



PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

VALEDICTORY SPEECH



Hon Lynn MacLaren, MLC
(Member for South Metropolitan)

Legislative Council

Address-in-Reply

Tuesday, 16 May 2017

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ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting on the following motion moved by Hon Sally Talbot —

That the following address be presented to Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor in and over the state of Western Australia and its dependencies in the commonwealth of Australia —

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

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [7.30 pm]: Tonight, I rise to respond to the Governor and, more importantly, to say farewell. I acknowledge that we meet on Aboriginal land of the Whadjuk Noongar people and first off I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. There are many people in the public gallery whom I wish to welcome—kaya—and acknowledge. I will do so throughout my valedictory comments tonight.

One person who is not here—already with the water!—but who is listening on the internet in the early morning in Oregon is my mother. I will get this over with in the beginning; I want to acknowledge her at the outset. She has been a wonderful role model of independence, strength and compassion. To Madeleine and her partner Scotty in Medford, I want to say thank you for your support, your love and your encouragement. When my mother, father and I set out in the family car through the snow covered San Bernardino mountains towards Los Angeles International Airport in January 1979, there was no way of knowing that the journey would lead to this teary farewell from the first American-born representative in Western Australian Parliament in 2017. My home in the Californian Mojave Desert, which would see the trial of the first concentrated solar plant in 1981, was a long, long way from the Swan coastal plain—almost exactly half a globe away. But like any journey, it began with a spark of an idea, a rough plan and, in my case, the courage to improvise.

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent the South Metropolitan Region of Western Australia for the past eight years. The region has a great many Aboriginal elders who carry its stories and share a wisdom of the oldest living culture on the planet with all who are ready to hear it. I want to thank those leaders in our communities who shared their knowledge and sought to educate me. In my 20 years in Greens politics in this region, I feel like I have only begun to connect to the land and its people. I have been humbled to bring a voice to many issues of the traditional owners. I want to express my appreciation to the elders of this region whom I have come to know just a little bit during my time in Parliament: Reverend Sealin Garlett and Marilyn Garlett, Marie Taylor, Noel Nannup and Shaun Nannup, Trevor Walley and Dr Richard Walley—who was just here for the opening—Charlie Kickett, whom I met only recently down in Rockingham, Len Collard, and Matthew and Barry McGuire. I also acknowledge some of the emerging elders and wise women in our region, many of whom I hope will remain my friends and some of whom are with us today: Della Rae Morrison, Karla Hart, Ingrid Cumming, Corina Abraham Howard, Dorinda Cox, Marianne Mackay and Tammy Solonec. There are so many more I cannot list them all here, but I want all to know how I respect them greatly. I am in awe of their resilience in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

For the past four years, serving as one of only two Greens in Parliament, I have extended my reach to help people throughout the state wherever possible. I have a long list of portfolios for which I was responsible to keep abreast of parliamentary actions and to maintain relationships with people and organisations. I note that many people joining us in the public gallery tonight are from some of these organisations. Thank you for your support. I just want to mention a couple of groups because I saw them earlier. I have worked with FOODwatch for a long time. People are also here from Point Peron for the People, Hands Off Point Peron, Safe Schools Coalition Australia and the No WA Shark Cull coalition, as well as members of social justice movements, animal rights organisations, wildlife carers and local councils. This parliamentary term has been incredibly rewarding and rich with experiences. I want to share some of the highlights of the 2013 to 2017 term.

It should come as no surprise to anyone that the first thing I am going to mention is saving Beeliar wetlands. At great environmental cost and what I imagine has wielded a terrible impact on the spiritual, cultural and historical sites in the area near Bibra Lake, North Lake and Coolbellup bushland in the weeks leading up to the election, we saved Beeliar wetlands from the construction of the Roe Highway stage 8 extension. Thousands of people took part in almost daily demonstrations, rallies and protest actions. The local wetland protectors, wildlife carers and spiritual custodians were generous in sharing their knowledge. We learnt about nonviolent direct action. We formed affinity groups. Mums became liaison officers, musicians became organisers and individuals became a community. Several people were arrested and charged. Many people were fined and some charges were subsequently dropped or lessened. The actions of the police have been subject to complaint and an inquiry has been requested. The wheels of bureaucracy are much slower than the courts. Although the new government has announced running a fine toothcomb through the previous Treasurer's accounts, it has been silent about the use of force by the police—the charging horses and the unmuzzled dogs that patrolled the fences, the loss of trust in Her Majesty's finest. Tears fell today, months after the machines were silenced, when I passed by the scars of the land ripped by dozers, the mounds of soil in place of a biodiversity bonanza and the trees shredded, reduced to steaming mulch piles. The animals—the fortunate few animals—were relocated, but many, many more were massacred. The crawling, creeping, hopping, slinking ones who could not fly away would not be caught in traps. On Sunday, I planted a Tuart tree in what would have been the shadow of the tall Rottneest Island pines at the corner of Hope and Progress Roads. It would have been in the shadow of those ancient pines had the contractor not chopped off the tops, leaving stumps that still tower over the now barren landscape, a stone's throw from the riverbank where the Beeliar people once camped. Hundreds—perhaps thousands—of people will plant and weed and nurture the soil until the scars burst back into life now that the election has been won.

Bitterly, I reminisce over the rally in 2005 when Labor candidates said that they would stop the highway. Like marriage equality, it is well past time for them to deliver. From little things, big things grow. How long ago was it? It was 2004 and I worked for Hon Jim Scott when Mark Hingston, Joe Branco, Professor Phil Jennings and Felicity McGeorge—now Bairstow—with a handful of others alongside the Noongar people defended this patch from the Stephenson–Hepburn planned highway so long ago. I recall Joe holding an Environmental Protection Authority report from 2004 that concluded Roe 8 should never be. They knew it then, and the Liberal Party in government knew it before; in 2016, when the Liberal Party's pollsters reported its demise, before the bulldozers and the police were deployed to destroy and to defend the destroyers. I have to say it. This is my last parliamentary speech, and I have to say it: shame on you! I have looked into the eyes of those very young girls and boys who came to their beloved bushland and wonderland nature playground to watch the machines rip it apart. They hoped it would stop because their parents were protesting. I know the cost of the former government's policy, the lack of vision, the alternatives, the respect for nature, and now perhaps it, too, knows it. Perhaps because the Liberal Party so comprehensively lost the election it will rethink the link. The lost boys: the once-Liberal members for Jandakot, Southern River and now Bicton are among those who paid the price. I am reminded of a verse —

They would not listen, they did not know how

Perhaps they'll listen now.

Over my time in Parliament I have been an ardent advocate for planning with environment at its heart. Because of the significance of the Roe 8 campaign in the state election I wanted to outline our tireless work. Since 2005 I have asked questions about the Environmental Protection Authority, the environmental approvals, the land acquisition, the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee, the metropolitan region scheme amendments, the federal funding, the implementation conditions, the business case and the contracts. Much work is still to be done in this term of Parliament, and I regret not being here to see it through.

In March 2012 I moved a motion to initiate an amendment to the metropolitan region scheme to delete the zoning of the road reserve of the area proposed for Roe 8. I asked a question yesterday about this government's plan for that, and we did not get a decent answer. As I leave this chamber I implore members who have this responsibility to ensure that work is done with haste. That unfinished business needs to be completed, and a great cost has been paid. Please, do that. If members have learned anything from this election, they should do that, because the people have spoken in their numbers.

In August 2015 I presented a petition calling for a Legislative Council inquiry to investigate the alternative proposal for an outer harbour. That was unsuccessful in this chamber. I have since written to the Auditor General requesting that his office undertakes an investigation into the government's decision-making processes for Perth Freight Link. I actively supported the Aboriginal heritage legal case, as members know, by asking questions month after month and waiting for papers to be tabled on the very last day; eventually we got those papers.

I put forward alternatives; I was not just complaining. I wanted to put forward alternatives because that is what the Greens are here to do. I put forward an alternative for the outer harbour and the transport solutions. I worked in partnership with those communities—the Save Beeliar Wetlands people and the Rethink the Link people. I attended numerous community events and I spoke at many rallies. If anyone was following me on Facebook, every morning I was broadcasting live directly from the area so that Australians knew what was at risk and how people were prepared to stand up for it.

Most recently, during the election campaign, I called for a parliamentary inquiry with one of the terms of reference being the decision to invest more half a billion dollars of taxpayer funds without conducting any business case or other stage of a gateway review. I think maybe the Labor government is onto this now; maybe this review into the Treasurer's decision-making processes will reveal something. This inquiry was also to look into the traffic modelling and noise pollution; the breaches of environmental conditions, including adequate offsets; and, the failure to follow the management plans, including and in relation to fauna. What happened to that fauna is well documented. There was also the destruction of known spiritual and archaeological sites, and the handling of serious health concerns around asbestos. Members, this mask was on my wardrobe. When we went down to Beeliar wetlands to protest we were in fear of asbestos; we were given masks because it was a serious concern. That has yet to be investigated. Please, please, do that for me. Look into that and make sure that WorkSafe Western Australia did its job; and, if it did not, why not, who was at risk and why is there asbestos still covered there? What is going on down there? The Minister for Environment is in this chamber. We are delighted to have a new environment minister, and I really do ask him to take up this call.

In the aftermath of this destruction there is even more work to be done. I lament not being here, and I could not help but use part of my valedictory remarks to set this to-do list for the government. It is hard for a Greens activist to be in a position like this—to be able to voice concerns and bring issues to Parliament—and then no longer be here and silenced. Next week I will be silenced. It will be up to the former opposition; the current opposition made this decision, so, really, I depend on the current government to do this.

A total of 213 arrests were made. Let us think about that: 213 people were arrested trying to stop something from happening that the new government, as soon as it got in, said it would not do. What justice is there for those 213 people who acted in the public good and whose actions were vindicated, I would argue, in the end? Each one of them has a record for assault or trespass. What happened? Let us think about those 213 people who were courageous in their activism. The legal team supporting the arrested people is calling for a minority of the police who they believe acted unlawfully to be investigated. More importantly, there needs to be a thorough investigation into the systemic issues raised, such as the culture of policing and the hostility towards nonviolent protesters and the way people were targeted and vilified. I saw that myself. No police force is perfect, but let us not look away. If people made errors, mistakes or acted wrongly, let us get it out in the open. We would like an inquiry into the actions of the police.

I think back to when I was working for Hon Giz Watson and we wrote a letter to the police about the training provided for nonviolent direct action. What kind of training do police have to deal with nonviolent direct action? It is a thing. Ever since the 1960s—possibly before; I think I mentioned it in my peaceful protest speech—people have been practising nonviolent direct action, maybe for centuries. Our police should know how to deal with that without going over the top with horses in people's faces. That is not asking much. I see that the former Minister for Police from the other place is here. I know she is listening intently, and I hope that in opposition she will maybe have an opportunity to look at this.

I have a list of the charges. One person was arrested for obstructing police officers; 73 people were arrested for trespass; there were 63 charges for trespass and obstructing public officers; and there were 14 arrest warrants. The rest of the charges were of disorderly behaviour, one breach of a violence restraining order, criminal damage and no authority to drive. If members had watched the news they would think it was the Mafia out there: these people are mums and dads, students and public servants, and they were all just trying to protect this little piece of bushland. The response was well over the top. Enough said; I just wanted to put on the parliamentary record that there is business to be done and that part of my career has been to try to protect the Beeliar wetlands. On reflection, in spite of everything that we tried, we did not get anything achieved until the eleventh hour. Let us not wait for the eleventh hour the next time a member brings up something this critical. Maybe we could avoid that next time, and that is why I am sharing my reflections.

The other big thing that I have to talk about is stopping the drum lines. This term kicked off with a summer of shark killing on the government agenda. We defeated its drum line program by working with the community and exposing the irrationality of shark culling. It was a hot summer morning at Scarborough Beach in the auditorium where Missy Higgins would later perform when I laid out our terms for what we called Barnett's surrender: respect existence or expect resistance. It was a cry I repeated at the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre three summers later as the campaign to stop Roe 8 heated up. In true Australian style, we met them on the beaches in 2014, first at Cottesloe, where thousands gathered in the largest protest rally we have seen since

the 1998 rallies to save old-growth forests, and then, when at first the government refused to back down, dozens took direct action by monitoring those drum lines, by documenting the deaths and by publicising the irrationality of the program. In December 2013, the government announced its intention to use lethal drum lines, surprising most community and marine stakeholders. The first rally at Cottesloe Beach on 4 January 2014 was organised in days by concerned scuba enthusiasts and other ocean users. Six thousand protesters were at the rally on Cottesloe Beach on 1 February 2014. That was an amazing time; I was so blessed to be there. Early in 2014, Sea Shepherd attempted to secure a court injunction to force the government to suspend its policy, and the Greens called for a motion to revoke the exemption to kill protected sharks given to WA. The Environmental Protection Authority received hundreds of submissions asking it to assess or reject the EPA drum line trial. To his credit, the chair, Paul Vogel, who is no longer with the EPA, first said that the drum line trial would not be investigated as the environmental impact would be negligible, but then he had to do it. He eventually did it and he said that shark culling was environmentally unacceptable. The drum lines were removed at the end of April 2014 after 172 sharks, including some mako sharks and other species, but mainly tiger sharks, had been captured. About half were released because they were too small and the rest were shot or expired on the drum lines. In July 2014, 30 000 people—with 6 751 submissions and two petitions signed by 25 000 people—responded to the EPA about the government's plan to continue using drum lines for another three years. Intense lobbying and awareness raising by community groups, the Greens, and state and federal politicians included an excellent forum on more effective alternatives to mitigate shark hazards. In September 2014 the EPA recommended that shark drum lines not be implemented in WA. The Premier conceded defeat. The Greens challenged the effectiveness of the so-called imminent threat guidelines that were rebranded as serious threat guidelines. These are the guidelines under which after a shark bite incident, the shark is found and killed. Thankfully, that, too, with this new government, is a policy of the past, but at what cost? Governments need to listen, and not just at elections. Since 2000, 15 people have died as a result of a shark bite off the WA coast. There is general recognition by both the ALP and the Liberals now that killing sharks does nothing to make people safer. Instead, a range of other measures, including real-time alerts, improved emergency responses, shark education and awareness, and personal and area-based protective technology to suit different coastal locations and ocean users are the way to go. I just shook the hand of the new Minister for Fisheries and I really do think he gets it, but we need to make sure, because the law is not good enough.

Other successes of this past term include the defeat of forced local government amalgamations. We also protected peaceful protests by stymieing the related bill in the upper house for 18 months. I want to thank Irma Lachmund and the people who formed a coalition of groups to oppose criminalisation of dramatic protest—I mean democratic protest, although it could be dramatic as well! But yes, we did a good job there. I notice the former police minister is at the back of the chamber again! We did feel that that legislation was a bridge too far and we were not alone. In the end we had United Nations human rights experts quoted in this house. Obviously, governments try things, do they not? There needs to be a strong opposition. People need to be alert and experienced—people who have been here and done that, and who care.

Another thing I want to mention today—I notice that the former Minister for Road Safety is also here—is the “one metre matters” bill. There were several deaths on the road of people riding bicycles. What did we do? I put a bill up and said that we need to be clear about the law. I did that because a national campaign was calling for it. I said that we could do that in WA. We want to protect people on the roads; let us do that. Now, after the election, the government is interested in doing it. Why did it take all that time? I introduced that bill in 2012 and several people have died on our roads in that time. Let us just think about that. I want to thank Toby Hodgson, Matt Fulton, Sarah, Craig and all those who backed this campaign, including the Over 55 Cycling Club. Maybe now I can join them on a bike ride!

The other thing I need to mention, of course—I have already mentioned this today—is genetically modified organisms. We heard a speech today honouring the memory of the former agriculture minister, Kim Chance. That gave us an idea that this issue has gone on for years over successive governments. The Liberals, the Nationals and Labor have all been involved in this, as well as the Greens, thank goodness. The Greens, having the balance of power, did a great job in holding off GMOs in this state for many, many years. This, too, is a campaign that I worked on for many years. It is hard to let go of these campaigns. I would love to continue working with this. Many campaigns are still waiting for that moment when they finally meet their goals, such as the food and farmers' rights movements, which are still toiling to make a GM-free WA possible. I worked on this for years and I want to thank Steve and Sue Marsh, Janet Grogan, Maggie Lilith and Shirley Collins, and in particular Bob Phelps from Gene Ethics, Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering and Bee Winfield. There is another long list of dedicated farmers we have stood beside. For people who are keen on this, a march is coming up on the weekend, I think. Many thanks to my former research officer, the multitalented Louise Sales. She supported me very well during that campaign. We have lost her now to Tasmania, I think, but I want to thank her.

It should come as no surprise to any members that in many of these earth-protecting campaigns, women are front and centre, driving and steering at the very heart of those campaigns. From the days of the late Mary Jenkins, an indefatigable feminist in the South Metropolitan Region, to the ever-present former Senator Jo Vallentine, women have seen what needs to be done. They have rolled up their sleeves, they have crafted a new phone tree and they have got the party started.

Natalie Banks, of the No WA Shark Cull alliance, is one such woman. She left her government media position to join Sea Shepherd. Today, from Dubai, she wrote —

When I first thought of rallying to stop the WA shark cull, never in my wildest dreams did I imagine the outpouring of support for one of the most misunderstood creature. I have never experienced anything like it and I feel that I may not ever again. But shark lovers; every day you give me hope for the future, your words and actions compel me to move forward for a better world.

The recent Rethink the Link and Save Beeliiar Wetlands campaigns brought Kim Dravnieks and Kate Kelly into the limelight, and they were surrounded by powerful women, including Felicity Bairstow and a very long list of others, going back decades and stretching long into the future, as the wounded land is healed. At one point in the campaign, we pitched a photo idea to *The West Australian* to photograph all the women at the campaign's heart. The list grew so long, it may have been the reason that *The West* declined; it would need to be a broadsheet for that!

I do not mean to diminish the activism of men in Western Australia, who are also tireless in their efforts. In particular, I want to single out Robert McLean, John Lawson and Sean van Alphen—a group of mates who formed the Numbat Task Force. Over many years of tracking and photographing their favourite woodland animal, they have grown to be the state's most successful wild numbat protectors. They were instrumental in the intervention that halted a landfill that threatened some of the last remaining numbats in the wild across Australia, so good on you, guys.

That is one of the highlights of my long time in Parliament—to know that we played a role in highlighting that problem. My staff worked tirelessly to figure out how we could appeal to the minister to make this end. There are so many campaigns, and so many women at the heart of them, I cannot possibly do justice to a list of them all, but I want to make mention of the animal justice campaigners: Katrina Love and Sandie Rawnsley of Stop Live Exports, who I have worked with for years; Amy Wilks of Animal Amnesty; and Alanna and Andrea of Free the Hounds, who today were on the steps of Parliament, giving us a petition. The list goes on and on. I want to now express my thanks to them for working with us, for having faith in us and for trying to make this a better place for creatures that do not have a voice. I also want to acknowledge the many, many people across the state who have tried to save mature trees, including Leisha Jack, who I met at her activist debut at a rally for the campaign to save the trees at Charles Riley Memorial Reserve.

Working in my electorate has also given me an opportunity to help many of my constituents. Among the individuals we helped was a public housing tenant who was bullied, possibly by her neighbours. I saw the scorched entry to her small apartment and listened as she recounted the trouble she experienced getting someone to listen and someone to help. We did help; we got her new accommodation. Everyone who is a member of Parliament has had these issues, and it makes us feel like we are worth it. It makes us realise, “This is what it's about; it's not just arguing about words on a page. I've got somebody into secure, safe accommodation.” I am so grateful for those opportunities. We do not get many opportunities in life to help people directly like that, and being members of Parliament gives us that opportunity.

I recall many hours of debate on the residential tenancies legislation, during which I tried—unsuccessfully—again and again to amend the legislation, and then for years afterwards, speaking up for the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people who were evicted as a result of that Housing Authority policy. I did everything I could as a member of Parliament; I had the best research and I had help drafting the amendments, but the will was not there on the part of the government to change that legislation. That is frustrating when, time and time again, one cannot change legislation. One then has to deal with the consequences of it because somebody did not agree.

There is much work to be done for the homeless. Every single member of Parliament has a responsibility to provide help and, I would argue, to actually end homelessness. This is not pie in the sky; this is something we can do. There is an action plan. Why not just do it? During the last election campaign, the Greens launched a policy to end homelessness. I met with a roundtable of groups that are serious about this issue. This is serious; this is not some sketchy plan. This can actually be done, and all we have to do is set our minds to it. We have to have the will to do it, and we have to pursue that goal, and put people in charge to do it. It is possible, we can do it; why not? The benefits of housing the homeless, of ending homelessness, and of reaching in and solving the problems that keep people homeless are exponential. We can do it, but we have to have that will.

Because of the inadequate laws for the protection of our green infrastructure and biodiversity, people turn to their members of Parliament to help save their much-loved urban bushland and trees, and that happened for me. I have an amazing photo of that ancient jarrah tree; if members have not visited it, they still can. It is lying on the ground. It was cut down because somebody apparently complained about bees. There is a simple solution for that, as most people would know, but somehow, somebody got permission to cut down this tree that was 200 years old and that provided habitat in a place in which it was desperately needed, not far from Roe 8. They just chopped it down, and it broke my heart. I still remember that time, and think that it is time for me to go visit that tree.

Stories like that are rife throughout our area, particularly in the metropolitan area, where people love their local trees and they are knocked down. The law needs to be changed. We have to be able to protect these trees; we have to find some way to protect mature trees on a grand scale because our biodiversity is being destroyed right before our eyes. I remember saying it in 2009 when I first got elected. We have talked about it a lot over the last eight years, but nothing has changed. I would like a model local law that protects mature trees; I am no longer here to fight for it, so please. Thankfully, Hon Robin Chapple will be here; it is on his list.

Hon Robin Chapple: It is now!

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: There are lots of other local issues with trees. There was a campaign for a tree in Healy Road, Hamilton Hill. I made such good friends saving this tree that was being hacked away and was going to be lost; a big branch was taken off. It is a community coming together to protect an asset, to protect amenity, and to protect something they value. It is a wonderful thing, and it happens everywhere. It does not matter if one is a Labor member or a Liberal member; it is happening in one's area. The next big thing is probably going to be Underwood Avenue.

I have to also just mention Lathlain Oval. Victoria Park is the electorate of one of the most senior members in cabinet, and Lathlain is also in South Metropolitan Region. The West Coast Eagles Football Club expanded the oval and knocked down some trees, and it is a tremendous loss to the community in that area that has not been addressed. It is death by a thousand cuts.

I hope members are getting some sense that the journey I talked about at the beginning of my speech is a marathon; it is not a sprint. There are times when we sprint, but we have to be able to go with the issues that are in front of us, such as greyhound racing. Who knew about that? There was an exposé in New South Wales and then it became an issue.

Being flexible and able to be impromptu and address issues as they arise is very important because that is the opportunity for change. They have asked us in our valedictories to try to give members ideas for how to approach the new term. I would say that was my most successful strategy in that I was able to retool and address the issue that was the hottest issue of the day at the time. The issue of sharks is a perfect example. Who knew that I would be a champion for sharks? It is important that we respond to the issues of the day.

I want to thank the Greens in other states because throughout the last eight years I have worked collaboratively with them. I have truly enjoyed working alongside them on campaigns to improve our society, to protect the planet and to be a voice for the voiceless. Thank you to my friends and colleagues in the Senate, in other state Parliaments and in Greens groups. I particularly want to acknowledge some of the Greens MPs I have worked with over the years who have stood up for animals—Christine Milne, Lee Rhiannon, Tammy Franks, Mehreen Faruqui, the late John Kaye and Sue Pennicuik. They have all been my comrades who have shared my pain and private members' bills and worked across state boundaries to collaborate. Being in a minor party with only a few of us working together across state boundaries was a successful strategy. It was only because of our common bond and our common goals in green politics that made that possible.

I acknowledge Hon Rick Mazza behind me because he was the chair of the committee that examined the operations of the RSPCA. I do not want to go into detail because we have debated it at length over a very long period. However, for me the take-home message is that the animal laws in this state need to be updated. I am hoping that the Animal Welfare Act will be reviewed this term and that it is not weakened but strengthened across the board. I hope that I will read in the paper or possibly online that the Animal Welfare Act has been reviewed. It has been my solemn responsibility as well as my great joy to be a voice for animals over the last eight years. It is one of the areas in politics that is growing in significance across Australia and is long overdue. I have already reflected on the success we had in protecting sharks. It was a hard-fought victory over many months with a range of powerful and creative advocates in several areas, backed by experts both here and abroad; but if only the law had been strong enough in the first place to protect them. I tried to protect free-range farming from the watering down of the labelling laws so that consumers could help to improve the welfare of laying hens. If only the law had been strong enough in the first place to protect them. I tried to stop the overbreeding of greyhounds and the use of them in a sport that causes traumatic injury leading to euthanasia on a regular basis. If only the law had been strong enough in the first place to protect them. By appealing to

the minister, I was successful in helping to save a small population of wild numbats near Dryandra. But the law should have been strong enough in the first place to protect them. This is the work left undone—reform of the law that is supposed to protect animals and to ensure their welfare.

I want to thank you, Mr President, for your wisdom and leadership over these years. There were times when you saved me. I am thinking of the time when the first reading of a bill was challenged. It was quite a moment for me because I was afraid that I was not going to be able to read in the bill, which was really important to me. In your wisdom you took it offline, had a good look at it and came back with a very measured ruling. I have felt safe in your hands and I want to thank you for that. I am outgoing too, so that is nice.

I want to express my appreciation to the members of the opposition who worked with us over eight years, gave me fulsome briefings when required, and sometimes when our values crossed, which they did on the Biodiversity Conservation Bill, were willing to work with me. I appreciated that. Another member has already mentioned that when we come from a position of respect, anything is possible. I offered that respect. I worked with Hon Kim Chance—maybe that is why; he taught me that. When we start from a position of respect, we can go places. Even if we disagreed on many policies, we worked together collaboratively in many ways. I will mention some of those as I go on.

I want to thank also members of the Nationals, particularly Colin Holt. It has been a pleasure to work with you over these eight years—tearing up. Why is that? I knew Colin before. I met him when I was working at the Western Australian Council of Social Service, so I knew we had this common understanding about community services and how difficult they were in the regions. We were on a committee together and I always enjoyed working with you. If I miss you, I will call you.

Hon Col Holt: You've got my number.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I do have your number. I might give you a few questions to ask!

The work we do is mostly determined by the government of the day, which controls the agenda and sets its legislative priorities. In Parliament this term I debated 92 bills.

Hon Peter Collier: We know.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I am glad you are paying attention.

I debated 38 bills in the previous term. That was a bit light on because there were four of us. I dealt with a total of 130 bills. I moved several amendments, and in the last term, two of them were passed. That was exciting. I developed four bills of my own and I had carriage of the Greens' biodiversity bill introduced by former member Hon Giz Watson, so I have had quite a workload. I will mention it here: I am looking forward to a break. I have thoroughly applied myself to the task at hand. It has given me an energy to approach it but it was a lot of work, especially when it was on a million crime bills and one or two environment bills. It was a hard slog but I enjoyed it and I tried to apply myself to it as the now Leader of the Opposition has acknowledged. My ability to assess and consult with stakeholders about legislation and debate it relied very heavily on my research team, who are also tired. I want to thank Leigh Sinclair, who I know is here tonight, for her tremendous wisdom, organisational skills and unflappable way of being. We need someone like that around us. Leigh makes deadlines look easy to me while managing to keep a young family in school and at sporting events. I even felt supported by Darren, her partner. Leigh kept all the balls in the air and has been my supportive friend in difficult times. I am so glad we shared that office at WACOSS way back when. I also acknowledge and thank research officers Caroline Perks and Dinny Lawrence for their expertise and the wonderful contributions they made this term and the previous term. Many others helped to ensure that I was ready and well briefed for legislation. Most recently in a voluntary capacity Jennifer Gardiner helped us. Although I cannot name each of you at this time, your assistance to me in my role and your generosity have been deeply appreciated. We scrutinised the government in every way possible. We asked 660 questions without notice, 431 in the most recent term.

I want to thank the parliamentary staff. Janice Shaw, who has probably gone home by now, is awesome. I worked with Janice even when I worked for Jim Scott. She has very rarely dropped the ball. The volume of work and the deadlines that she meets on a daily basis are amazing. Janice, you have my long-term respect. Chris Hunt manages the questions on notice. Chris took us through the transition to be online. I do not know how you did it, mate, but thank you very much. I am so glad that my staff know how to do that.

I also want to thank the very professional officers who assist us with the business in this chamber. I want to thank the Clerk, Nigel. I want to thank Paul Grant, Grant Hitchcock, Renae Jewell, Paul Lobban, Brian Conn, Lisa Parrella, Jackie and Hayley. There is no way that I could have done this volume of work unless there was support at every turn—the little things such as making sure that there is water and that I have a lectern. They also make sure that we feel respected, because sometimes there is argy-bargy in here, and they are a great neutralising impact—we can just look at someone and say, “Can you please give me a piece of paper?”

I served on the Standing Committee on Legislation this term and Hon Robyn McSweeney was our chair. Thank you very much; it was a pleasure. It was tough being on Hon Robyn McSweeney's committee because we had a lot of work to do. We did 15 reports. I think I managed to substitute out for a couple of them. But that was a lot of very, very detailed work—the demise of the Crown. Members can talk to me later about that.

Hon Donna Faragher: That was serious.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Hon Donna Faragher was on the committee as well.

Hon Donna Faragher: I took that very seriously.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Yes. I also served on the Select Committee into the Operations of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc), thanks to Hon Rick Mazza. I thank the committee officers who supported all those committees, including Mark Warner, Samantha Parsons, Alex Hickman, Suzanne Veletta, Niamh Corbett and Denise Wong. There are so many people in the background. I have felt over the last eight years that the professionalism in this place is outstanding. I just checked that Hansard got that, because if it is not in *Hansard*, it never happened. Hansard has been tremendous for me. Some of them have problems with my accent, but they have managed to make most things read even better than how I am saying them, which is nice. Thank you and I appreciate that.

Over this time, I have hosted three Celebrating Pride at Parliament events, which have been supported by every party here. Hon Martin Aldridge is nodding; thank you very much for co-hosting. Hon Jacqui Boydell and Hon Michael Mischin also co-hosted. Hon Helen Morton co-hosted; that was a wonderful year that she co-hosted. It made a big difference to the community. I am here to tell members that they really like it. They really want members to keep doing it. Hon Stephen Dawson was also a consistent co-host. It is a way to bring the significance and importance of legislators into a cultural month of pride and to build relationships. I hope that all members have managed to continue to keep those communication lines open. We invite the media and it is a great opportunity. It has been my absolute pleasure, one of the highlights of my eight years, to host a cross-party party for the community to which I feel very connected. I want to thank all those members who found it in their heart to be generous and co-host those events.

I also initiated a Parliamentary Friends of Bandyup group, which did not go down very well. I would really love the rest of you to pick that up! That was a stretch too far. It is a great idea. The Parliamentary Friends of Bandyup would be a great thing and I can put my people in touch with you.

Hon Liz Behjat: You are saying the building or the people in there?

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: The women who are there. Yes, if Hon Liz Behjat is interested, it might be a good thing.

Hon Liz Behjat: I will not be here.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: That is a great opportunity. I see in the President's gallery Alison Xamon, who I feel will make such a great contribution. I congratulate her on her election—again! That proves it can be done. The Bandyup group is the kind of thing I would see Alison taking to like a duck to water. If people can find it in their hearts to think of the women in Bandyup, who really need that kind of boost, I would really implore members to join the group. I know that Simone McGurk is interested. If we can get some more people interested, please take that over. I could give the original list of people to invite, but take it over and do with it what you will.

I thank all the Parliament House staff, and there are so many we depend upon. I think I will get the chance to do that on Thursday when we wrap up, so I will not list them now. Know that I thought about you in my valedictory speech and I will mention you later.

It has been my pleasure to bear witness to the pledges of thousands of those who have come across the seas to share our boundless gifts. Like me, their journeys to Australian citizenship were layered with farewells and blows, losses and gains, and always hope. I have met people from every continent, from Afghanistan to Zambia, and young families from Nepal and older couples from Scotland. One of the joys of my role has been to meet these new citizens and to welcome them to Australia. South Metropolitan Region, possibly more than any other region, has just boomed in the last eight years with people from other countries. We have had a huge increase in population. I have welcomed them and I enjoy the multiculturalism that ensues.

Over two terms I have seen Willetton Senior High School transform. I have been to several openings of new schools in Tuart Grove, Baldivis, Golden Bay and more. I have visited some of the oldest schools from Victoria Park to Attadale. I have spoken at school graduations from Fremantle Primary School to the Octagon Theatre. I have been inspired by young people and educators at all levels.

My team has expanded and contracted over the years. I want to thank all those people who have come in, particularly of late. Elliot Sawers joined us and lifted our game on so many levels and then, because he was so good, Senator Ludlam took him. Connor Slight, who we stole from Hon Robin Chapple on his day off, helped us with amazing audiovisuals and great work on our social media. I want to thank Nadine Walker. Nadine came to my team early in the term and she really made a big difference during the shark cull and through our marriage equality work. Of course, Senator Siewert took her because she was awesome. So now Nadine is working with the Senate team and she is doing an outstanding job. I want to thank Wanjiku, who was with us a short time. I still see her; she made a big difference to our team and I really miss her. In particular I want to thank Nina Jurak, who Robin has working in his office. Nina helps us to keep in touch with Robin and makes sure that we are all working together. She has helped me in my selection of staff and she has long experience that goes back to Hon Giz Watson. I am going to miss these people so much, but maybe we will have coffee with each other sometime.

I want to say that there is nothing like winning an election, but I am here to tell members that the converse is also true. Losing an election is a uniquely unwelcome experience. To those 32 100 South Metropolitan Region voters who put the Greens first above and below the line, I thank you. I know you did it. You do not have to apologise.

I appreciate it but we did not get over the line. We increased the percentage of voters who chose to put the Greens first. To get over the line we needed 49 384 votes. Can you believe it! We needed nearly 50 000 votes for a quota in the South Metropolitan Region, more by far than any other region—except the North Metropolitan Region. That seems even more unfair when we look at the first preference voters in other regions who delivered their Greens representatives. So, 33 448 people in north metro, with a quota of 47 782, have a voice in Parliament, and 29 810 are about to have their Greens voice heard in Hon Tim Clifford who was recently elected to the East Metropolitan Region. There are 13 179 south west voters who will have a voice in this Parliament as of next week in Hon Diane Evers, who, again, joins us in the President's gallery. She will bring, once again, a rural voice into this chamber. Again, the never-say-die Hon Robin Chapple will be representing the Greens in the Mining and Pastoral Region. The system may not be quite perfect but it has resulted in the Greens doubling its numbers, which is the result we would get if we had true proportional representation statewide. Personally it is a bit gutting, but on balance it is a great result for the Greens.

That is not the only problem with our electoral system—the number of people who elect us—and this was revealed in the cold stark light of that day on 25 March, the day after my birthday, when the results were declared for the South Metro. In South Metro, unlike in any other region in which the Liberal Democrats fielded a candidate, the higher than expected vote for the Liberal Democrats seemed to be due solely to its position on the ballot, which confused voters who may have been looking for the Liberal Party instead. Preferences flowed to the Liberal Democrats from a starting position of just 13 000 first preferences. It is fair enough that those 32 100 Greens voters in south metro feel bereft this week as I leave the Parliament. There is, alas, nothing I can do about it. That is the system we have. Electoral reform should be on our agenda.

I want to congratulate Hon Sue Ellery for Labor's comprehensive victory. Never before has Labor won so overwhelmingly—other than in 1955. It was an awesome win and an awesome vote for Labor. I warmly wish the Labor government well. I would have loved to be in this chamber with the Labor government—I am now for only a short time, but I like it already! I would have loved to serve in a Parliament with a Labor government, but every time Labor gets in, they push me out. In 2005, the same thing happened. That is a bummer!

I congratulate all incoming members, especially the four Greens and the never-say-die returning Hon Robin Chapple. In the weeks since the election I have been handing over a wealth of material to this awe-inspiring team. I look forward to listening to their inaugural speeches. It is with great sadness that I make my valedictory speech at this close of term. However, as I have packed up my office I have been reminded of the colossal privilege to serve as a Greens member of Parliament. The Greens campaigned well in all the regions in the election and we continued to increase our vote, even in the Agricultural Region under the leadership of wheat and sheep farmer Ian James. I look forward to seeing him in the Parliament one day soon. In the South Metropolitan Region there are three new members in the lower house who relied on second preferences from Greens voters to claim their seats. The government should well remember this. No doubt the members for Bicton, Jandakot and Southern River will remember. I guess they have to respect the Greens' interests, because I ain't going to be here!

I want to thank the south metropolitan candidates who campaigned so well. I loved the team: Dorinda Cox; Thor Kerr; Mark Brogan; Louise Dickmann; Martin Spencer; Ryan Quinn; Jody Freeman; Shannon Hewitt, who is here tonight; Toni Pkos-Sallie, who I hope made it tonight; Jordan Steele-John; and James Mumme. I also thank the team that supported them: Pete Best, Luke Edmonds and Kate Davis, and Liam Carter, my campaign manager. Look out for him; he is an awesome dude. He is really on the up and coming. Thank you, Liam. I would also like to thank the south metropolitan Greens in Robert Delves, Kim Dravnieks, Sunny Miller,

Dawn Jecks, Christine Cunningham and Scott Ryan, all of whom have been my comrades and supporters over the years and who I hope will pick me up off the floor once I depart this place and give me something useful to do with my life. I also thank The Greens co-conveners and election campaign committee, the fundraisers, the media team and the policy group. I cannot name them all, but hopefully some of my colleagues can name them as they come in. I want to thank them all. It has been my absolute pleasure to be a Green in Parliament and to carry that mantle on behalf of all of them. We may never pass this way again.

My most important role—drink water—will now be to care for my partner who is being treated for metastatic breast cancer. She says an unwelcome visitor has taken a permanent place in our lives. I look forward to sharing sunsets and pottering around at home on the weekends. Sarah and I were married late last year—it is a bit too quiet—because we do not have the right to marry here. In 2012 I introduced a bill that would have established same-sex marriage in WA by amending state laws including the Family Court Act and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. Since 2004 we have waited politely for the Australian Parliament to pass marriage equality laws. It is incredible that the Australian government is still baulking at making this long overdue reform. We could have it tomorrow in WA if the McGowan government would simply support my bill. That is it—no more conversation: equality. Be brave for marriage equality. Your constituents are asking you for equal rights. It is not hard. I have drafted the bill. I did not personally do it; I had parliamentary counsel do it, so it should be good. Please do that for me and for my partner and for everyone else who just wants equality. It is not a lot to ask. It is 2017. Again, it is long past time.

I think I may have skipped a page and did not mention a couple of really important people: Arran Morton, who has been in my office for the last year and who has brought life, warmth and true gentleness into our office. It has been a pleasure to have you in the office. I want to thank you particularly for your work organising Pride at Parliament. Arran trusted that we would win the election, so she left her career and came into politics. I really hope that she finds her feet in a new exciting challenge and continues to blossom in new skills. It is been great to have her in the team.

I should have mentioned Eloise Dortch when I talked at length about the shark cull. She has also been a tireless worker in my office. The team that I have now is like family, and I will really miss them. I cannot say it enough: it has just been very lovely. We have all gone through tough times together and I appreciate that you were there for me to not only make sure that I did my job well, but also to keep me human, reminding me that sometimes I had to have a break and spend time with Sarah. I really appreciate the team that I have had and how they have supported me. I see Kyle in the gallery. I appreciate you, too, Kyle. It has been great to be in your life these last five years. It is great to see you in the gallery. I hope that you get an opportunity one day to be down here. Hopefully, by then we would already have marriage equality and we could be looking after mature trees and all those things. I will do a lot of that work for you. Whether you have been a friend or a colleague or just someone who I have encountered in my office and who we have been able to help, I want you to know you have played a great role in my life and helped me to become a fuller human being and given me an opportunity to be compassionate, to be understanding of difference, to learn new things and to respect people even if they have a different way of thinking and a different value system to me. I think that is such a great opportunity. I can hear my father telling me that that is a really important skill to have in life and it is a good opportunity to have it as a member of Parliament and as a public servant.

I could not have done this job without Hon Robin Chapple by my side. He has been such a lovely man to work with. He has been a friend to me. He has been my dinner companion when I have been grumpy. He has been very, very kind to me as I have navigated these waters. I know that being successful in Parliament relies upon having a good buddy, and Robin has been that to me. I now bestow that gift upon my Greens colleagues. He can now look after them and make sure that they navigate these waters well.

In concluding my remarks, Mr President, it is been a journey that has been rewarding for me. I feel sad going, but I have every faith that there is something on the horizon and there is a reason for this change in my career path. I will find a way to use the skills and knowledge that I have built up for the good of Western Australians. Hopefully, I will continue to enjoy doing it, and, maybe, I will have a little bit more sleep. That would be really good. I will hopefully find some way to repay the citizens of Western Australia for the faith that they have put in me and the tremendous opportunity that they have given me to represent them in this place.

[Applause.]