not. In the end, it looked like he had been convinced. There was no change or shift in my mindset that it was actually a good debate and there was a convincing argument there. From memory, it was something like that there would be an extra couple of months or something. It was only a couple of months, but a couple of months would make a difference. I thought that was a pretty good argument in the end and it convinced me to go across and actually vote. I think that is what we need to do, and that is what it is all about—being convinced that changes can be made to make it a better bill. I thought that amendment would do that. Yes, it was a good experience seeing that debate take place and it is how it should happen here. But anyway, I will leave it there, thanks. That is all I will say.

Hon Sophie McNeill (3:49 pm): I rise to contribute to the third reading debate on the State Development Bill 2025. Let me start by making clear, and it will not be a surprise to anyone in this chamber, that like my fellow Greens colleagues, I deeply oppose this bill and the unprecedented powers it will create. I appreciate the contribution my honourable colleague Hon Dr Brad Pettitt made, outlining our concerns and why we will not be supporting this bill. During the Committee of the Whole process, the Greens did their best. In here, in what is supposed to be a house of review, we did our best to examine and interrogate the provisions of this bill and to unearth exactly what these new powers will allow. Because of how vague and broad this legislation is, and how the content of this bill stood in stark contrast to the publicly stated intent, we will not be supporting this bill. I am really proud of the work that was done in this place and the information that we learned, and how the Greens shone a light on the risks and the consequences within this bill. It absolutely reinforced why we will not be voting for it this afternoon.

The Greens were the only ones in this chamber who engaged seriously and critically in the Committee of the Whole process, with a bit of help from our crossbench colleagues.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: No, you agreed. You really agreed. You were answering the questions, honourable member. You were sitting there cheering them on.

Hon Stephen Dawson: Engaging critically.

Hon Sophie McNeill: Yes, seriously and critically.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: If that's not engagement, I don't know what is.

Hon Sophie McNeill: It is extremely telling that some of the strongest supporters of this bill are the opposition, given what they stand to gain if they ever regain power. After this process and after listening to these debates and hearing the two major parties gang up together to ram this through, it is why the Greens cannot support this bill and why we will not be voting for it this afternoon—ramming it through before Christmas.

My fears about this bill—

Hon Dan Caddy interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: Pardon, Hon Dan Caddy?

Hon Dan Caddy: You had all the time you needed. It wasn't rammed through. There was no guillotine order.

Hon Sophie McNeill: No—

Several members interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: The surrogacy debate was never guillotined—

The Acting President (Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur): Order, members! Hon Sophie McNeill.

Hon Sophie McNeill: Thank you, Acting President. We did not have to be here till 3:00 am last night. We were here because this government promised its corporate overlords that this bill would pass before Christmas, and they ganged up—

Several members interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: No, we had our questions to ask. We could have sat next week. We were happy to come back next week. You did not want to.

Several members interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: No, we did not have to do this. This was entirely on you.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Why don't you take responsibility for your actions? You chose to be here.

Hon Sophie McNeill: I am proud of what we did last night.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: That was your choice.

Hon Sophie McNeill: We had no choice.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: You blamed us. You had plenty of time.

Hon Sophie McNeill: We were not even informed—

The Acting President: Order, members. Honourable member, if you direct your speech through the Chair, there will be fewer interjections, which will be easier for Hansard. Thank you.

Hon Sophie McNeill: Thank you. It is very telling. I have not been in this house for long, but I have learned that this government is particularly defensive about the things that it knows in its heart that it is not proud of. I have got to say that my fears about this bill—

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Have you learned anything in this place? Have you actually learned anything?

Hon Sophie McNeill: Yes, I have—absolutely. I have spent my career observing people, watching them and reporting on it. I have learnt a lot in this place, member.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: You don't have any of the same issues the rest of us have, do you? You're just sitting up there on your high perch—

Hon Sophie McNeill: Like I said, they are the most defensive when they know they cannot be proud of what they are doing.

Point of order

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt: I have a point of order.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: You're going to take a point of order! You are? The temerity.

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt: Absolutely.

Several members interjected.

The Acting President (Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur): Order, members!

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt: A point of order—the accusations that were thrown by Hon Matthew Swinbourn towards the member as interjection of a personal nature were unparliamentary.

Hon Kate Doust: But what did he say that you took offence to?

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt: Do you want me to repeat it?

Hon Kate Doust: Yes, you actually have to say what you found offensive.

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt: I think it was unparliamentary to say that somebody had not learnt anything in this place since they have been here. I think that should be withdrawn at this point.

Several members interjected.

The Acting President: Order, members! I have been given advice that no unparliamentary language has been used. However, if the member has taken offence—

Hon Sophie McNeill: I have taken offence, actually.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Good luck to you then. You don't have the call; you shouldn't be standing up.

The Acting President: Members, there is no unparliamentary language. However, if the member has taken offence, I would request the comments be withdrawn.

Hon Ayor Makur Chuot: I have a point of order. It is regarding the pointing that has just happened from the honourable member. This is the second time it has happened. Yesterday, I got freaked out when one of our members here pointed at me very aggressively. I got freaked out because I am not a violent person and I feel like this house should be safe for us as females and anyone who is here. I am just bringing this to people's attention. I think pointing to other members in a very aggressive way is not parliamentary.

The President: Honourable member, while I understand your discomfort, there is currently no point of order. I did not see the action. However, you know that I do find actions such as that to not be in the best interest of positive debate in the chamber.

Members, the question before the house is that the bill be read a third time. I would request that this debate be done, as most of our debate is, in a calm and orderly manner, within the confines of our standing orders and our etiquette, and that members respect the member on their feet.

Proceeding resumed

Hon Sophie McNeill: Thank you, President. I would like to take a moment to thank all the parliamentary staff who were here until 3:00 am and for all their work this year. That incredible commitment to be there with us was so appreciated. I would also like to thank all the department and ministerial staff who are here until three o'clock this morning. Thank you for your incredible work. I would also like to acknowledge the incredible tenacity and commitment of my wonderful colleagues in our Greens team: Hon Dr Brad Pettitt, Hon Jess Beckerling and Hon Tim Clifford. We are all in the same position in that we will not be voting for this bill this afternoon. We cannot support this bill in its current form, but I am really incredibly proud of the effort that we put in during this process to expose the failings of this bill. Our incredibly hardworking staff at the Greens spent a considerable amount of time interrogating the provisions and failures of this bill. I know that my office alone had more than 80 pages of questions, but unfortunately, because of how this was rammed through last night, we only got through about 60% of them. I could have kept going until about 5:00 am—

Several members interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: I could have—

Several members interjected.

Hon Sophie McNeill: I was very proud to stand in this house alongside my colleagues last night as we interrogated this bill. We collectively exposed its failings in many ways, and we reinforced why we cannot support the bill this afternoon. My colleague Hon Tim Clifford exposed the unprecedented centralisation of powers that this bill will allow—that it gives to the Premier—and how dangerous this is to our democracy. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt revealed the absolute failure to consult with the renewable energy sector and the Heritage Council and how it overrides planning laws. Do not get him started on planning laws, even if it is one o'clock in the morning.

The President: Order, member. Member, you might be aware that the scope of the third reading debate is quite narrow. Part of that is about not revisiting the process of the development of the bill from second reading or in Committee of the Whole. A third reading debate gives us an opportunity to discuss why the bill should not or should pass—that which gives you the opportunity to vote. It is not about the committee stage, not the detail of how it went into committee or the debate in committee. It is simply why the bill should pass or not.

Hon Sophie McNeill: Thank you, President, for your guidance. I was discussing why our Greens team will not be supporting this bill. It is because of what we found out during the Committee of the Whole process. Unfortunately, it confirmed some of our worst fears.

I want to reiterate some of the concerns that we have about the bill and the failure of this chamber to pass the amendments that I put forward. We had very strong arguments about why the bill required further oversight, scrutiny and investigation—because of how broad the bill is. Among our concerns about why the bill should have gone to committee was the unprecedented amount of power that the bill will give to the executive—not just the executive as in the cabinet, but the executive as in one person, the Premier; Minister for State Development. That is the largest reason why we are not supporting this bill—that incredible unprecedented power. As my colleague Hon Dr Brad Pettitt mentioned, we heard the warnings from the Law Society of Western Australia about the bill and how it will give extraordinary powers to the executive arm of government and allow ministers to override conventional protection safeguards. All of this was confirmed during the debate, and that is why we will not be supporting the bill and voting for it this afternoon. The referral motion was not successful, despite the fact that the bill will permit modification orders to override 40 pieces of legislation and will allow joint decision notices to twist the arm of public authorities. It will place undue time pressures on public authorities to make decisions about priority projects. Despite warnings from the Centre for Public Integrity and the Law Society and those organisations begging for it to be sent to committee, that did not happen. Unfortunately, the major parties united in this chamber to turn it into a box-ticking exercise for the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, and that is why we will not be supporting the bill. In its current form, the bill will serve the purposes of fossil fuel billionaires like Chris Ellison and companies like Woodside rather than the best interests of Western Australian families.

The government has consistently stated that the bill will be used for decarbonisation. It has said that it will be used to speed up the transition to renewable energy and in the fight against the climate emergency. If that is what this bill will do, we would wholeheartedly vote for it this afternoon, but, as I have discussed during the debate, it is extremely hard to trust the government on this. There is nothing in the bill about renewable energy or the green transition and nothing that will narrow the scope to what the government claims it will use it for. That is why we will not be voting for the bill this afternoon. It is really hard to trust a government that has always put the interests of fossil fuel companies first in this state, and this bill will give it the power to fast-track absolutely anything it wants. That is why we will not be supporting this bill. We want those powers to be narrowed.

In an answer I got at about 3:00 am when I asked why one of the acts had been included in schedule 1, we learnt that it is one of the acts that will be able to be used to override the current approvals processes for new pipelines at Barrow Island, which is home to Western Australia's most polluting project, Chevron's massive Gorgon gas project. Only then did we learn why that act had been included in the legislation, and that is why we will not be supporting the bill this afternoon.

Despite the government's claimed intent of the bill, there is not a single reference to renewable energy in it. During the Committee of the Whole process, we learnt, as my honourable colleague Hon Dr Brad Pettitt outlined, that there was no consultation with climate change organisations. Despite the claimed intent of the bill, they were not consulted. There was no consultation with renewable energy companies or green stakeholder bodies, despite the claimed intent of the bill. We learnt that consultation on this bill was internal to government. We were told it was because it focuses on coordinating and streamlining internal government processes to enable decisions to be made quicker. When we asked why it was all internal to government, we were told that it was cabinet-in-confidence. That is why the bill is in the state it is in, and that is why we will not be supporting it. It is hard to imagine that the Northern Territory's Country Liberal government provided a more transparent and public consultation process than the Cook Labor government did in Western Australia. We exposed this during the Committee of the Whole process. No draft versions of the bill were provided to the people of Western Australia, no explainers were handed out and there was no public consultation process—nothing. Crickets. That is why this bill is in the state it is in and why the Greens will not be supporting this bill.

During the Committee of the Whole process, our worst fears were confirmed. The longer it went on, the more we learnt about the terrible powers that the bill contains and what it will enable. There will be nothing to stop this or any future government from using the bill to fast-track projects or modify 40 pieces of existing legislation to approve massive new gas projects. Nothing in this bill will stop it from fast-tracking fracking in the beautiful and pristine Kimberley. Nothing in this bill will stop the fast-tracking of uranium mining, and that is why we cannot support the bill. We heard numerous times from opposition members about how excited they are to overturn the Labor Party's current ban on uranium mining in this state. That is the issue. That is the problem with the bill and why we cannot support it. We should be making legislation for the future, not just for now. That is one of the most alarming parts of this bill and why we cannot support it. There is zero futureproofing. We heard time and again that there will be no carve outs under this legislation for any sector.

I was grateful that we got confirmation that these powers could be used for something like Westport. I thought the opposition might be interested in that. It legitimises our concerns that these powers could be exercised to the

detriment of the beautiful, precious places that we love, like Cockburn Sound, where Westport is planned for. It is a place that has been cared for by First Nations people for thousand of years, and now we get to say, "Hurry up; we want a state significant project to take place there." Again, another reason we cannot support the bill is the lack of safeguards and the impact that could be had on these precious places that we love.

We discovered during the Committee of the Whole House process that so much of the operation of the powers in the bill will be determined in the guidelines. I am hopeful that the government's commitment to public consultation is legitimate, but I am concerned that we still do not know anything about how this process will happen, what it will look like or when exactly it will occur.

The Greens tried to reason with the government with our amendments, because it claimed that the fast approvals process is for the purpose of decarbonisation and the renewable energy transition. That is what it has claimed this bill is about. We thought: "Great; that's fantastic, but let's lock it in and futureproof it for when those guys get in." Finally, we are hearing from the government about renewable energy and the desire to be a renewable energy superpower. That is fantastic. We love it. It has taken years and years, but finally it is there. But if we do not futureproof legislation like this, we hold no hope for what could happen when the other side of the house gets in. That is why we put forward dozens of amendments. They were really well researched, thought out and detailed amendments to make the bill better and safer and to futureproof it, because we cannot support it in its current form.

The government claims that the bill is for decarbonisation, but when we moved an amendment to exclude fossil fuels, it voted against it. The government claimed that the environment will not pay the price with this bill, but when we moved an amendment to ensure that those safeguards were put in, it voted against it. The government claimed that the bill is for shipbuilding, but when we moved an amendment to ensure that our critical minerals would not end up in F-35 fighter jets, it voted against it. The government claimed that it is not its intention to allow this bill to facilitate the fast-tracking of new uranium mines or nuclear power plants, but when we moved an amendment to ensure that a future Liberal government could not use these powers, as it has made clear is its intention, once again the government voted against it. That is why we will not be supporting the bill. The government did not accept a single Greens (WA) amendment. It was happy to do a dirty deal with the Liberal Party. If the Liberals did not accept any of our amendments, the government would accept some of its, and they would work together to ram this through before Christmas. That was the deal that was done.

This bill will give extraordinary powers to one person, Premier Roger Cook, who is also the Minister for State Development. They are extraordinary, unprecedented powers. The thing with this bill is that the government could use it for the good of the planet. It might sound exaggerated, but, no, it actually could. This state has a massive problem as one of the world's largest exporters of liquefied natural gas, a dangerous fossil fuel. The decisions that are made in this place, in this state, have the power to influence the planet's trajectory and take us from climate emergency to a better place. This bill in its current form could also lead us to climate apocalypse. It could be used to approve massive new gas projects. What happens here matters. This legislation matters. It could be used to build the renewable energy we need. That is what we, the Greens, hope, and that is what the community is begging for. The government has told us to trust it, and history will soon demonstrate what the true intent and usage of this bill's powers will be. Every government member of this house has a responsibility to ensure that this will be used for good. This is on them now. If they allow it to be used for new fossil fuels, they will have to look their children in the eye and tell them that they enabled that. If the opposition uses it to fast-track new uranium mines, it is the same deal.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: We were going to do that anyway, irrespective of this legislation.

Hon Sophie McNeill: That will be on you. As I outlined, the Greens will not be supporting this bill, but we look forward to the day when we can support some form of progressive climate legislation, because we urgently need it in this state. We are here ready and waiting to work with the government. Bring it on. Our children can no longer afford to wait.

Hon Dr Brian Walker (4:12 pm): I had promised the Leader of the House that I was not going to rise and so I do apologise. It will be a very short contribution.

For this third reading speech, the question really is why the State Development Bill 2025 should not progress to be approved by the Governor. Give us a good reason, after all the debate, the bill should not progress. I think that the answer is that the bill is not actually fit for purpose. There is a bigger question. The reason is that we have the equivalent of a landmine placed on the road in front of us. It will not do any harm there at all. It is a beautiful landmine. It may be beautifully organised. It may even be painted in nice colours. It is a beautiful landmine, but if someone steps on it, they will get torn to bits. This bill is now standing in front of us like that landmine. It has the potential to cause tremendous harm.

This morning, I was speaking to two members of the press about this. I said, "Listen, I trust the government of the day now to absolutely do the right thing." Should the current opposition come into Parliament, I would expect exactly the same thing. I do not have a problem with that. The problem I have is when, in the unforeseen future, another flavour of government comes in. Can we trust that new government not to use the landmine to tear us to

pieces? The levers of change are now established. The bill, as it now has been passed and will go for approval to the Governor, has the power to cause us great harm. For this reason, I say the bill should not progress. It will, but it should not. I want my voice to be documented on that. We have had tremendous shouts from the government side trying to shut down, if you like, the opposition to this, but the opposition really ought to be clear minded.

I have to give a bit of a serve to my friends the Greens, and I have to agree with my colleague Hon Dr Steve Thomas. He is quite right: the changes that the Greens tried to bring in would have just slowed progress at times when the whole point of the bill is to actually speed up progress. I take their point. I can see why they were doing that, and I agree with that, but we cannot resolve that. It will not be fixed.

The bigger problem I have is that this is actually part of a larger piece. I mentioned this yesterday and I will say it again. I will keep on repeating this because I am terrified that in Australia, and in Western Australia particularly, we are allowing ourselves to occupy the position of a vassal state, paying tribute to a state that is more than happy to exploit our resources. It is not their country being destroyed. They are very happy. We are going to do it for them. They will be very happy if we bypass the laws that are causing obstruction and allow them in to exploit our reserves, cause us damage and maybe supply ingredients for weapons of mass destruction. It is possible. Actually, it is our problem.

For this bill, we heard last night in Committee of the Whole that the actual problem is that the regulations of the other laws have slowed progress of project applications. That, of course, is intolerable. We need to have business moving forward—yes, with due concern for the environment. When I say "due concern", I mean that the environment comes first, because when the environment goes belly up, we go belly up, too. There are lots of demands, including the needs of people and businesses to run a profit. Rather than doing the obvious and necessary of addressing the deficiencies of the laws that are already in place, we put another law in place. Hon Dr Steve Thomas said that this law is not going to work either, and I quite agree with him. We will wait and see.

We are going to continue down the road of having insufficient laws, causing more backlogs and not doing what it should do. We are just adding more regulations and more legislation to the mishmash. We should be removing laws, removing legislation and freeing up business. We should be doing that. I would like to see how we could move to doing that rather than putting in legislation that technically allows the simple transfer of power from Parliament to the hands of an executive, and only a few members of that executive, to do basically as it wills. What will happen when the transnational corporations working on behalf of that failing great power want to extract our soils and our precious minerals for their business? Do members think they care anything about us at all? Are they allies of any value at all? No, we are simply the ones they can exploit. By putting this legislation through, we are basically saying to them, "Come on! Exploit us! It doesn't matter. If a few dollars are dropped our way, we'll be thankful for any drippings we can get from your beneficent hands."

This bill will not serve the people of Western Australia nor will it serve the people of Parliament. It will serve the interests of a very few. I would think that, as such, it is legislation that will cause us problems. This morning, I said to reporters, "I hope that looking back in five years' time, I do not have to say, 'We told you so!'" We are telling the government so now. I really hope that I am wrong because if in five years' time I am saying "We told you so", we are in deeper doo-doo than we were before. For that reason, this bill should not pass.

Hon Tim Clifford (4:17 pm): It is no surprise that I, as part of the Greens (WA) team and the Greens spokesperson for transparency and democracy, rise for this third reading speech in opposition to the State Development Bill 2025. The Greens have always stood up for transparency and democracy in every state in this country and for all levels of government. We have stood for checks and balances to ensure that our systems of power are not in any way exposed to corporate influence, greed or corruption. Coming back to WA, we have the interests of the oil and gas industry and their spokespeople at the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, and to be honest, those interests are painted all over this bill.

From the beginning or inception of this bill, it was clear that was always going to be opposed by the Greens. In the first instance, it was opposed for the way it was put to the public, which was very expedient. It was very vague when it came to the first briefing. As we moved through every clause of this bill, and I believe there are 115 clauses, there was little in the bill to reassure the public that any measures have been taken to avoid the total removal of the existing system's checks and balances and those relating to where we stand in this place. For example, at clause 10, I moved an amendment to ensure that there would be some level of qualification for the appointment of the Coordinator General, but the government opposed that. The justifications for that were weak, at best. My amendment, new clause 18A, which really goes to the heart of what I put on the table, was to make sure that we put safeguards in place. It is quite extraordinary that the government would not entertain any form of amendment that would safeguard our community. I found it extraordinary. I asked for the minister to table any evidence—

Point of order

Hon Stephen Dawson: When the President made a contribution a little while ago, she told us what was within the scope of a third reading speech. My understanding is that what the honourable member is now talking about is part of the second reading debate, and I urge you, Acting President, to bring that to the member's attention.

The Acting President (Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur): Honourable member, I would like to read this to you guys one more time, as the President has explicitly provided guidance on what a third reading speech should include:

The member will be aware that the third reading is a very narrow debate about why the bill should or should not be read a third time. The member cannot retrace the steps of the debate during the second reading or committee stages because the chamber has considered those matters and has made its determination. Any comments made in addition to that need to specifically relate to why the bill should or should not be read a third time.

I encourage the member to please keep it within the scope of the third reading speech.

Proceeding resumed

Hon Tim Clifford: This bill should not be supported in any form because from the beginning to the end, the bill has no safeguards or checks and balances on conflicts of interest or on the huge concentration of power, which is unprecedented. I am disappointed that I stand here in my third reading contribution articulating the point that goes to the heart of this. After all the days we spent on the bill, there are no reassurances in it that can give us any confidence in the future. I have said over the previous couple of days that this bill is an absolute scandal waiting to happen. Alarm bells were ringing throughout the stages of the debate. This bill puts an enormous amount of power in the hands of too few people and has hardly any checks and balances. That is why it must be opposed and members should vote against it at the end of the third reading debate.

As the Greens' transparency and democracy spokesperson, we oppose the bill for all the obvious reasons. I believe that both the major parties will regret supporting this bill and the expedient way they put it forward. One day a headline will reflect terribly on the decisions that were made over the previous days during the course of the debate.

Hon Jess Beckerling (4:24 pm): I rise to give a very brief contribution to the third reading debate on the State Development Bill 2025. Like my colleagues in the Greens, I will oppose the bill. I am sure that will come as no surprise to anyone. Nothing that I have learnt in the passage of this debate has changed my mind on the substance of this legislation. In fact, many of the things that I learnt over the past two days have confirmed my view that this legislation is alarming and dangerous.

Some of the key issues that have been well prosecuted in the debate on this legislation are the lack of transparency and public accountability that it provides, the fact that it concentrates unprecedented power in the Premier's office and that there has been no external consultation. That, along with its near certain negative impacts on nature, culture and communities, is why I will not support its passage. I am proud of the herculean effort to ensure that in spite of the extraordinarily rushed timing and the broad scope of this bill, it was subject to scrutiny and explanation in this chamber over the past two days. Although this was, of course, the first time that I have sat in this chamber until three o'clock in the morning, I understand that doing that was a necessary part of this work and there are times when bills are urgent. Having raised three kids who kept me awake for several years between them, I am accustomed to staying up into the wee hours, getting on with it and staying kind and focused while I do it. However, this bill was not urgent for any good or substantive reasons. The bill is absolutely unprecedented in the way that it concentrates power and it required far greater review than it received. It seemed to me that there were members of this chamber who came to realise just how serious and problematic this legislation was in real time as we were discussing it late into last night. My colleagues in the Greens and I were learning more about its implications as the answers came in. There is no doubt in my mind that it warranted a proper deliberative examination by the Standing Committee on Legislation.

Another alarming gap in the passage of the legislation that we have heard a little about—I will not harp on it—was the lack of willingness to engage with the numerous and substantive amendments that we brought to the debate. Those amendments would not have changed the fact that this legislation is cooked, but they would have limited the damage and brought it more in line with the stated intent of the bill and the second reading speech that the government gave in this place and the position that was presented in the media.

I will highlight a couple of stand-outs. The first was the refusal to add any safeguards for the protection of nature and cultural heritage. If this bill was not designed to rush projects through, even if they risk having a major impact on nature and heritage, why not provide that protection in the legislation? The government refused to engage on the issue of the bill prevailing over the Environmental Protection Act. It is the only bill ever to do so. "Unique" is the word that the minister used. That paves the way for the Premier to override the Environmental Protection Act to push his favourite project through, which could be anything at all and, in the future under a Liberal government, as we have heard loud and clear, would almost certainly be uranium mines and nuclear power stations. That is what makes this such alarming legislation.

One thing, though, has been enormously heartening for me throughout this debate, and that is the depth of commitment and capacity in the community sector to face these sorts of retrograde actions by this government. Extraordinary efforts have been made by the Conservation Council of Western Australia, the WA Forest Alliance, Greenpeace and legal bodies such as the Environmental Defenders Office, the Law Society of Western Australia, the Centre for Public Integrity and former Premier Carmen Lawrence, and so many others who recognise the threat

that this poses and who made their voices clearly heard. I want to thank and congratulate them for everything they have done to raise awareness and push back.

I have also been extremely proud of our team, not only the Greens MPs in this house, all of whom have gone above and beyond doing the work that this chamber needs to do, but also our incredible staff. While we were in here at three o'clock this morning, despite our best efforts to get our staff to go to sleep, they were glued to their screens, supporting us admirably and showing their next-level solidarity.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

(Continued at a later stage of the sitting.)

QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

The President: Members, are there any questions?

PERTH MOTORPLEX CONTRACT—EASTSIDE CONCRETE

1286. Hon Nick Goiran to the minister representing the Minister for Police:

I refer to the minister's incomplete answers to my questions without notice this week. Noting that this is the final scheduled sitting day for this house this year, I respectfully ask that direct answers be provided to the following direct questions consistent with the basic principle of responsible government.

- (1) Has WA Police provided information to VenuesWest regarding the Perth Motorplex contract awarded to Eastside Concrete?
- (2) If no to (1), has there been any communication by WA Police with VenuesWest about this matter?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following response from the Minister for Police.

- (1) The Western Australia Police Force continues to provide advice to government on this matter.
- (2) Not applicable.

DION BARBER—LEGAL CASE

1287. Hon Nick Goiran to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:

I refer to the revelation during the annual reporting hearing by the Insurance Commission of Western Australia that the Premier has never been briefed by the commission on the case of Mr Dion Barber, and that the involvement of Mr Don Punch, now the member for Bunbury, is not being disputed in the appeal.

- (1) Has the Premier read the judgement and the adverse findings involving Mr Punch?
- (2) If no to (1), will the Premier commit to doing so during the parliamentary summer recess and before the resumption of Parliament in February 2026?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the Leader of the Opposition for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) The Premier has been briefed on the content of the judgement.

KEYSTART—SHARED EQUITY SCHEME

1288. Hon Tjorn Sibma to the parliamentary secretary representing the Treasurer:

I refer to Keystart's shared equity scheme.

- (1) How many customers since 1 January 2025 have taken up a shared ownership home loan?
- (2) How many customers since 1 January 2025 have taken up an Urban Connect shared equity home loan?
- (3) How many customers are expected to access the Keystart shared equity scheme in 2026?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Treasurer.

- (1)–(3) Keystart aims to encourage as many Western Australians as possible to access its shared equity home loans. Since 1 January, 108 people have accessed a shared equity loan or received pre-approval under Urban Connect.

GRIFFIN COAL

1289. Hon Dr Steve Thomas to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for State Development:

Happy Thursday! I refer to the Cook government's extraordinary \$308 million taxpayer-funded bailout of the insolvent and foreign-owned Griffin Coal company. As at 11 December 2025, I ask:

- (1) How much fiscal drawdown of the \$308 million "grant" has been directed to or received by the receivers, liquidators and managers of the insolvent Griffin Coal?
- (2) Is the \$308 million total the maximum amount the government will spend to prop up Griffin Coal to 30 June 2026 or will the fund be increased again?
- (3) Will the government provide funding to Griffin Coal for activity beyond 30 June 2026?
- (4) Will the government extend the *Collie Coal (Griffin) Agreement Act 1979* beyond 30 June 2026, and if not, why not?
- (5) If no to (3) and (4), what commercial solution is now in place to ensure the continuity of coal and electricity supply?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. Honourable member, I am going to miss Thursdays for the next eight weeks! Anyway, this is the answer.

- (1) As at 11 December 2025, \$209.1 million has been provided to the receivers and managers of Griffin Coal.
- (2) Yes—based on current forecasts.
- (3)–(5) The government has previously stated that it expects the continuation of the mine to be on a commercial basis. The government is currently in discussions with commercial parties to determine what should occur after 30 June 2026.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT—COMMUTER PAYMENT OPTIONS

1290. Hon Steve Martin to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the activation of contactless payments on public transport on Monday 8 December, and reports on social media that passengers using the new tag-on method have been issued infringements by transit officers because those officers have not been issued card readers to determine whether passengers have tagged-on using the new system.

- (1) How many infringements, including any infringements that were later withdrawn, were issued to Transperth passengers who tagged on using the new contactless payment methods on:
 - (a) Monday 8 December 2025;
 - (b) Tuesday 9 December 2025; and
 - (c) Wednesday 10 December 2025;
- (2) Have all transit officers been issued with new card readers, and, if not, why not, and when will they be?
- (3) Why was this problem not anticipated, given the considerable time and expense that has gone into this program?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

- (1)–(3) The data cannot be provided at present as the Public Transport Authority requires four business days to process data on infringements issued to Transperth passengers. All transit officers, revenue protection officers and Wilson bus security officers were issued devices prior to the contactless payment rollout on 8 December 2025, as well as being provided with training on how to operate the devices.

CYCLONE SHELTERS—PORT HEDLAND COMMUNITY CENTRE

1291. Hon Neil Thomson to the Minister for Community Services:

Is Hon Matthew Swinbourn the Minister for Community Services?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I am the minister.

Hon Neil Thomson: That is why it says the Minister for Community Services; I will get it right eventually!

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: I appreciate the member trying.

Hon Neil Thomson: I am trying.

The President: I hope you do it speedily, honourable member!

Hon Neil Thomson: I ask:

- (1) When is it expected that the Port Hedland Community Centre will be fit for purpose as a cyclone evacuation shelter, noting it is now six weeks into the cyclone season?
- (2) What are the options for residents of Port Hedland if the Town of Port Hedland is not able to confirm that the Port Hedland Community Centre is fit for purpose as a cyclone evacuation shelter?
- (3) Is the minister aware that the Exmouth Recreation Centre on Murat Road is not a cyclone evacuation centre, and how does the minister propose to clarify the confusion caused by the minister's response to question 1263 asked on 10 December 2025?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Local governments, in collaboration with the local emergency management committee and relevant emergency management agencies, including the Department of Communities, are responsible for determining whether the Port Hedland Community Centre is fit for purpose. The Department of Communities is unable to advise on these timeframes.
- (2) Residents of the Town of Port Hedland will have access to a safe nearby shelter in South Hedland at the JD Hardie Youth and Community Hub.
- (3) I reject the premise of the question. The Department of Communities has advised that the Exmouth Recreation Centre has been identified and listed as one of the evacuation centres identified by the Shire of Exmouth in collaboration with the local emergency management committee.

DEMERSAL FISHING BAN

1292. Hon Julie Freeman to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to Legislative Council question without notice 1256 answered on 9 December 2025, which confirmed that the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development modelled the west coast demersal scalefish resource to recover to target levels by 2040.

- (1) Did DPIRD provide any advice recommending that the west coast demersal fishery be permanently closed beyond 2040 or was the decision to make the closure permanent made solely by the minister?
- (2) Will the minister table all DPIRD advice, modelling or documentation that recommended a permanent closure, and, if no such advice exists, will the minister state that explicitly for the record?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

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

- (1) The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development advised a total closure was required to recover the west coast demersal scalefish resource to target levels by 2040. Rather than suspend these businesses' ability to fish for 15 years, which appears to be what the member is inferring, I made the decision to provide a \$20 million buyout of the licences of the 41 boats fishing for demersal in the west coast bioregion. The \$20 million figure represents around four times the gross value product of these fisheries.
- (2) I refer the member to the scientific stock assessments that I tabled in this place on 18 September, and listed as tabled papers 602, 603, 604, 605 and 606. The opposition has also been provided with the science, and the shadow spokesperson for fisheries has been given briefings by me, DPIRD scientists and attended the Fishing Futures Forum.

DEMERSAL FISHING BAN—NANNYGAI STOCKS

1293. Hon Rod Caddies to the Minister for Fisheries:

I refer to the recent decision by the WA Labor government to prohibit commercial demersal fishing in the west coast bioregion.

- (1) Can the minister advise whether nannygai stocks in the South West region of Western Australia are depleted, overfished or at risk?
- (2) If the minister maintains that nannygai stocks are in danger, will she table the most recent scientific assessments and data that justify including nannygai in the blanket closure?
- (3) Will the minister consider introducing a targeted exemption allowing a limited number of licensed commercial fishers in the South West region to harvest nannygai at sustainable levels, specifically to supply fresh local fish to Western Australian consumers and businesses?

- (4) If the answer to (3) is no, why is the minister unwilling to adopt a more nuanced species-by-species management approach for demersal fisheries, given the markedly different stock status and recovery rates of individual species such as nannygai compared with more vulnerable indicator species?

Hon Jackie Jarvis replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. It is clear that no-one has read the science that has been tabled because it is all contained in there—but I will proceed with my answer:

- (1)–(4) The most recent stock assessment indicates that the demersal species bight redfish—nannygai—in the South West area are at adequate levels. However, with the fishing gear used, and high mortality rates due to barotrauma, commercial fishers cannot effectively target individual demersal species without impacting other at-risk demersal species.

CANNABIS—AUTISM

1294. Hon Dr Brian Walker to parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer the minister to the results of the first major study to be undertaken examining cannabis use in autistic adults, noting that they showed a 73% decrease in short-term overall symptom severity. Although I note that more research will need to be done into longer term reliance:

- (1) Is the minister able to provide an accurate estimate of the number of adults with autism in WA, noting that the Australian Bureau of Statistics survey from 2022 showed notable increases over the four preceding years?
- (2) Will the minister ensure that this latest United Kingdom-based research is shared with the relevant officers in the Department of Health so that the potential for new and effective treatments may be considered going forward?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Health.

- (1) There are no Western Australia-specific adult figures published as of 2025.
- (2) WA Health and the clinical professionals employed in the public sector continue to review research and its translation and application to clinical circumstances.

GAMBLING—BEHAVIOURAL INSIGHTS TEAM REPORT

1295. Hon Tim Clifford to the minister representing Minister for Racing and Gaming:

I refer to the Behavioural Insights Team (BIT) research on gambling harm that I mentioned in my previous question without notice. For the sake of clarification:

- (1) Was the director general of the former Department of Local Government the customer for the report?
- (2) Why will the government not release a copy of the report?
- (3) Has the Gaming and Wagering Commission received a copy of the report?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Minister for Racing and Gaming.

- (1) Yes. The former Department of Local Government, Industry Regulation and Safety commissioned the report on behalf of the Problem Gambling Support Services Committee (PGSSC), as the PGSSC is not a procuring authority.
- (2) No decision has been made in relation to the release of the report.
- (3) Yes.

ENVIRONMENT—CAMBRIDGE GULF

1296. Hon Sophie McNeill to the Minister for the Environment:

I refer to Boskalis Australia's plans to mine up to 70 million cubic metres of sand from Cambridge Gulf to export for construction.

- (1) Can the minister please confirm that Cambridge Gulf is an important habitat for sawfish, turtles, barramundi, crocodile nurseries and the snubfin dolphin?
- (2) Is the minister aware of any endangered or critically endangered species that inhabit Cambridge Gulf?

- (3) Has there been any consultation on this proposal with community and/or potentially impacted businesses?
- (4) Has there been any assessment of the impact this proposal will have on water quality and biodiversity of the Ord River?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(4) The Environmental Protection Authority's report on this proposal is subject to an appeal. As a decision-maker, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on this matter until the appeal process has been completed.

CORRECTIVE SERVICES—UN WORKING GROUP ON ARBITRARY DETENTION

1297. Hon Dr Brad Pettitt to the minister representing the Minister for Corrective Services:

I refer to yesterday's ABC article "UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention denied visits to NT prisons, meetings with government":

- (1) Has the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention been denied access to any facilities across the WA custodial estate, including both youth detention and adult corrective services facilities, during this visit?
- (2) If yes to (1), which facilities were the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention denied access to, and what were the reasons for this denial?
- (3) What, if any, facilities across the WA custodial estate have the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention been granted access to?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following response has been provided by the Minister for Corrective Services.

- (1)–(3) The state government worked collaboratively with the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to enable a range of visits to WA facilities, including prisons. Where access was not able to be coordinated, it was explained the state would attempt to facilitate future requests.

HOMELESSNESS—COMPANION ANIMALS

1298. Hon Amanda Dorn to the Minister for Homelessness:

I refer the minister to the experiences of people living rough in Western Australia who rely on companion animals for safety, support and connection.

- (1) Is the minister aware of how many companion animals are currently living on the streets with their homeless guardians?
- (2) What is the minister doing to address the challenges faced by people experiencing homelessness who have companion animals, including access to crisis accommodation and essential services?
- (3) Is the minister aware of the importance of these companion animals to their humans?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Data of this kind is not routinely collected.
- (2) The Cook Labor government's approach to homelessness is grounded in person-centred evidence-based support that recognises the diverse needs of individuals, including those with companion animals. Where appropriate and practicable, some crisis and supported accommodation services can accept therapeutic support animals alongside clients. Additionally, a number of programs will consider domestic pets and companion animals on a case-by-case basis, taking into account service dynamics, safety requirements and the nature of the accommodation.
- (3) Yes, I am aware of and recognise the significant role that pets play in supporting individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

SOCIAL MEDIA BAN

1299. Hon Philip Scott to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

I refer to the Attorney General's media statement of 9 December titled "WA joins national effort to defend social media age ban".

- (1) How much money is the Western Australian government contributing to the so-called national effort to defend the Commonwealth's social media age ban?
- (2) What community consultation was undertaken by the WA government before deciding to defend the Commonwealth's social media age ban?
- (3) The media statement states that the social media age ban empowers parents. Can the Attorney General explain how forcing kids to prove their identity to an overseas social media company empowers parents?

Hon Dan Caddy replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The Attorney General has provided the following answer.

- (1) The Attorney General of Western Australia filed a notice of intervention in the High Court of Australia proceedings S163/2025 on 9 December 2025. The Solicitor-General of Western Australia and the State Solicitor's Office will act for the state in the matter. It is not possible to estimate what the cost of the intervention will be at this time.
- (2) Community consultation is not undertaken when deciding whether the state should intervene in a constitutional matter. Consistent with this practice, no consultation occurred in deciding whether to intervene in this matter.
- (3) The Commonwealth reforms are a landmark shift that moves responsibility onto the platforms and not young people or their parents to ensure that the digital environment is safer, more accountable and more supportive for families. These laws give parents the support and tools to help shield children under 16 years of age from risks such as cyberbullying, mental health stresses, exposure to inappropriate material and addictive platform design.

STAMP DUTY RELIEF

1300. Hon Simon Ehrenfeld to the parliamentary secretary representing the Treasurer:

I refer to the rapid rise in transfer duty revenue in recent years, rising from around \$1.2 billion in 2018–19 to \$3 billion now and estimated to reach \$4 billion this year.

- (1) As higher property prices have been delivering much higher transfer duty revenue for some five years, why has the government not provided stamp duty relief for home buyers beyond the first home owner relief?
- (2) Will the government provide some relief for home buyers in the \$700,000 to \$1 million price range and, if not, why not?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I provide the following answer on behalf of the Treasurer.

- (1)–(2) The state government delivered transfer duty relief as part of the 2025–26 budget, increasing the exemption and concessional thresholds.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

1301. Hon Phil Twiss to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to question without notice 1262 asked by Hon Steve Martin and answered on 10 December.

- (1) Since 2022, has Main Roads Western Australia awarded, either as a contract or subcontract, any work to Kerbing West or Eastside Concrete?
- (2) What were the two Public Transport Authority projects mentioned in the minister's answer on 10 December?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

Sorry, member, but what number was that question?

Hon Phil Twiss: It was question without notice 1262, or C1474.

Hon Samantha Rowe: I do not have the answer in my file, but if the answer comes in before the end of question time, I will provide that to the member.

PERTH PARK: BUSINESS CASE SUMMARY

1302. Hon Michelle Hofmann to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the government's recently released *Perth Park: Business Case Summary*, which relied on modelling provided by the Office of Major Transport Infrastructure Delivery.

- (1) For each of the years 2024–25 to 2055–56, what is the undiscounted dollar value for each of the quantified costs in figure 2, being maintenance, operational expenditure and capital expenditure?
- (2) For each of the years 2024–25 to 2055–56, what is the undiscounted dollar value for each of the quantified benefits in figure 3, being net tourism expenditure, net inflows and contingent valuation?
- (3) Can the minister confirm that figure 3 presents a profile of quantified benefits to 2054–55 as stated or is it to 2055–56 as displayed in the figure, and up to which year are the associated average benefits calculated?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

- (1)–(2) Advice is being sought on the legality, probity and confidentiality issues around the release of the information.
- (3) The profile of the quantified benefits and calculation of average benefits are to 2055–56.

AUSTRALIAN LAW REFORM COMMISSION—REPORT 143

1303. Hon Michelle Boylan to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:

I refer to recommendations 28 to 30 of Australian Law Reform Commission report 143 on the greater use of prerecorded testimony, an issue that remains in Western Australia after the passage of the *Evidence Act 2025*, and to the *Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy 2025–2035*, which includes no commitment to improving how survivors give evidence.

- (1) Why were prerecorded evidence reforms not included in the *Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy 2025–2035*?
- (2) When will survivors in regional WA have an easier way to give evidence than having to testify in a traditional courtroom?

Hon Dan Caddy replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) Implementation of the *Sexual Violence Prevention and Response Strategy 2025–2035* is guided by action plans. Action item 18 in the *First Action Plan* relates to the implementation of the *Evidence Act 2025*.
- (2) The act contains significant protections and assistance measures for victims of sexual assault. It maintains and improves two currently available witness assistance measures—prerecording orders and video link separation orders. Courts will be permitted to make these orders in any circumstances they consider appropriate. The act also provides that witnesses who are complainants in criminal sexual assault matters are to automatically be treated as special witnesses, which entitles them to certain supports and assistance. As stated during Parliament's consideration of the legislation, approximately 18 months is required to prepare for its commencement.

HEALTH INSURANCE ACT 1973—SECTION 19(2) EXEMPTION

1304. Hon Anthony Spagnolo to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:

I refer to section 19(2) of the *Health Insurance Act 1973*, which prevents Medicare benefits from being claimed for services delivered by or on behalf of government unless an exemption is granted.

- (1) Will the minister please table the list of radiation oncology locations in Western Australia that currently operate under a section 19(2) exemption?
- (2) For each location identified in (1), will the minister advise:
 - (a) the provider and physical location;
 - (b) the date the exemption was granted; and
 - (c) whether the exemption applies to all Medicare-eligible radiation oncology item numbers or only a subset?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Health.

- (1)–(2) There is no established process to request an exemption from the Commonwealth under section 19(2).

FITZROY CROSSING NIGHT SPACE PROGRAM**1305. Hon Nick Goiran to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:**

I refer to the Attorney General's answer on 4 December 2025 to my question without notice, which revealed that the Attorney General had not been provided with an evaluation report of the Fitzroy Crossing Night Space program that commenced on 3 March 2025, even though it was to be completed by late November 2025.

- (1) Has the Attorney General now received the report?
- (2) If no to (1), has the Attorney General taken any diligent steps to address this?
- (3) If yes to (1), will the Attorney General table the report?
- (4) If yes to (2), what has been done and what is the outcome of that action?
- (5) If no to (1), (2) or (3), why not?

Hon Dan Caddy replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided to me by the Attorney General, and I note that it is current as of Tuesday 9 December when the question was asked.

- (1) No.
- (2) Yes.
- (3) Not applicable.
- (4) The report is forthcoming.
- (5) The report has not yet been provided to the Attorney General.

STAMP DUTY**1306. Hon Tjorn Sibma to the parliamentary secretary representing the Treasurer:**

I refer to windfall gains in stamp duty revenue received by the state government.

- (1) Will the state government commit to further stamp duty relief to assist homebuyers?
- (2) If not, why not?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Treasurer.

- (1)–(2) The state government delivered transfer duty relief as part of the 2025–26 state budget, increasing the exemption and concessional thresholds. The budget contained \$1.4 billion in additional investments to boost housing supply and affordability, lifting our total additional investment to \$5.8 billion in recent years.

GRIFFIN COAL—CONSULTANTS**1307. Hon Dr Steve Thomas to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for State Development:**

I refer to the government's ineffective outsourcing to find a solution to the ticking timebomb that is the insolvent and foreign-owned Griffin Coal.

- (1) What is the total that has been paid to the following consultant firms for advice on the insolvent Griffin Coal during 2023, 2024 and to 10 December 2025:
 - (a) KPMG;
 - (b) Ad Astra Corporate Advisory;
 - (c) Sternship Advisers;
 - (d) Preston Consulting; and
 - (e) Ashurst?
- (2) What reports have the above groups provided to government and on what dates?
- (3) How many of the reports are available for public scrutiny, and can the minister please provide those that are?
- (4) As of 10 December 2025, how many of the aforementioned groups are still engaged by government, and have any additional Griffin consultants, entities or advisers been engaged by the government?

Hon Stephen Dawson replied:

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

- (1)–(4) The honourable member is requesting a significant amount of information that is not able to be prepared in the limited time provided. If the honourable member decides to put the question on notice, the Minister for State Development will endeavour to provide a response.

CONSUMER PROTECTION—REAL ESTATE AGENTS**1308. Hon Tim Clifford to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Commerce:**

How many complaints regarding real estate agents were received by the Consumer Protection division in the 2024–25 financial year?

Hon Dan Caddy replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

There were 683.

SCOTT RIVER WIND FARM**1309. Hon Rod Caddies to the Minister for the Environment:**

I refer to the decision by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to not assess Synergy's Scott River wind farm proposal.

- (1) Can the minister confirm that the EPA has found that the proposed Scott River wind farm may have potential impacts on:
- (a) local terrestrial environmental quality from disturbance of acid sulphate soils;
 - (b) terrestrial fauna from ongoing risks of collision with wind turbines;
 - (c) inland waters from dewatering and disturbance of acid sulphate soils; and
 - (d) social surroundings from construction and operational noise, dust and vibration, and visual amenity?
- (2) Can the minister guarantee that the wind turbines to be installed by the state government at Scott River will not cause asbestos contamination in the local environment?

Hon Matthew Swinbourn replied:

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(2) In accordance with the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, the independent Environmental Protection Authority has determined not to assess the proposal. I table a copy of the EPA's decision report that sets out the reasons for this decision.

(See paper [911](#).)

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: The proponent is responsible for development and construction decisions and activities, including compliance with relevant legislation and regulations.

WESTPORT—BRIEFING REQUEST**1310. Hon Steve Martin to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to my 28 July letter requesting a briefing on behalf of the opposition from the Westport office, and to multiple parliamentary question follow-ups to which a clear answer to the briefing request was not provided.

Is the briefing request contained in the letter denied?

Hon Samantha Rowe replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question and provide the following answer on behalf of the Minister for Transport.

I refer to the answer given to Legislative Council question on notice 760.

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH—STAFF—WORKING FROM HOME**1311. Hon Neil Thomson to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Health:**

I refer to question without notice 1284 answered on 10 December 2025. The following questions refer to the fewer than five staff who are currently working under work from home arrangements interstate or internationally.

- (1) In which state or territory has each worker been residing under the current work from home arrangements?

- (2) In which country has each overseas worker been residing under the current work from home arrangements?
- (3) For what period of time has each interstate worker been working from home?
- (4) For what period of time has each international worker been working from home?

Hon Pierre Yang replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Minister for Health.

- (1)–(4) There are no overseas working arrangements. The disclosure of this information has the potential to identify the employee.

DECARBONISATION—LNG EXPORTS

Answer

Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House) (5:00 pm): I would like to provide an answer to Hon Sophie McNeill's question without notice 1130 asked on 20 November 2025, and I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

1. Yes, we support the use of WA LNG to assist countries in their energy transition.
- 2–4. Information on the composition of shareholders for companies that meet with the Premier's office is not recorded. If the Member has a question about a specific company, I invite her to submit a question on notice.

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE 800, 839 AND 855

Paper tabled

Papers relating to answers to questions on notice were tabled by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House)** and **Hon Matthew Swinbourn (Minister for the Environment)**.

GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS—OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

Answer

Hon Samantha Rowe (Parliamentary Secretary) (5:01 pm): I have an answer for Hon Phil Twiss. The answer for question without notice 1301 is as follows.

- (1)–(2) Main Roads WA does not directly award subcontracts to subcontractors. As noted in question without notice 1262, Kerbing West was also engaged on four projects between 1995 and 2000 under the leadership of Richard Court. The Public Transport Authority has indicated that it was engaged on the Yanchep rail extension and the new Midland station project.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT—PATRONAGE

Answer

Hon Samantha Rowe (Parliamentary Secretary) (5:01 pm): I would also like to provide an answer to Hon Dr Brad Pettitt's question without notice 1269 asked yesterday, and I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*. I also table an attachment that comes with it.

(See paper [915](#).)

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

- 1–2. Patronage data is published on the Public Transport Authority's website, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics publishes population data, if the Member wishes to make a calculation.
To assist the member, I table the PTA patronage data and the ABS Western Australia snapshot. The WA Labor Government is proud of its efforts to make public transport more accessible and affordable, including by delivering 72km of new rail and 23 new stations through METRONET; making public transport more affordable by capping fares at two-zones—and soon—one-zone; and providing new, convenient fare payment options.

BUSSELTON HEALTH CAMPUS AND BUNBURY REGIONAL HOSPITAL—"BLACK" BED STATUS

Answer

Hon Pierre Yang (Parliamentary Secretary) (5:01 pm): I would like to provide an answer to Hon Steve Martin's question without notice 1117 asked on 19 November 2025, and I seek leave to have it incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted for the following material to be incorporated.

- (1)–(3)

Due to the additional manual verification required, an answer will be provided on the next sitting day of the Legislative Council.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER—AUDIOVISUAL UPGRADES

Statement

The President (Hon Alanna Clohesy) (5:02 pm): Members, before we return to orders of the day, I just need to make a very brief statement for your attention and in your best interests. This is a reminder to please clear your desks and drawers of all material in preparation for the audiovisual upgrade that will start tomorrow. Any items remaining on desks and in drawers will be cleared and stored by the chamber staff. You do not want that.

PAPER TABLED

A paper was tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

STATE DEVELOPMENT BILL 2025

Third reading

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

Hon Jess Beckerling (5:03 pm): To conclude my remarks from before question time, I put on the record my strong opposition to this legislation and also my gratitude to everyone who worked to oppose it and my pride to represent a party and a broader community of people who care extremely deeply about the legacy that we are leaving. For me, that is a shift from legislation that is written for the sake of big business and powerful industry to legislation that is written to benefit our kids, this extraordinary planet and a robust democracy.

As I have said throughout this debate, this is dangerous, anti-democratic legislation, and we at the Greens (WA) have done everything we could to limit its damage and ensure that the community is aware of its implications. I am pleased that, at the very least, we managed to secure a review clause that has been added to the bill, and I look forward to a thorough review of the outcome of this legislation in five years.

Hon Maryka Groenewald (5:04 pm): I rise to briefly acknowledge what the government says it is trying to achieve with the State Development Bill 2025, which is to strengthen our economy, reduce unnecessary delays and support major projects that are genuinely in the public interest. Of course they are things that we want to support. I recognise that the WA economy and the national economy relies heavily on the resources sector.

The reasons that I support my crossbench members in voting against this bill are perhaps not the exact same reasons that they are voting against it, but I feel it is important to address that nonetheless. This is not a straightforward development bill. Its intent is absolutely understandable but, of course, some of the mechanisms are quite troubling. It is also a short cut around acts of Parliament—the very acts that were created in the first place for deliberate reasons. Those acts were created to protect our environment, develop planning processes and provide accountability frameworks. If the government believes that those acts are no longer fit for purpose, as has been mentioned during the debate on the amendments in the Committee of the Whole, the proper path is to amend those acts. That is how good governance works. As several members said during the committee stage, and as Hon Dr Steve Thomas kindly explained those amendments to me as I was working through them, I have always maintained that I am somewhere in the middle on this bill. I am supportive of industry and open to hearing which laws need to be amended to improve the approvals process, but for me, at the heart of the Westminster system is the principle that power should be balanced, checked and accountable. Allowing one person—any person—to direct decision-makers and to modify how existing legislation applies to designated priority projects undermines the basic principles of good government, transparency and stewardship.

Perhaps members did not have the time to properly interrogate this bill. It has far-reaching implications. If the government is unwilling to subject its own proposal to serious scrutiny, it gives me less confidence in granting it all this additional power. Although it will not change the outcome, I think there are times when it is important to stand with my crossbench colleagues. I might not have the same reasons for voting against the bill as they do, but, again, I am somewhere in the middle. I am definitely pro-accountability and pro-transparency, and I believe that our role in Parliament is deeply important. Responsibility for decision-making in this place must never be handed over simply because the executive finds it inconvenient. For those reasons, I cannot support the bill.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas (5:07 pm): The State Development Bill 2025 will, and should, pass the house today, and it deserves to pass the house today. I will take a little bit of time to explain why. For those who wonder why we are debating these things, the approvals process in Western Australia and Australia is not only broken, but also becoming more broken as time goes by. We saw a decision in the federal Parliament not long ago that made the situation far worse whereby the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act will now be imposed upon Western Australia. That is a federal takeover of Western Australia's constitutional right to manage its lands and waters. The term "unholy alliance" might come up a few times today, but in an unholy alliance between the Labor Party and the Greens—

Point of order

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt: My point of order is that the third reading debate is not about introducing new information. It is quite clear in the standing orders. If we are to be consistent about this, I am just calling it out. Introducing new information about a bill that was not discussed previously is not appropriate.

The Deputy President: I am dealing with the first point of order, thank you, if you would not remind resuming your seat. There is no point of order. The honourable member had barely started his contribution. Let us see where that takes him.

Proceeding resumed

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Thank you, Deputy President. The argument federally about the approvals system being broken can, of course, be divided into two parts: those who want to develop and those who want to stop development at almost any cost. We had a similar debate in the house over the last couple of weeks. We also divided similarly. There are those who want to allow development and build the jobs for the next generation of Western Australians and want their children and grandchildren to be able to perhaps partake in the kind of economic boom that has provided this government with the most wealth that any government of any jurisdiction has ever had. Perhaps it has not appropriately spent the largesse, but it has that largesse nonetheless. This bill has divided us between those members who want an economic future and those who largely oppose development. It has been interesting to watch the house divide between those who are pro-development, those who are anti-development and those who are pretty keen to have a foot in each camp, and there are plenty of those! They say they want development, but they do not want any development really. There have been a few unholy alliances around that process as well.

Let me start by saying that I congratulate my friends in the Greens. I actually thought their contribution to the committee stage of the bill was very good. It was not always perfect, but they raised some very pertinent points. I commend them on their passion. I understand their passion. I understand they are opposed to development and that they take that view, but I think they can take credit for the way in which they presented themselves. I appreciated the contributions made by the Greens members. I think they were good. I mean, they were often wrong, but the passion with which they demonstrated their commitment was good to see. We get the best outcomes for Western Australia when we debate these issues passionately and from a position of knowledge and strength. I appreciated the contributions the Greens made.

The suggestion that this legislation was rammed through the Parliament, though, does them no credit, because that is not true; that is an absolute lie. The Leader of the House and I had this conversation over a number of days in the last week and we agreed that we would both sit here, and I think we sat here pretty much the entire time. I do not remember the Leader of the House stepping out. Maybe he did briefly, but I do not remember it. I did not step out. We stayed here for the entire debate. We agreed that we would stay here until the questions finished. To suggest that it was rammed through, curtailed or somehow cut off is absolutely not true. We were here at three o'clock this morning. If we had not gone home and we were still here, it might have been a problem doing the third reading speeches but we would still be here! It is not true that it was rammed through. We stayed for every question and I think we tried to contribute to every question. We tried to make a contribution. I got up a lot of times and said, "This is why I don't agree with the amendment proposed by the Greens." It was not the case that this was rammed through the Parliament.

We have to approach this on the basis that no changes to this legislation would have convinced the Greens to support the legislation. I know that because I said that during the debate on the motion to refer the bill to the committee. Hon Jess Beckerling not only confirmed that in the debate, but also repeated it. I appreciated the honesty. I appreciate the way she conducted herself in the debate; I thought she was very good. Particularly for a first-term member, her contribution was very good. And I loved the honesty. Nothing would have made the Greens support this bill because they are ideologically opposed to what this bill is trying to do, which is to push through the approvals process in a timely manner.

Hon Jess Beckerling: You could still have agreed to some good amendments to improve the legislation.

The Deputy President: Order!

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: I will come back to the amendments in a bit.

The Deputy President: Order, member! The point of the third reading debate is to hear the member's view on whether the bill should be read a third time, so I am not entirely sure that another party's position on the bill is entirely relevant.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Thank you, Deputy President, for your guidance. The reality is that nothing would have appeased the various members of the Greens that this bill should proceed.

The opposition thinks that the approvals process has fallen in a hole and actually needs to be improved. The amendments that were put up by the opposition were designed to increase the efficiency of the approvals process, with some accountability. I am pleased to say that the government accepted some of the opposition's amendments.

Hon Stephen Dawson: They were the ones that didn't go too far.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: The Leader of the House and I might disagree about whether they went too far. The government was given the opportunity to really drive the approvals process into the positive, but it did not take that up. I am not morally offended; I understand that the government could go only so far. If the government really wanted to improve the approvals process, it might have picked that one up too. The contribution on that amendment by Hon Tim Clifford was outstanding. Thank you for that. I really enjoyed that reference to Joh Bjelke-Petersen. The government might have accepted that and could have taken it further.

None of the amendments the opposition put forward to make this bill better were designed to slow down the approvals process or undermine certainty. The government's one amendment around review of the bill was acceptable because it is a completely normal process to have a five-year review of bills. The opposition and everybody else supported that process. Almost every amendment proffered by the Greens, which were the only other amendments, were almost all designed to slow approvals, and make sure that community campaigns could be mounted to slow or stop approvals. They were by far directly designed to undermine the intent of the bill. For those reasons, those amendments entirely failed. Every Greens' amendment failed because they were designed to undermine the intent of the bill. The opposition occasionally has to make a sensible decision for the benefit of the state of Western Australia. Occasionally, unfortunately for us, that means agreeing with the government and that is what we did in this case. This bill was designed to drive the approvals process forward and make it more efficient. We had no choice but to agree with the government and that is why the third reading of the bill should be supported. It is absolutely essential that it does so.

I have said repeatedly during the debate that we have very little confidence that the Cook Labor government will actually be able to deliver an improvement in the delivery of major projects. I think the house almost universally, with the exception of the Labor Party, agrees with that. If the house were surveyed, it would be found that everybody is in furious agreement, except the government, that the government is pretty average at delivering approvals processes. As I have said repeatedly, this is the government's seventh attempt to try to make the approvals process better. It has had six failures out of six. We are rather hopeful that the seventh attempt might be better. I have to be hopeful—I am an Eagles supporter! I have to be optimistic. I am optimistic that, just maybe, the government might actually improve its performance in approvals.

The state government will have the federal government hanging over its head and making things worse. The government has my sympathies for that. It absolutely does. Of course, with the unholy alliance of Labor and the Greens federally, there are enormous issues. But, just maybe, this government might be able to make some improvements to the approvals process in Western Australia. If there is no other reason for the house today to support this legislation and the third reading of the bill it is that, just maybe, the government might actually make some improvement to the approvals process. Possibly. Maybe. The opposition stands ready to help the government and hopes that it succeeds. We have no confidence—we have watched Labor's performance over the last eight years. It is pretty hard to have confidence when we have seen that in place. The reality is that we hope that this bill will give the government the capacity to make improvements that we have not seen to date. To oppose the bill would be, in my view, churlish. This is not referring to the people who—do not take insult—oppose it on philosophical grounds. That is their position and I understand that. However, from an opposition perspective, if we were to oppose the bill when we believe in improving approvals, a more timely approval sense, and that the government should lift its game in this regard, that would have been churlish. That needs to not happen.

The opposition will, obviously, support the third reading. I have to say that some parts of the debate were really interesting. I thoroughly enjoyed enunciating support for uranium mining in Western Australia. Can I repeat, particularly to my friends in the Greens (WA), that nothing in this bill, whether it got up or not or whether members could block it or not, would actually stop us delivering on that agenda if we had the opportunity. Be assured and comforted that members' failures to make amendments to this bill has made no impact on our agenda. I hope that is of some comfort. We want to deliver those things anyway. The argument that I heard the most during this debate as to why this bill and its third reading should not be supported was about whether this bill is only and exclusively dedicated to renewable energy. I made some comments. I listened carefully to contributions to the third reading debate of Greens members. I really want to make mention of that because it was said that nothing in this bill is about renewable energy or uranium. All of that is true. Do you know what?

The President: Order, member. Before you put the next part, can I just remind you that a third reading speech is not about reprosecuting your argument; it is simply about reasons the bill should pass the third reading stage or not.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Thank you for your guidance, President. I am nearly done. It is absolutely true. This bill is not purely about renewable energy. The suggestion that it is is not true. The bill does not say this. It was great.

It was said that nothing in the bill relates directly to renewable energy. It is true. It is not just about renewable energy. The repeated suggestion that this bill is about only renewable energy and the government has failed if it is not purely about renewable energy is a fallacy. It is a furphy; it is not true. This bill is about development, one part of which is renewable energy. I suspect renewable energy will play a role in this. Other parts will relate to the mining sector. As much as the Greens hate it, it will relate to the gas energy sector as well. I live in hope that it will one day apply to uranium as well. It is not the case. To suggest that the bill should not pass because it was not exclusively about renewable energy is a lie. It is not true. This bill was never exclusively about renewable energy. The government probably gilded the lily in its second reading speech. To be honest, if members of the Greens are not used to this government gilding the lily in its second reading speeches, I am not sure how long they need to be here to be used to it. Second reading speeches are not delivered under oath; they are delivered under parliamentary privilege, which means they are even less likely to be true. The fact that the government talked about renewable energy does not mean the bill is exclusively about renewable energy. To suggest the bill should not pass because it is not exclusively about renewable energy is an absolute nonsense.

As much as I would like to extend the debate tonight, I am going to finish with this.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn: Cruel bastard!

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: Yes, I am.

The reality is that this bill should pass if members believe in an improved approvals process that will allow the projects that will underpin the wealth of the next generation of Western Australians to be delivered. Some of those will be renewable energy and some will not. Some will be gas, some will be critical minerals, some will potentially be iron ore and some will be other things. All those things will be important to the next generation. I am not suggesting that the next generation will manage to be as rich as this generation. I am not suggesting that the future governments of this state will have anything like the money in the money bin that the Labor Party has had over the last seven years. The absolute wealth—the plethora of funds—it has, dare I say, Hon Philip Scott, lucky Phil over here. The money it has! If those in the next generation might want to buy a house at the prices that are being imposed upon them, they will need reasonably well paying jobs, and that means they need this legislation to pass to deliver the jobs of the future to afford the future that they deserve.

Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House) (5:24 pm) in reply: I thank all those members who made a contribution on the State Development Bill 2025. I also want to thank the advisers who have been here for the last few weeks. I acknowledge the Coordinator General, Chris Clark and my namesake, Steve Dawson who sat next to me. It is not often you get two "Stephen Dawsons" in the house, and it is probably just as well we do not. I acknowledge Tahlia Rose, Adrienne LaBombard, Hayley Blight, Sophie O'Keefe and Amy Bracegirdle. It has been a busy few days and I also acknowledge the contribution that all members made last night in the marathon sitting. I, too, have the same view; this bill was not rammed through this place. We would have sat as long as we needed to, but I acknowledge that we answered all those questions that were asked of us and we ended up voting to send this bill to a third reading.

This bill really is about transforming the way that we develop industrial land and deliver transformational projects for Western Australians. It will drive economic growth and job creation across Western Australia and it will support the state's ambitious energy transition and decarbonisation goals. This bill should be passed at the third reading because it will also support the government's Made in WA vision, supercharging our focus on a range of areas including advanced manufacturing, clean energy products and the delivery of major infrastructure projects. This government remains committed to driving these outcomes through the Coordinator General and the powers established under this bill. These powers are significant, but they are not unprecedented. They have been drawn out from our own statute books and statutes successfully rolled out in similar jurisdictions. They will complement our existing approval system and the planning powers under this bill will integrate seamlessly with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act. This is a significant milestone for Western Australia's journey to decarbonise and diversify its economy. I urge honourable members to pass this bill through the third reading stage.

Division

Question put and a division taken with the following result:

Ayes (26)

Andric, Hon Klara
Boylan, Hon Michelle
Caddy, Hon Dan
Carr, Hon Sandra
Dawson, Hon Stephen
Doust, Hon Kate
Ehrenfeld, Hon Simon
Freeman, Hon Julie
Goiran, Hon Nick

Hirst, Hon Klasey
Hofmann, Hon Michelle
Jarvis, Hon Jackie
Kaur, Hon Dr Parwinder
Makur Chuot, Hon Ayor
Martin, Hon Steve
O'Donnell, Hon Andrew
Rowe, Hon Samantha
Sibma, Hon Tjorn

Spagnolo, Hon Anthony
Stratton, Hon Dr Katrina
Swinbourn, Hon Matthew
Thomas, Hon Dr Steve
Thomson, Hon Neil
Twiss, Hon Phil
Yang, Hon Pierre
Cayoun, Hon Lauren (Teller)

Noes (9)

Beckerling, Hon Jess
Caddies, Hon Rod
Dorn, Hon Amanda

Groenewald, Hon Maryka
McNeill, Hon Sophie
Pettitt, Hon Dr Brad

Scott, Hon Philip
Walker, Hon Dr Brian
Clifford, Hon Tim (Teller)

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time and returned to the Assembly with amendments.

COMPLIMENTARY REMARKS

Statement

The President: Members, as is tradition in this place, our members' statements for our last day of sitting before the summer recess are reserved for complimentary remarks from leaders of the parties, and others who may desire. Therefore, I will first of all give the call to the Leader of the House.

Hon Stephen Dawson (Leader of the House) (5:31 pm): Thank you, President, and thank you for your guidance for when we have to make complimentary remarks. It has been an interesting few weeks, and we are all very tired, so that guidance is probably very important this afternoon.

President, can I thank you for the way you have conducted yourself in your role as President this year and the team that you have around you, including Rebecca Condo, who provides assistance to a number of us in a range of ways.

Can I acknowledge everybody around the house. It is hard to imagine. Although we have sat for 16 weeks plus one for estimates, it has actually been a full-on year because, of course, we started the year with our own election, so most of us have been on the road since January. Of course, then you get elected, you get straight into it and straight onto business. It has been a big, big year, so I want to congratulate each and every one of you for making it this far. Of course, while we all have not agreed on everything—sometimes on most things—we have been elected by our electorates in here, and so it certainly is our role to make our views known.

Can I thank the parliamentary staff across the precinct. We are well looked after in our roles. I will acknowledge the usually unflappable Sam Hastings, the Clerk. I think probably at 2:00 this morning he was still unflappable. I certainly acknowledge him for his sound advice, but also the advice that he provides to all of us because he gives it without fear or favour, and of course we all can and do approach Sam and his team. So, Sam, thank you. Thank you to you and your team. You are ably supported by the Deputy Clerk; by our clerk assistants, Daniel and Grant; by the Usher of the Black Rod, Lauren Wells; and I should acknowledge the Deputy Usher of the Black Rod, Hayley Brown; and Brian and Yasmine as well, who look after us. Of course, I acknowledge the team in the chamber, too. To Thabiya, Renae, Lauren, Sophia and Emily—did I miss anyone; I had said Thabiya first, thank you—thank you to you all. Our heads are often in the business of the day, but you are there just to assist us, whether it is to get us glasses of water, make sure we have tabled papers or whatever. I want to thank you for making our lives a lot easier in here. To Lauren and Sophia—oh, and Tina, too—for their patience in terms of the documents that they have to help us with. The Legislative Council team I think does go above and beyond to ensure that this house runs as smoothly as it does, so thank you all.

To the honourable Leader of the Opposition—thank you. We are probably diametrically opposed in terms of our policy positions on many, many areas, but it has been a great pleasure to work with you this year. I have really enjoyed it. I think we have an excellent working relationship. I appreciate the way that you approach the business of the house. I appreciate our conversations, and of course, as I said, while we do not always agree on the policy detail, we certainly share a commitment to getting the business done in this place in the best way possible for everyone. So thank you, Nick, for your contribution.

I acknowledge the opposition Whip. There are not always as many pairs as we would like! Although, there were plenty flowing last night. But can I thank you for your assistance, too, honourable member, because the Whip's role is a challenging role, whether it is in government or opposition. So thank you, and I acknowledge the Greens Whip as well.

Can I also acknowledge and thank the Liberal and National Parties. Thank you for your participation and collaboration this year. I acknowledge Hon Dr Brad Pettitt and the Greens' MLCs, too. Thank you. To the crossbench, I acknowledge you all as well and thank you and wish you a happy Christmas. It is not always easy as a crossbench to assist and to be patient, but you certainly have carried out the work that you do to represent your constituencies, and I acknowledge that professionalism that you show in your job. A number of members—in fact, most—have joined us this year. It is a steep learning curve to come into this place with its, at times, archaic rules and conventions, but I congratulate all of you for making it this far and for contributing in the way you have this year.

I acknowledge the team behind me and thank them for another year of great work. As I said, a number of people have new jobs. The Leader of the Opposition has a new job and I have a new job this year, too. I thank my team for making my life easier, at times—all the time! Being a government MP is not the easiest of jobs because, for

the most part, aside from interjections, they cannot speak on legislation. They have to sit there, do what they are told and do what the boss says. I come from the school of Hon Sue Ellery, so I can do the death stare just as well as she can. Thank you for what you have done and for contributing when you have needed to contribute. Thank you, members, for responding to the death stare on a Thursday when I gave it to you and you have not made a member's statement because we have been tired. You are a brilliant group of people and a great bunch to lead.

I acknowledge and thank Hon Jackie Jarvis, my deputy. Thank you, Jackie, for the role that you play. I get to be good cop more often now and Jackie gets to be bad cop, which is great for me and my kudos. Thank you, Jackie, for also taking up Wednesday in the chamber, which I think is the hardest day when in government having to listen to some of the things that are said during motions or committee reports.

Hon Matthew Swinbourn, our newest minister, has had a great first year. Congratulations. We have already heard people speak about him as a hardworking minister. He has carried some significant legislation this year, so well done and congratulations.

To the parliamentary secretaries who support their ministers in this house, I have to say that this year they have worked harder than in previous governments.

A government member interjected.

Hon Stephen Dawson: I am not saying that the honourable member did not work harder as a parliamentary secretary—I remember that. Certainly in this government they have worked incredibly hard. They have taken on responsibilities like never before. They have had the chance to lead legislation and answer multiple questions. Thank you for what you do. I particularly acknowledge Hon Dan Caddy, who always makes an effort to be here. Thank you for being here this afternoon for my speech.

To Hon Lauren Cayoun, our Whip, who has done an amazing job, again in her first year as government Whip and as a member of this place. Hon Neil Thomson would know that wrangling caucus members is not always the easiest job, and wrangling Labor caucus members can be a challenging task. Certainly with a steadfast and also communicative Whip, I think Lauren has done a great job this year and you, too, make my job and life easier as leader.

For the last few years we have had an annual Legislative Council Labor caucus Christmas bake-off. I want to put on the record that the winning dish was made by Hon Klara Andric, who made a lovely csirke paprikas, I think it was called. The competition was fierce this year, with some amazing dishes being presented, particularly from our new members. Hon Dr Parwinder Kaur baked a delicious sugar-free orange cake and Hon Andrew O'Donnell baked some lovely cinnamon scrolls. He is a man of many talents.

Finally, I also acknowledge the team in my office, both Bek in my ministerial office and my ministerial advisers at document Dumas House and the team I have here—Russell, Sophie and Linda. They are great for me. I know that many members have to interact with them on different levels and I hope you find them as helpful as I do. I am certainly incredibly proud of the role that they play. They have done a fantastic job. They are all new to the roles that they have this year, but I am pleased with what they do.

I also acknowledge Alaa and Doug, who work respectively for Minister Jarvis and Minister Swinbourn. They help those ministers and also work with my team to chase ministerial officers to get the answers to parliamentary questions. Honourable members would be surprised. I know that, from time to time, some people raise their eyes about the answers that are provided, but rest assured we have teams always engaged with ministerial officers to ensure that we get the best answer that we can get.

We have successfully reached the end of the first year of our term. It has been a big, big year. I thank all those who have taken on new roles, including new members. I want to acknowledge the Deputy Chairs and the Deputy President. Again, it is a new role for the Deputy President and new roles for the Deputy Chairs who assist. I think they have all done incredibly well in those roles. Hon Dr Brian Walker was here before, but I think the rest are all new. Hon Sandra Carr was here, too! Thank you, Sandra; you have done a great job as well. I have acknowledged that personally in the last few days. You have all done a great job. It is a hard job because we are bossy, pushy people from time to time. We raise our voice from time to time. You have to sit there and be unflappable, and you have been, so congratulations. Thank you for keeping us on track when you have.

Finally, I wish everybody a very festive Christmas season. I hope you get to spend time with your families. That is one thing that we do not always get time to do in this job, so please make sure you enjoy yourselves over the next few weeks. Be merry, but do not go overboard—we do not want to read about it in the newspaper! I hope you get a great holiday. Thank you, keep safe and I look forward to seeing you all in the new year.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon Nick Goiran (Leader of the Opposition) (5:41 pm): It is 11 December and I stand with mixed emotions at this time. On the one hand, President, you know that in this 42nd Parliament, the opposition has been very clear:

we are prepared to be here any day and at any time. Equally, President, the truth is that I think it is time to call it a day for 2025. Like so many others, I suspect, I am very much looking forward to a break.

I associate myself very much with the complimentary remarks made by the Leader of the House and will avoid any unnecessary repetition at this time by duplicating a round of thankyou's. However, there are some who absolutely must be recognised. I begin with you, President, and thank you for your stewardship of the chamber in this 42nd Parliament, consistent with the last Parliament. Thank you for the way in which you have preserved this institution, which is fundamentally the most important role of the President. I know that you know that, President. On behalf of the opposition, we thank you for that role. Also to the Deputy President and each of the Deputy Chairs, in a similar way, on behalf of the opposition, we thank you for your very important contribution to our modern democracy.

Equally, President, on behalf of the opposition, I thank the Clerk and the entire parliamentary staff both inside and outside the chamber and, indeed, even those outside the building, all of whom contribute to what a magnificent place this is and what a privilege it is to work here. We thank each and every one of those staff members for their diligence, conscientiousness and general demeanour. They make it a pleasure to be here.

I also want to thank the Leader of the House. I thank you for the remarks that you made earlier. Again, I associate myself entirely with them. Evidently, we are not going to agree on policy matters from time to time. Equally, on occasion, we do. But, most importantly, as with the role of the President, this institution fundamentally must be of paramount interest to all of us. It does none of us any service, least of all the people of Western Australia, if the reputation of this house is diminished. Members know that I feel strongly about that. It has equally been my pleasure to work alongside the Leader of the House to make sure that at least there is some good order in the way in which the business of this house is undertaken. In the same way, I thank each and every one of your colleagues on the front bench and on the back bench for the contributions they have made and wish each and every one of you a happy Christmas.

I also take this opportunity to recognise our friends from the crossbench. With the exception of Hon Dr Brad Pettitt—I recognise Hon Tim Clifford has been here before—I wonder whether there is a deep appreciation for how difficult it was in the last Parliament. The 41st Parliament was incredibly difficult if you were not a government member. I want to acknowledge that there will have been times of exasperation for members of the crossbench in 2025. Rest assured that any exasperation that they experienced was light in comparison to what Hon Dr Brad Pettitt and Hon Dr Brian Walker and I, and others, experienced in the last Parliament.

I say most sincerely that it was a joy to see the crossbench arrive in Parliament and restore some balance in this place. People ask, "How is it going in this 42nd Parliament?" I say repeatedly, "Look, obviously you don't want to be in opposition. We want to be on the government benches." That goes without saying, but for the time while we are here on the opposition benches it is tremendous that there is no political party that has the numbers in the Legislative Council. That forces people to work. It forces people to discuss, to collaborate, to try to persuade one another. Sometimes that can be exasperating. I know that has been the case for some members this week as it was for other members in other weeks this year. But it is working, so I thank the crossbench, no matter which political party they are from, because without them it would not be the case. I sincerely say that our parliamentary democracy is better for their existence. I thank them for that and wish everyone, on behalf of the opposition, a happy Christmas and a restful period into the new year.

Last but not least, of course I want to thank my alliance colleagues. I begin with Hon Julie Freeman. Her colleague Hon Rob Horstman is most genuinely away on what we refer to as urgent parliamentary business and we wish him well. It has been a pleasure to work with both Hon Julie Freeman and her colleague. We talk about an alliance; there is all this talk about coalitions and so forth, but thank you for making it incredibly easy for us, for working collaboratively with us. It has not gone unnoticed and we very much appreciate it.

To the rest of my Liberal team, it is an honour to be the leader of this team. This is a team I know I can rely on every single day to be prepared, no matter the item of business. Thank you, colleagues, for doing that since your arrival in May and, for those on the front bench, for a much longer period of time. I very much appreciate it. I wish each and every one of you a happy Christmas. Enjoy it with your family. Make the most of it, and I am looking forward to working with you to do our part for the people of Western Australia to hold the government to account, as we must, for the benefit of everyone in this state.

Hon Dr Brad Pettitt (5:48 pm): I rise on behalf of the Greens. I want to make some similar remarks to my colleagues. I start with the clerks' office, both Sam Hastings and Paul Grant, and the whole team. Three out of the four of us are new, and I feel like I come to you very regularly with questions! I say a huge thank you for being so helpful, approachable and professional all of the time. It is greatly appreciated. I say to you, President, I know that all of us here greatly appreciate that you are so approachable and fair. We greatly appreciate the way you have guided us through the year and as we have gone forward because it is a steep learning curve in the first little while. It has been much—Hon Stephen Dawson, the Leader of the House, his team and all of you—going on from what Hon Nick Goiran said, I am enjoying the 42nd Parliament far more than the 41st. It is much more stimulating and

energising and I certainly think the balance of power dynamic is where we can see this place do its job. I am enjoying finding out how that works. I will say that I am really looking forward to not just the year ahead but the whole term ahead and how we can work as collaboratively as possible with Hon Stephen Dawson and his team going forward.

I can say it has been really refreshing working with Hon Nick Goiran. Again, it was not a relationship we could negotiate before because there was no balance of power to talk about really. Our refreshingly frank and straightforward conversations and negotiations have been greatly appreciated. I thank him and the whole alliance. This sort of flows onto the comments I want to make about the backbench.

I can honestly say that there is often a reputation in the public that everyone just yells at each other and does not get along. Despite the diverse political views out there, I think we are collegiate and friendly and find points on which we can agree. The crossbench especially is extremely diverse—in a good way. There is that sense that we can actually work together in surprising ways. I think that is really important and it is a sign of a healthy democracy in Parliament when we can do that. I thank them for their part in that.

My biggest thanks personally go to these three people: Sophie, Tim and Jess. There was a joke at the last election about getting Brad some friends, and I have the best friends possible here in this place. I hope you can all agree. I am biased but I think they have done an amazing job. More personally, they have just been really good people to work with, so thank you. I hope members do not mind. I thought it might be nice to thank them. Just indulge me quickly; I will not spend very long on this. We have a real sense of being a team. I think one of them said that in their second reading contribution. Most of them were up at three o'clock this morning, which I found unusual. I was saying, "Go to bed!"

I just want to give a quick shout-out to our team in our electorate offices: Tim, Hannah, Eve, Aliza and our fabulous volunteers Trish, Jarrod, Sienna, Tilda, Georgia, Nelson, Gabby, Mark, Mads and Joanna. All of them go above and beyond and I think they deserve a special shout-out here today. Thank you to all of you. I want to follow on from those remarks. I am going to try to turn my email off for a month. We will see how we go. Have a great break. Enjoy your family and come back rested. I am looking forward to working with you in 2026.

Hon Maryka Groenewald (5:52 pm): I will just re-echo the words shared by Hon Stephen Dawson, Hon Nick Goiran and Hon Dr Brad Pettitt. It has been an incredible learning curve over the last eight months. I think all of us are definitely ready for a break. As I said to people, I am going to buy a Nokia and that is what I am going to be using over the month so that I do not have to look at a smartphone. Look, I just want to really thank Sam and the Parliament staff. I mean, it is such a joy for me to walk into this place every day from greeting the police officers outside to greeting reception staff and just getting to know people. From here to 2PP—everybody makes this place work. I want to thank Rob Hunter. He does a tremendous job at keeping everybody moving and connecting the dots. This place really relies on a level of communication and efficiency. It has been so great to be able to work with people across the board.

Of course, it is a challenge as a single party to keep things moving, but as every member has said earlier, I really want to thank the small team that I have too. I want to honour them for their commitment over the last eight months. I am just really proud of the work that we have been able to do in such a short period of time as well. To every one of the members in this place: again, we might not agree on everything but I can wholeheartedly say that every conversation I have had with every single one of you has always been so encouraging. There is always something that we have in common. Whether it is food, a policy issue or something else, I know there is always commonality. I really look forward to taking that into next year as well. I think there is real benefit in building those relationships with each other.

If I can, it would be remiss of me, of course, not to remind members that Christmas is a special season. As Hon Stephen Dawson said, it is time to not only take stock but just spend time with family and friends and for me, of course, to be able to say to you all that I hope you have an absolutely blessed time with your family. Maybe you will find yourself wanting to do Christmas morning. Go to a church service and see what it is all about. I am just praying for a really great Christmas period and protection. I hope you guys come back refreshed for next year. Thank you, President.

Hon Rod Caddies (5:54 pm): I want to start by thanking you, President. I have spoken to other people who felt very welcomed from the day we got here. I am trying to think of the way to put it, but there was a really warm feeling when we arrived. There was no division between parties or anything like that. The President was so welcoming. She told me to spend a lot of time in the chamber. I have tried to do that, and it has been great. I have watched people with a lot of experience, like Hon Nick Goiran and other members, and also those on the other side, like the ministers. I have watched the Committee of the Whole House and the way that operates. It has been a really good experience. I did not know what to expect. Even as a staffer from previous times, I was not in here and experiencing what it is like on the floor. I thank members with experience from both sides who have given me advice. They were not just people who align with my politics; everyone has been very positive in helping me in this house. As has been mentioned, it is great having the diversity. I love the passion in the Greens WA. It is good

to have differences of opinion, and I respect that, whether it is the Greens or the Animal Justice Party Australia. Things have surprised me. I have to honestly say that I had a bit of a vision about the Animal Justice Party, but Hon Amanda Dorn has proved me wrong on that. She is very open, and it has been great to watch her contributions and hear her passion for animals.

I did not write anything down because I was not sure whether I was going to speak tonight. There is the whole crossbench, with Hon Dr Brian Walker sitting beside me. I ask him things on numerous occasions. It has been good. He helps me out with bits and pieces. My honourable colleague Hon Philip Scott has been contributing by my side as he would be. It has been great having him here. I think it probably is a bit lonely on your own, being a single member. I feel for the guys who are by themselves. It is good to have one person at least! I am sure people in the big parties—the major parties—understand that having people around to support them is probably a good thing.

I do not know whether I thanked Sam, Paul and the team at the beginning. It is the same for me; I have had to approach Sam on many occasions, some good and some not so good. It has been a real help. The staff here are just awesome. It is like no other workplace. It is really great to be here. I have the same feeling here that I had when I was in the early days in child protection. I was excited to be there, and I get excited to get here every day. Thank you.

Hon Amanda Dorn (5:58 pm): I would like to start by thanking you, President, for making everything feel warm and welcoming. I mirror exactly what Hon Rod Caddies said. I thank the honourable member for his generous remarks. I thank the President very much for making me feel comfortable. The top-down approach that Sam has with him and his staff is fantastic. It is just so welcoming and positive. The team has created a positive environment; they are really terrific to deal with. We have really leaned into Deputy Clerk Paul. He has been fantastic with helping me in my office. So have the Greens and Hon Dr Brian Walker's office, because they can celebrate that additional 0.5 FTE for staff members, which I will just mention, and my office has leaned into them. I am really grateful for what Hon Dr Brian Walker's office has given my office. It was great to meet everybody on the crossbench and in the chamber and to find common ground. Everything that I wanted to illustrate in my speech, which is trying to find that commonality and common ground, really came true over the last few months. I want to thank members for that, and I wish members a merry Christmas. Ultimately, my favourite thing about Parliament has to be the electric shoe shine in the female washroom. I wear a different pair of shoes every day so I can clean my shoes. The shoe polish has dried out and needs to be replaced, but I look forward to using that again next year.

Hon Julie Freeman (6:00 pm): I really do not have a great deal more to add because it is all been said so well by the people who have gone before me. I wholeheartedly echo the great words of the Hon Stephen Dawson, Hon Nick Goiran, Hon Amanda Dorn and the honourable—I am sorry; there are too many names. I will collect myself. I know 100% that a 3:00 am finish is never good preparation for something like this. I want to make sure that I thank the staff. The parliamentary staff across the precinct have been amazing, but most particularly the staff here in the Legislative Council, especially Sam. You have been a very wise counsel to me a couple of times and I deeply appreciate that. The Leader of the House, Hon Stephen Dawson, has been incredibly generous and very professional and I have very much appreciated working with him this year so thank you very much. To the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Nick Goiran, your guidance and leadership of the opposition alliance has been such a great grounding and a good foundation for Rob and myself. I sincerely appreciate all of your guidance this year. It will only make us better as we go forward. To the members of the crossbench, what an amazing journey of discovery this has been for me, meeting people who I might not have ordinarily come across and learning about the lens through which you see the world. That, in turn, will inevitably influence the lens that I see my world through. Members of the government, thank you very much again for your professionalism and your generosity and for sharing your worldview, because what we discover is that we actually all have more in common than we have in differences, and that is what helps us all to move forward. Finally, President, thank you so much for your calm approach and for your wisdom. When spirits are high, tempers are frayed and everyone was a little bit tired, we needed that calm influence and wisdom to bring us all back down and remind us of why we are here and what we are doing. I very much appreciate that.

I would like to wish everyone peace and hope and a very merry Christmas. I was trying to think how I might do that. One of my portfolios is creative industries and members all know that I was a an early childhood teacher for quite some time. So, President, with your indulgence, I hope you will forgive me for singing:

Dashing past the press
Coffee fuels me on
Speeches that impress
Speeches that go long
Racking up the clicks
All over this great state

You know that you're working hard
 When you can't recall the date
 Oh, Division Bells, Division Bells
 Jingle all the way
 Rushing down the marble steps
 Several times a day—Hey
 Division Bells, Division Bells
 Jingle night and day
 Oh what fun it is to be
 The Members for WA

[Applause.]

The President: I am fairly sure this chamber has seen nothing like that.

Hon Dr Brian Walker: "As you command"!

The President: Order, members! Hon Dr Brian Walker.

Hon Dr Brian Walker (6:04 pm): Members, I am going to do this a little bit differently, as I am the person speaking last in the chamber. As my colleague Hon Julie Freeman said, everything has been said, and rightly so too. Let me first of all thank all of my new friends in this chamber. It is a pleasure to meet you all, with your different views, different approaches and different voices. Each one of you is valuable and each one of you is loved. Thank you.

To the old friends whom I met in my last term of Parliament—I said goodbye to some good friends earlier this year—I welcomed those old friends, and they are dear friends and people respect immensely. It was alleged earlier that we have differences of opinion. Yes, we do, but the thing is that we can look at this with genuine love for each other and we can look for understanding, and I think that is mostly what we do. I am very happy to be part of a group of friends who are able to exchange their views in such a manner. It serves the people of this state, and I welcome each and every one of you into my personal family.

I turn now to the opposition. We on the crossbench are a voice of the people who are not in the two-party preferred system, so we represent the varied voices of our state, and we put, if you like, the leavening into the bread. The function of the opposition here is not actually to oppose, but to enhance the legislation with new thoughts, as indeed is our job. I have very much liked every single connection we have had with each other.

I go on to the Leader of the Opposition, Hon Nick Goiran, a man whom I immensely admire and would hate to be facing if he were standing in front of me in court. I think that the way he interrogates is a fearsome thing to behold. I admire very much how my colleagues from the front bench are able to withstand that in the Committee of the Whole. I thank them for that. Well done to all of you.

I move now to my friends in the Labor Party. What a wonderful job you have all done. I admire the way you stand together, help each other and smile, even when things are going bit rough—like last night, for example. I think that this is all due to the wonderful nature of who you actually all are and the way you stand together, and I admire the unity that you show with each other. It comes down to the leadership of the Leader of the House. I must say thank you so much for being a person whom I can work with. I thoroughly enjoy the connections we have, even if you have scolded me on a number of occasions—quite properly so, too. I value that so very much, and the team that you are leading, and I count my blessings for actually knowing you.

All of this depends on the leadership of this chamber. Here I look towards the President. I will give some personal greetings from my wife. When she came across this charming lady, she did not know who you were. I told her, "She is the President", and she is just in love with you. She thinks you are a fantastic person. This is true; I think all of us can say that. Again, even if you scold me—you have done many times, and rightly so, too—it is always with respect and deep understanding and knowledge of the beauty of this chamber and how we serve the people of our state. I thank you for upholding the traditions, keeping us in line, by all means, but upholding what it means to be a parliamentarian.

With that, we come to Sam Hastings. Actually, I cannot claim him as a good friend, but you are my good friend because of all the advice you have given me. It is so much appreciated. I also thank your team, Paul and all who work with you. You are deeply admired and appreciated, and we can all stand to that. With that, I thank all the chamber staff we have here. Each one of you has helped us in so many ways, and without you, we would be very much in a worse position. That leads me, as I am going, on to Rob Hunter. He was mentioned here. He is going to be giving us a tour of Parliament soon, I hope. Who wants to join us? We will have a party going around! I go on to the garden staff, the police out there, the catering staff—man, are they just a fantastic bunch of people. Are we

not so well served? Can we not also just give a massive thankyou to all who are doing what they can, unobtrusively. Do members notice how unobtrusive and how beautiful and perfect it is? We are blessed to be allowed to work here, and I think we all appreciate this. I am going to say a massive thankyou to all who serve the people of Western Australia in this fantastic institution.

With that being said, I wish each and every one of you a wonderful Christmas. May your coming year be blessed with all that is good. May your families blossom, may your lives be enhanced, and may we all stand in service of each other and of the people of our great state.

Members: Hear, hear!

Hon Anthony Spagnolo (6:09 pm): I stand to make some brief remarks as not just an opposition member but also a parent of two young children. I want to reflect on that in some closing remarks. As we wrap up 2025, I found myself appreciating one of Parliament's lesser known blessings, which is the parliamentary pair. I am extremely grateful for the one that I received last night while many colleagues were here until 3:00 am. My colleagues can attest that I was watching from home. They were here doing important work. I was able to slip out after dinner yesterday. I say this not to rub it in but to express some gratitude. I want to thank the government and the opposition Whips for allowing me to do that. As I was away on urgent parliamentary business, I feel compelled to report back on said business. I can assure you, President, nothing keeps you humble quite like walking through the front door at a reasonable hour to be greeted by a four-year-old, hands on hips, saying, "Well, where have you been?" My daughter Gloria immediately set about enforcing her usual bedtime routine, which consists of a long post-dinner shower, debating which set of pyjamas met her standards on that particular night, brushing her teeth and finally selecting four non-negotiable stories read in specific voices, with characters swapped out for specific family members. If I got that wrong, there were corrections issued mid-paragraph! As I was lying there putting her to sleep, I realised two things. The first is that I was very lucky to have a pair. The second is that it would probably be the first time all year that someone has followed my contributions with such careful attention. This humbles you. This being my first year in the WA Legislative Council, I found the contrast between parliamentary life and home life to be one of those things that does keep me grounded. Family anchors you, as does the work itself.

Like others who have spoken tonight, I want to thank the many people who make this place function. I thank the chamber staff; our Hansard people, who deal with our late-night syntax; and, of course, staff right across the Parliament. They have been absolutely brilliant in keeping this place running. I also want to acknowledge our colleagues across the chamber. As has been mentioned, we often disagree, sometimes loudly—sorry, I am Italian! But we can all feel the commitment that we all bring to making Western Australia a better place for future generations, including our children. It has been a genuine privilege to be here and learn this role with you over the last seven or so months. In closing, I know this is perhaps a little bit unusual—I will not sing, I promise—but I want to conclude my remarks by reading the final page of the book that I read to my daughter last night as I put her to sleep. I think it is very fitting as we round out the year. This book is called *Angelina on Ice Skates*. Members may be familiar with the Angelina Ballerina books. This is the current flavour of the month in my household. It is a story by Katharine Holabird with illustrations by Helen Craig. It concludes like this:

At the end of the performance, as the magic hour of midnight approached and fireworks sparkled in the sky, Angelina and her friends wished everyone joy and peace, and they all sang and danced together to welcome in the new year.

After a year of long debates, late nights and spirited disagreement, it is oddly reassuring to remember that even in a children's story, the big finale is not all about the performance or winning everything. It is about showing up together, offering each other a bit of joy and peace, and stepping into a new year with a sense of possibility. If we can manage even a fraction of that in 2026, I think we will all be better for it.

The President (Hon Alanna Clohesy) (6:13 pm): I am going to undertake one of the more pleasant tasks in the role of President and wrap up proceedings today. Thank you everyone for your contribution. To the leaders, particularly, thank you for your commitment to the important role that this chamber plays and for your ongoing commitment to the Legislative Council. It is clear and it makes a difference. Thank you. Thank you to our Deputy President, Hon Steve Martin. I have appreciated your support and your dedication throughout the very short six months that we have been working together. To the Deputy Chairs—you rock! You absolutely do. To think that that most of you are new to the chamber, much less to Parliament, and then to back it up and sit here—and sometimes stand—to perform those roles is truly amazing.

To the returning Deputy Chairs, I thoroughly appreciate the work that you have been doing, going from strength to strength, in bringing our chamber together to operate in the way that it should.

Our 42nd Parliament started with a bang. It really has taken off, and the volume of work that has been undertaken in nearly seven months has been huge. We started out with the biggest intake ever of new members in the Legislative Council—18 new members. Members, you quickly found your feet. You did that with the support and assistance provided through the great induction program. But, let us face it; you did it by yourselves. Congratulations.

To the returning members, you wasted no time in regaining your feet, I suppose, to continue to contribute to the work of this place for the people of Western Australia. Thank you.

As we have all noted tonight but also throughout the last few months, our work here is not possible without the support and professionalism of those around us. Much of our work is done in not only the chamber but also the committee system. The committee system has been steady and consistent and, for some committees, very busy. I would suggest it has been one of the busiest starts to a new Parliament. As you all know from your experiences, our committee staff continue to provide the high-level research, support and advice that shapes the important work of our committee system. On behalf of all members, I thank our committee staff sincerely for their commitment and work.

Thank you also to every person in our Parliamentary Services team. As some of you have mentioned, these are often the unsung heroes of the Parliament and are critical to the functioning of Parliament. I am going to look at my list now because I am going to get it wrong if I do not read it out! I would like to thank Building Services, Catering Services, Finance, Human Resources, IT, Security and the Protective Service officers, Reception Services, Hansard, Library and Information Services, the Parliamentary Education Office and—I was going to get to broadcasting—Broadcasting.

Our scrutiny of legislation role has been undertaken with much diligence since we were all sworn in. As with other aspects of our working life, that would not have been possible without the high-level support of our chamber and procedural teams. I know that our Clerk, Mr Sam Hastings, values highly each and every one of the Legislative Council Department team, and that shows in the way that they go about their work, working together seamlessly, quietly, efficiently and incredibly professionally. I think all of us would agree that our Clerk goes well and truly above and beyond for each and every one of us to support the work that we do in this place. Suffice to say, thanks for everything, Sam.

The other part of the picture, of course, is my own small but mighty Presiding Officer's team, Bec and Steve. To them, thank you.

Members, I said to you when I was elected by you as your President that it is an honour and a privilege to serve, and it remains so every single day. Thank you. I hope you get some time to relax and refresh with your loved ones, because I have a feeling that next year is going to be busier than ever. Enjoy the summer recess, members. Merry Christmas and happy new year. And with that, the house is adjourned.

House adjourned at 6:19 pm

Questions on notice answered today are available on the [Parliament of Western Australia's website](#)