



# Parliamentary Debates

(HANSARD)

FORTIETH PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
2017

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Wednesday, 24 May 2017

# Legislative Council

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**THE PRESIDENT (Hon Kate Doust)** took the chair at 1.00 pm, and read prayers.

## **HELENA VALLEY LOCAL STRUCTURE PLAN 71**

### *Petition*

**HON SAMANTHA ROWE (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [1.01 pm]: I present a petition containing 16 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned residents of Western Australia are opposed to the reclamation of the lake and wetlands situated at the end of Carabeen Avenue in Helena Valley, being lots 2, 3 & 6 Helena Valley Road, Helena Valley, structural plan No 71 for the purpose of 76 housing lots.

Our petitioners therefore respectfully request the Legislative Council to oppose the development of 6–8 housing lots to save the wetlands and the lake sanctuary, by protecting the breeding habitats of long neck turtles, up to 38 varieties of birds and a large variety of other wildlife. This area has significant social and recreational value to our community.

This sanctuary of wildlife, wetlands and lake are the last in Helena Valley and should be declared Environmentally Sensitive A sec 51b E P Act 1986

“And your petitioners, as in duty, bound will ever pray”

[See paper 227.]

## **PERTH MODERN SCHOOL — RELOCATION**

### *Petition*

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan)** [1.03 pm]: I present a petition containing 6 474 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned residents of Western Australia respectfully oppose the Government’s ‘Education Central’ plan to:

- remove without reason the selective academic status of Perth Modern School;
- relocate the selective academic school students to an inner city location called ‘Perth Academic College’ in a high-rise building.

Education Central was developed without any consultation with the Perth Modern School community. ‘Perth Academic College’ would compromise student health, safety and wellbeing; does not provide equity of access to the outdoor natural environment and sporting facilities, as available in other government secondary schools; and unnecessarily disrupts Perth Modern School students in order to address student enrolment pressures in other secondary schools.

Perth Modern School’s alumni organisation, the Perth Modern Society Inc., at present provides an exceptional level of support—including the Sphinx Scholarship Fund’s financial and moral support for disadvantaged students. Similarly for the Perth Modern School Parents & Citizens Association. These are important elements of Perth Modern School, and are non-transferable to the proposed ‘Perth Academic College’.

Your petitioners therefore humbly pray that the Legislative Council recommends that:

- Perth Modern School retains selective academic school status in its current location;
- a comprehensive and transparent consultation process is undertaken with all stakeholders to develop:
  - evidence-based strategies for secondary school planning, including meeting the demand in Western suburbs;
  - principles to ensure student equity around health and well-being, including on-site outdoor ground-level spaces for sport and recreation.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray

[See paper 228.]

**METROPOLITAN REGION SCHEME PROPOSED AMENDMENT 1310/41 —  
GUILDFORD ROAD FROM EAST PARADE TO TONKIN HIGHWAY**

*Petition*

**HON ALANNA CLOHESY (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [1.05 pm]: I present a petition containing 1 557 signatures couched in the following terms —

To the President and Members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled.

We the undersigned residents of Western Australia are opposed to Metropolitan Region Scheme Proposed Amendment 1310/41 Guildford Road from East Parade to Tonkin Highway dated December 2016 and associated WAPC covering letter dated 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

Your petitioners therefore respectfully request the Legislative Council to oppose the current process and recommend:

- Immediate discontinuance of this proposed amendment by WAPC on behalf of MRWA and the WAPC agents, subsidiaries, staff, contractors, consultants and Ministers; and
- Immediate discontinuance of all related processes relative to this proposed amendment by MRWA, and the MRWA agents, subsidiaries, staff, contractors, consultants and Ministers.

And your petitioners as in duty bound, will ever pray.

[See paper 229.]

**PAPERS TABLED**

Papers were tabled and ordered to lie upon the table of the house.

**GENETICALLY MODIFIED CROPS FREE AREAS ACT — REINSTATEMENT**

*Notice of Motion*

**Hon Diane Evers** gave notice that at the next sitting of the house she would move —

That given the government spoke so vigorously against the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Repeal Bill 2015 when in opposition, that the government now reinstate the Genetically Modified Crops Free Areas Act 2003.

**RURAL FIRE SERVICE — ESTABLISHMENT**

*Notice of Motion*

**Hon Rick Mazza** gave notice that at the next sitting of the house he would move —

That this house —

- (a) supports the creation of an independent rural fire service consistent with the recommendations of the Euan Ferguson report;
- (b) funds the new RFS by a proportion of the emergency services levy;
- (c) treats the ESL the same as other sources of state revenue and collected by the Department of Finance;
- (d) enables the Department of Finance to remit funding to Department of Fire and Emergency Services and the RFS as per operational and budgetary requirements; and
- (e) directs the Standing Committee on Public Administration to inquire into the implementation of an independent rural fire service and report to the Legislative Council within 12 months of the referral.

**EDUCATION CENTRAL POLICY — PERTH MODERN SCHOOL**

*Motion*

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan)** [1.08 pm]: I move —

That this house notes both the significant concerns being raised across the community and the lack of consultation undertaken by the McGowan government on its Education Central policy, particularly the proposed relocation of the state's only fully academically selective senior high school, currently at Perth Modern School, to a high-rise inner-city school within the Perth City Link, and calls on the government to —

- (1) reverse its Education Central policy and maintain Perth Modern School as a fully academically selective school; and
- (2) revert to the comprehensive western suburbs secondary schooling strategy announced in September 2016.

Less than 10 minutes ago, I tabled a petition signed by 6 479 concerned Western Australians. All of those signatures were collected within just three weeks. Those 6 479 people are incredibly concerned, frustrated and anxious about the McGowan government's Education Central policy and what it means for students, both now and into the future, their families and the history and traditions of Perth Modern School. Such is the depth of feeling and concern for this issue that we see signatures from right across Western Australia, from the city, north, east, south and west, to Miling and Merredin, Wyalkatchem and Albany and everywhere in between. Today they are joined by others in both the gallery and outside Parliament who also share grave concerns for this proposal. It is not only those with a very strong connection to Perth Modern School, but also others with a particular interest in schooling more generally across the western suburbs.

The motion today is not about condemning the government or the minister. Indeed, I leave those sorts of motions to Hon Sally Talbot, who is on urgent parliamentary business. Rather, it is about asking the minister, the Premier and his government to listen to the legitimate concerns of the petitioners, to listen to the students, to listen to their parents, to listen to the old Modernians and to listen to those who just want Perth Modern School left as it is—a fully academically selective senior high school in Subiaco. People want the government to listen and reverse this ill-conceived and unwelcome policy.

The minister might well say that this motion is premature and that all will be revealed soon enough. But, unfortunately, that just does not cut it. The simple fact is that we are already seeing a government and a Premier after just two months into the job saying that it will be their way—no ifs, no buts. Both the minister and the Premier have talked about consultation and a mandate. Indeed, a couple of weeks ago when I asked a direct question on which group or groups the minister had consulted on the Education Central policy prior to making the announcement on 29 January, she said —

The member will recall that in 2014, 2015 and, indeed, in 2016, Hon Ken Travers and I asked a series of questions in the house, in estimates, and I think in annual reports hearings as well, about the government's proposed ways of dealing with the pressure that was building in the western suburbs, particularly around the city side of the western suburbs. We did that and we held forums with a number of parent groups, in particular from inner-city suburbs—the inner north suburbs. We consulted a range of parents and people interested in the subject, basically from 2014 through to 2016.

What does that answer mean in a nutshell? It means that there was no consultation, or certainly not with those people with a direct interest in Perth Modern School. The Premier's response to a similar question asked on the same day in the other place is even more telling. He said —

Our consultation process was this: we published the policy two months before the state election and we were elected on the policy. That was our consultation process.

That is not consultation. Indeed, even today I read in the paper that when the Premier was again asked about it, he said Labor won and it had a mandate. That is concerning, to say the least. I would argue and accept that for some of its policies, the new Labor government can certainly take a clear position. I accept that. But to suggest that simply because the Labor Party won on 11 March that it has a mandate for every single one of its policies, including this one, which has been so roundly criticised by all and sundry since its announcement, is a bit cute, to say the least. If implemented, this policy will effectively end the traditions, ethos and heart of a school that has played such a significant and distinguished role in our state's public education system for more than 100 years. This is not something that we as Liberals can support.

What is the purpose of Education Central? I think there are a few mainly political reasons for the decision. One, of course, was simply for the Labor Party to seek to distinguish itself from the Liberal Party and the comprehensive western suburbs secondary schooling strategy that the former minister Hon Peter Collier, who is next to me in the chamber, announced last year. We all know that there has been significant demand for places at secondary schools in the western suburbs for some time. Indeed, those of us who were in the chamber during the last term well remember speeches by the now Minister for Education in which she talked a lot about the need for forward planning, the need to end the uncertainty and the need for a decision. Indeed, this is what the now minister had been calling for. I quote again from Council *Hansard* of 14 September 2016 when Hon Sue Ellery said —

The issue is that the vast majority of parents across Western Australia are actively engaged in the education of their children and in decision-making about the education of their children. They do not wait until their children are in year 6 to make decisions about where their children will attend secondary school. They make those decisions well in advance and they make decisions about where they will buy houses or rent or move to well in advance of their children having to front up to their first day at secondary school. That is part of their frustration as well because these people want their children to go to public schools. They want their children to go to strongly performing public schools and they want to make the decision about where they live well in advance of their children's first day of year 7. They want as much information as they can possibly get to assist them with that decision.

What did the former government's strategy therefore involve? First, it involved \$88 million worth of expansion projects to increase the capacity at both Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School. It also included a commitment to opening a new secondary college at City Beach in 2020. It would be built on the former City Beach senior high school site and would cater for 1 600 year 7 to 12 students. To make way for the new school, the International School of Western Australia would relocate to Doubleview Primary School and a brand-new primary school would be built for the existing Doubleview Primary School students. The Japanese School in Perth would also relocate to buildings at the City Beach primary school site. Other proposed changes included those relating to Carine Senior High School. I am sure that Hon Peter Collier will outline those and other elements of the strategy further when he no doubt gets the opportunity to speak on this motion.

It is certainly clear to me that all the decisions that centred around the then government's policy were based on sound enrolment projections and significant planning and negotiation by the then minister and the Department of Education to achieve an outcome that would appropriately address the substantial growth and demand for places in the western suburbs. With all this announced well before 11 March, I think most with an interest in this issue would have assumed—albeit now obviously it was wrong to assume—that the solution had been found and that the government would then just get on with the job of implementing the strategy. But what happened instead? A curve ball was thrown by the Labor Party on 29 January 2017, which has created the same level of uncertainty and frustration for parents and families as the minister espoused back in September last year. Indeed, I want to read part of an email that I received from one concerned parent. This parent is not connected to Perth Modern School and I indicate that I have her agreement to read this email. She states —

Labor's Education Central Policy, whilst of particular concern to the Perth Modern School Community, directly impacts all current and future public secondary school students in Perth's western suburbs and beyond—with the potential to affect student enrolments at not only Churchlands SHS and Shenton College, but also, for example, Carine, Balcatta, and Mt Lawley Senior High Schools, as well as Dianella College.

As a mother of two primary-school-aged children, currently in years three and six at Woodlands Primary School, I remain extremely alarmed that enrolments at Churchlands are projected to reach 3000 by 2019—and that we, as parents, continue to experience much angst with regards to our children's secondary schooling.

The issue of overcrowding at namely, Churchlands SHS, is one that has been acknowledged by both major political parties over the past decade—but still, as parents, we continue to be faced with uncertainty regarding our children's public secondary schooling needs in Perth's west. Last September, when the former government announced its Western Suburbs Secondary Schooling Plan, we believed a viable solution to the ever-increasing enrolment pressures in the area's two public high schools had been delivered. However, any certainty that we believed this plan had provided, was swiftly eroded when Labor finally announced its Education Central Policy in the lead up to the March State Election.

As the Hon Sue Ellery MLC, Minister for Education, rightly pointed out in Parliament, as Shadow Education Minister last year, "when parents make decisions about which secondary school they want to send their children to, they do not wait until their children get to Year 6; they make those decisions well before" that time. As parents, we made decisions about where we intended to live, over ten years ago. We put our finances on the line, in an effort to purchase a home within the local intake area of Churchlands SHS, in order to ensure our first-born could attend that school. Accordingly, overcrowding issues that have evolved over time and remain unaddressed, as well as talk of new schools and the changing of geographic catchment areas, creates great angst and enormous pressure for us. Thousands of other families across Perth's west share our concerns and frustration.

The letter goes on to state —

This crisis cannot be permitted to continue. It requires urgent resolution. The matter of our children's education is not one that should be politicised. Decisions and solutions **MUST** be in our children's best interests—and must be based on sound research, evidence and planning. To this end, and with respect to Education Central, I ask the following:

- Using projected enrolment data, please indicate how many students will be re-directed from ... Shenton College to the proposed local intake Perth Modern High School from 2020 up until 2025.
- Presuming that Perth Modern is operating as a local intake high school from 2020, what are the projected enrolments for CSHS and Shenton College from 2020 up to and including 2025?
- In order to provide reliable data in response to the two aforementioned queries, proposed catchment areas must have been considered. Accordingly, when will the Government announce

amended catchment areas for parents within all those local intake areas that will be impacted by *Education Central* ... ?

- If the relocation of ISWA and the Japanese School progress as planned, what is intended for the City Beach site?
- What is the total projected cost of Education Central—including ongoing liability for rent for the new Perth Academic College? And, in particular, how do these costs compare to the projected costs of the *Western Suburbs' Secondary Schooling Plan*?

Please provide us with the answers we seek and engage in open communication and consultation regarding a matter that impacts thousands of Western Australian children.

These are just some of the many questions that are now being asked and that we are not getting answers to. I want to turn back to the curve ball itself, otherwise known as Education Central, which was announced by the Labor Party on the eve of the election. According to the policy document, Education Central will be a purpose-built facility in the Perth City Link precinct, housing both the proposed Perth academic college and Scitech. The academically select school currently located at Perth Modern School would be relocated to the college and cater for around 1 500 students. To say that this policy has been met with alarm is an understatement. The number of letters that I have received, principally from concerned parents, is growing every day. I know the minister and her colleagues are also receiving plenty of letters, but is the government listening? Sadly, so far, it appears not. According to the government, consultation has been done, save, of course, for the only consultation that is mentioned in the policy document—that being on the final name of the school. With all due respect to the minister, this is hardly the biggest issue that is worrying the school community; it is important, but it is not everything. I want to go through a few of those concerns.

First, I refer to the location. The Premier keeps talking about improving accessibility to the school as though it is a huge problem now. The existing site is accessible. No school is always accessible in the best way that we would like it to be, but it is accessible. What about security and the safety of students leaving late from school for whatever reason or the additional congestion that will no doubt be created? Indeed, I want to refer to an excerpt of a letter I received from a parent just yesterday. Again I have permission to read this letter, which states in part —

To move our children to a proposed CBD location will have a significant impact on getting to and from school. My daughter already spends 45–90 minutes each way using public transport. Waiting with 1,500 other children to take a lift to the 16<sup>th</sup>–25<sup>th</sup> storey of a high rise will add a further 15–20 minutes to that journey. It would be compounded if I needed to drive her into the city to drop her in with a heavy instrument for music lessons. Over a quarter of the students do instrumental music, so that is well in excess of 300 students. (For example in year 8 and 9 there are 100 students in each year that do music). Many of the students in the music program are in orchestras who practice out of school hours: after school and on weekends. The number of extra of vehicles driving into the city to support just the music students' practice and concerts will have a significant impact on road congestion.

Then of course there is the height of the building. The minister is on record as saying that a decision on the height has not been made, and, to my knowledge the minister has not given a definitive figure. However, we do know that it is going to be a vertical inner-city school, and that it will be located on the top floors of the building and that separate dedicated lifts will service it. Of course, we have the artist's impression, which was included in the policy document; all this points to a high-rise building in the centre of the city. As the saying goes, if it looks like a duck, swims like a duck and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck.

I know that the minister will probably say that other states are heading towards high-rise options as well. Indeed, in questions without notice last week, we learnt that the minister has visited the South Melbourne Primary School site in Ferrars Street and that a fairly large entourage also accompanied the minister to Sydney where she was briefed on the planning, design and construction of the new Parramatta primary and secondary school, Arthur Phillip. The opposition understands that in due course there will be a need for an inner-city school. We do not disagree with that, particularly, as increasing numbers of people are moving into the inner parts of the Perth metropolitan area; but, can I say that with my fairly quick reading about the schools that the minister has received either briefings on or visited the sites of, there appears to be a couple of significant differences. The most notable being that the school's play space is not confined solely to the roof as is proposed for the Education Central building. Indeed, in the case of the South Melbourne school, as well as play areas being provided at ground level, additional land has been purchased adjacent to the school to be used as a community park for both students and locals alike. There are also outdoor recreational areas, again on the ground, at the proposed Parramatta school. I understand that the design of the latter has enabled a much larger playground and a variety of outdoor spaces to be incorporated to encourage sport and other activities. It is this very issue—what a high-rise school with limited outdoor areas may mean for student's health and overall development—that is causing the most concern for parents.

I asked the minister yesterday whether the government has commissioned a health impact assessment and whether it would involve community consultation. Again, I got no answer. The answer was, according to the uncorrected *Hansard* —

As I have answered in previous questions, the government is working through all the issues associated with our election commitment about how we address the issues created by poor planning of the previous government in population growth, particularly on the city side of the western suburbs. When we are ready to make the announcement about all the elements that make up that decision, we will so do.

Again, that is not an answer to a simple question on whether a health impact assessment would be undertaken. The reality is that students should have space. They should have outdoor space, and it does not matter how old they are. We all know that in the early years of a child's life, play helps children to learn, and to build resilience and confidence in a range of other skills. In the very early years, it is very hands on. I know that simply by virtue of being a mum of a six and a four-year-old. We spend plenty of time in playgrounds and sandpits, so I get it. But while the nature of play changes as children get older, the importance of the outdoors does not. Indeed, I want to refer to the "Play Space Guide" for WA schools, which has been released by the School of Population Health at the University of Western Australia. It states —

As students transition into adolescence and high school the nature of play changes, but is still an important part of development, and older students also benefit from outdoor environments in which they can be exposed to nature, participate in physical activity, socialize with peers or undertake learning activities in a different setting.

Play spaces also foster physical movement which results in many benefits for students. According to the draft Australian Curriculum: Health and Physical Education paper "Movement is a powerful medium for learning through which students can acquire, practice and refine personal, interpersonal, behavioural, social and cognitive skills".

Play spaces also provide environments for students to gain two hours of physical activity per week during class time as mandated by the Department of Education in Western Australia.

Researchers from the University of Western Australia's Centre for the Built Environment and Health have summarised the evidence describing elements of a good play space. This includes creating environments that encourage physical activity, social interaction, creativity, imagination and problem solving, as well as contact and interaction with nature. Accumulating evidence points to the health and developmental benefits of contact with nature, such as improved cognitive function, increased creativity, improved interaction with adults, reduced attention deficit hyperactivity disorder symptoms and reduced rates of aggression. In summary, a good play space can achieve so much!

If the minister intends to press on with this unwelcome proposal, and we obviously hope that she does not, I ask most sincerely that the appropriate health assessment, as recommended by the Department of Health for projects such as this, be undertaken. Indeed, I want to leave the minister with comments made by one parent on this particular matter. He said —

As a parent of a year 7 girl attending perth modern school, I have a range of concerns related to the labor government Academic Central plans.

One key concern relates to a very practical and important of bringing a family up—that is "getting our kids to do the recommended physical activity".

He goes on to say —

... her trip via the train has a very important 15-minute walk with backpack twice a day, to and fro the leederville train station. The 2.5 hours a week social and physical time is doubled to 5 hours a week as she insists on going to school 30 minutes early to socialize and play in the grounds. Remember play-dates are impractical as the kids are from all over perth.

The academic central plan will take this away. Instead she faces a direct train trip, an elevator ride to an enclosed space or rooftop. She loses one hour a day of activities which support healthy physical and mental development, this is replaced with increased sitting time, reduced green space and light exposure as well as reduced sporting activity.

He goes on to say —

If the government consulted, then the simple and practical aspects inherent in the EC proposal could be easily discovered. My concerns extent to our broader community, multiple this one hour a day, by 1500 kids for 6 years and suddenly we are talking about a public health impact.

In WA ... we already face challenges with childhood obesity, increasing diabetes, physical inactivity and suboptimal mental health. I have written to the education and health minister suggesting the health risks of EC are high, that these have not been acknowledged or evaluated, sadly I have not had replies. My view is that EC is experimental and ... I will not give my consent for her to be enrolled.

That says it all, really.

Finally, when it comes to cost, many are questioning, quite appropriately, the financial viability of the proposal, yet at the moment we are left to wonder what the true cost will be. I note that Hon Peter Collier will probably talk at length about the western suburbs strategy, but it was costed and the funding was there. Again I asked the minister a question last week about a business case or financial modelling. I asked —

- (1) Has the government completed a business case or any financial modelling for the delivery of this policy?
- (2) If yes ... will the minister table a copy; and, if not, why not?
- (3) If no ... has the minister requested that a business case be prepared and who is it being prepared by?

The response was —

- (1)–(3) Education Central is a McGowan government election commitment.

We know that.

Work is currently being undertaken between relevant agencies and the detail will go before cabinet. This information is cabinet-in-confidence.

We are left again with scant detail from the government other than what we can ascertain through the media and other means, which appears to involve some convoluted arrangement with leases and the like. I want to refer to a news article written on 30 January that states —

For the plan to go ahead, a Labor government would need to find a contractor in the private sector to build the high-rise on the government-owned land.

The \$45 million dollars would cover the initial school fitout cost of \$25 million and leasing costs up until 2021.

The state would then pay rent that Labor has estimated at \$13 million for both the school and Scitech annually, but said much of that would be offset by a subsidy the government currently paid to Scitech.

If we take just the last part of the article relating to Scitech and if we can go by what we read in the news— I accept the minister may provide more details to us throughout this debate; I am not sure whether that will happen, but we can hope—the government appears to think that it can use the funding given by the state to Scitech to help fund the lease. I am not quite sure whether Scitech would be terribly fussed with that unless, of course, the government intends to substantially increase its funding. Why? Again, in answer to questions I asked last week in this place, the government advised me of the current funding arrangements between the state government and Scitech, and this agreement is between 2013 and 2018. The total funds equate to \$41.5 million over five years and in each of the financial years it equates to around \$8 million, give or take a bit. If we go with the Labor Party's logic, there will not be anything left for Scitech to use to continue to develop its full mission—that is, to increase awareness, interest, capability and participation by all Western Australians in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. I do not see paying leases in any part of that mission.

Many questions are unanswered and the number is growing by the day. In concluding my remarks, I reiterate that it is the opposition's very strong view that the Education Central policy is ill-conceived, has caused unnecessary alarm and unnecessarily does away with the heritage and traditions of this fine school. Some might argue that the latter will remain irrespective of whether the selective status is removed because the school itself will remain, but a school is made up of much more than the walls of the building that encompasses it. The heritage and traditions are passed to generations of students, and they are as present today as they were when the school was first formed many years ago. We cannot forget that this concern is not shared by just those involved with Perth Modern School; it is a much broader issue than that. It covers the western suburbs more generally. The problem was solved in September last year. We simply ask that the minister steps back, takes a breath and listens—listens to the 6 479 people who signed the petition that was tabled today and to the chorus of others who have joined them in their quest to have the government's policy reversed. Some might say that in government decisions have to be made and they will not always be popular with everyone in the community, and I get that. I was the Minister for Environment and the Minister for Planning. It is a very rare day indeed when there is universal endorsement for a decision that is made. The support for this proposal is just not there. Minister—through you, Madam President—if you were to change your mind tomorrow, and I think I speak for all of us on this side of the house, we would thank and applaud you for making the right decision. Indeed, I will leave members with two letters, one of which was penned by former Labor MP Judyth Watson and appeared in the paper just a couple of days ago. It reads —

Malcolm Quekett is right to argue ... for the consideration of the heritage values of Perth Modern School and its traditions. PMS has not only been a beacon for the success of public education, but its graduates have contributed as advocates and practitioners to all public education.

Former students have been leaders not only in WA, but nationally and internationally. Each of those individuals, including myself, acknowledge that Perth Modern gave them opportunities they may not otherwise have had.

As much as they belong to the site, the school's heritage values belong to past and present students. Those men and women are being unnecessarily upset; I am certain that they would much rather work with the Government to facilitate high standards of public education to which they are committed.

I hope that the Government will compromise, leaving PMS as is, and find other better solutions to the needs of students to the north and west of Perth Modern School.

This is part of a letter that a parent sent to me just yesterday that sums up the situation most eloquently. It states —

Our family appreciates that we are fortunate to have this opportunity for our daughter to be supported to achieve her academic and all round potential by attending Perth Modern School. For her part, she works hard through doing her homework and overall commitment to learning while she is at school.

My daughter is thriving in the Perth Modern environment, where it is not just one class in a mainstream school, but an entire curriculum adapted to help students reach their potential. She is involved in much more than academic study; she also takes music, drama, sports, manual arts and debating. Over the evenings of last week, we have attended a debate, music concert and art exhibition. As well as achieving academically, I want her to develop many skills, and I also want her to be physically active during teenage years. In short, I want her to learn, but also when she goes to school I want her to be able to run around and play with her friends during recess, just like any other child at most other schools across WA.

As a parent who sees her daughter thriving at Perth Modern School, I ask that the Academic Central proposal be reconsidered. Please change the proposal to move our children out of their current superb school, into a skyscraper that does not yet exist and is likely totally unaffordable for the state. Please continue to sustain excellence in academic selective education, as already exists at Perth Modern School campus.

With that, I urge the house to support the motion.

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Minister for Education and Training)** [1.43 pm]:  
Mr Deputy President, can I use my first opportunity with you in the chair to congratulate you on your new position.

I acknowledge that uncertainty causes anxiety and that many of the parents of children currently at Perth Modern School are anxious to see what the government's proposal will look like for them and their children. I am working through the issues to provide the very best model to take forward to them. It is only reasonable that people have been asking questions. This proposal is about their children and they want me to be mindful and protective of their children's welfare and, importantly, to think about the future for their children, and that is what the government is seeking to do. Our election commitments and our platform are aimed at creating a better state with a real eye to the future. Perth is a growing city and Western Australia is a growing state, and we have committed to building a new economy for a new century. Building the very best new schools and improving existing facilities is about making sure that we provide educational sites and educational venues that are the very best they can be.

The so-called western suburbs secondary school strategy developed by the previous government was problematic. The population growth on the coastal side of the western suburbs is not as rapid as has been suggested. The population growth in the western region is not down near the beach; it is on the inner eastern side of the western suburbs. That is where the infill is and that is where local government is supportive of, and is even driving, infill and growth. The CBD population is expected to grow by around 50 per cent over the next decade and the growth rates in North Perth, West Leederville, Leederville and Mt Hawthorn are in the 10 to 16 per cent range; whereas the suburbs closer to the beach are experiencing lower growth and, in the case of City Beach itself, negative growth.

There have been increasing enrolments from 2007 to 2017, and I will touch quickly on those. The student enrolment at Churchlands Senior High School in 2009 was 1 766; in 2015, it was 2 271; in 2016, it was 2 486; and in 2017, it was 2 581. The student enrolment at Shenton College in 2009 was 1 242; in 2015, it was 1 875; and in 2017, it was 1 969. Those rates are predicted to continue to grow. Without action, pressure was beginning to mount. As soon as 2020, Churchlands Senior High School is predicted to have 3 250 students, Mount Lawley Senior High School is predicted to have 1 950 and Shenton College is predicted to have 2 271. By 2025, Churchlands will be pushed to 3 852, Mount Lawley to 2 372 and Shenton College to 2 565. They are outstanding public secondary schools producing outstanding results. People might ask, "What is wrong with that?" Let us put to one side the issue of the physical capacity to fit those numbers of students onto the sites and

the problems with having so many transportables. Why is it that numbers over 2 500, and closer to 3 000 or even over 3 000, are problematic? That goes to the capacity of schools to deliver and create real communities, meaningful pastoral care and the like. I want to talk a little about that.

The view from educationalists is that although the existing schools with high populations have managed them well—they are led by some of our most professional and leading school leaders and they are managing it well—it becomes increasingly difficult as enrolments beyond about 2 500 or 2 700 start to grow. Churchlands Senior High School already has three school chaplains, three school psychologists, two nurses, six program coordinators of student services and numerous other staff responsible for the wellbeing of students across the pastoral care delivery program. Coordinating an even greater number of staff and programs for an enrolment beyond 3 000 students would present significant challenges for that school. Even maintaining a school culture in which everybody at least knows everybody in their year will be difficult when those numbers are reached. The sheer size of the school will make it harder to deliver programs, because their effectiveness will become increasingly fragmented and diminished.

One of the real issues is how to ensure ongoing communication links and a chain of command with such a large number of students on a single campus. Developing the connectivity that is needed between the teams and the people for whom they are responsible, parents and students, and parents and teachers is diminished with such a large number of students on a single site. It becomes difficult for staff to have opportunities for meaningful input at staff meetings. Everything becomes fragmented because, literally, everyone cannot be put into one space. It is being organised by year group, and, therefore, the whole-of-school community relationship is broken down. The school's capacity to manage communication amongst teens on subject areas, and instructional leadership undertaken by line managers are compromised by size—it does matter.

The total number of year 7 to 12 secondary students in Perth's western suburbs is expected to grow from 6 196 in 2017 to 8 173 by 2026. Most of that growth is coming from the inner-city side of the western suburbs, closer to the CBD; it is not coming from the coastal side of the school. As a consequence, enrolments are predicted to grow, which creates serious issues. Why are we still talking about an appropriate site for the new local intake secondary school? The City Beach proposal by members opposite is not the perfect solution because it is on the wrong side of where the growth is coming from. The abject failure of an earlier Liberal government, of which Colin Barnett was the Minister for Education, was not holding onto the land of the schools that he closed along that strip in the western suburbs, which cut off options for future governments, including the next one of which he was a member.

**Hon Peter Collier** interjected.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I made a point of listening in silence to every word the member spoke. I asked my colleagues to make sure that we listened to every word that was put because this is an important debate. I am going to ask that the member gives me the same courtesy in return.

**Hon Peter Collier** interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order! The minister has clearly indicated that she is not interested in interjections. The mover of the motion was heard in respectful silence, and that is what is going to happen with the minister. Minister, please resume.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thank you very much, Mr Deputy President. It is also important to touch on the issue of what Perth Modern School has been and what it is now. It was established as the first government secondary school in 1911. Its charter was to offer a modern education to students of strong academic ability. Selection was by scholarship and both male and female students studied science and modern languages as part of their course, which of itself was important because it was the first time that female students were able to study the full range of courses. Throughout the years the school has developed a very strong reputation based on the achievement of high educational standards and the successes of past students. In 1958, Perth Modern School's status changed from being a version of a select school to a comprehensive school. In today's language, it shifted from being a select school to a local intake public secondary school, open to local students whatever their academic prowess. In 1968, the special music scholarship was established. The intensive English centre was established in the school in 1983, and this provided for those students who had recently arrived in Western Australia from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. In 1999, as one of the outcomes of the projected closure of Swanbourne Senior High School, the school entered into a partnership with The Graduate College of Dance to provide a specialist ballet program on the site.

In 2000 there was a Senate inquiry into the education of gifted students that produced a range of findings. I am advised that Western Australia made a submission to that Senate inquiry. As a consequence of the Senate findings, the Western Australian government acknowledged the importance of fully selective schooling and gathered educational evidence around establishing a select secondary school. In February 2005, the then Premier, Geoff Gallop, announced that Perth Modern School would become WA's only completely select status secondary school. What happened to the existing school? The gifted and talented music program was phased out

and Perth Modern School returned to being an academic select school in 2007 with a year 8 cohort. The school commenced as a fully select school for years 8 to 12 students in 2011. Today, in 2016, it has an enrolment of some 1 381 students from years 7 to 12. The interesting thing to note is that far more students apply to get into the academic select program at Perth Modern School than it can currently take. To get into that fully academic select school, students need to demonstrate a high level of academic excellence. They apply for a position and sit a selective entrance test in about March every year. Tests are conducted on all academic languages and arts subjects. The selective test covers four components: reading comprehension; communication of ideas in writing; and quantitative and abstract reasoning. Three of those four tests are made up of multiple-choice questions. The writing task itself presents the applicant with a prompt and then students can write in any genre, unlike the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy, as long as it references the prompt. The answer is assessed for creativity and originality with an appropriate rubric, unlike NAPLAN, to measure the outcome. Those students who apply really do have to demonstrate they are able to not only retain information, but also be creative. These students really are the best and the brightest, and that is what it takes to get into that fully academic select school. It is worth making the point that a number of public secondary schools have really strong and extensive academic select components. For example, we could say that John Curtin College of the Arts is the next closest to being completely academic select, but it still retains a small component of local intake. Willetton Senior High School and Rossmoyne Senior High School have a very strong academic select component but also much larger local intake provisions.

It is an interesting exercise to look at the number of students who applied this year and see how many put Perth Modern School as their first preference. In March, which was two months after the policy was announced that the site of the only academic select school in Perth would change if a Labor government were elected, students sat the entrance test. A greater number of students applied to get into Perth Modern School this year than over the last four or five years. In 2015, 1 326 students sat the test and indicated that Perth Modern School was their first preference. In 2016—to start in 2017—1 370 applied for Perth Modern School as their first preference. In March this year, two months after the announcement of the Labor policy that the site might change, 1 544 students applied and put Perth Modern School as their first preference. Why is that important? It is important to note that an additional 175 students sat the test than last year, and that was 218 more than the year before. Across Western Australia, parents were not voting with their feet and saying, “We don’t want a part of the new fully academically select school.” That is not what was happening. It indicated that the work done by Perth Modern School as WA’s only fully academically select school was attractive to more parents in Western Australia than previously, irrespective of where that school was going to conduct its work. Those are important numbers to keep in mind. That does not take away from how I started my speech. I understand that uncertainty causes anxiety and that the parents of students at Perth Mod now want certainty. I understand that, and I am working as fast as I can, as effectively as I can, to provide them with that certainty as quickly as I can.

It is also important in this debate to talk about what academic select is, because there are different points of view about fully select schools versus trying to improve what we do for gifted and talented children in every classroom. There is a spectrum of views about that and it is important to put my view, and the view of this government, on the record, because some of those who oppose the government’s policy suggest that our motivation for that is that we do not support academic select schools and that we have an issue with fully academically select public secondary schools. That is not the case. That is not my view; that is not the view of the McGowan government. All students deserve the opportunity to achieve the highest standards of learning possible so that they are equipped to deal effectively with the opportunities and the challenges that they face. Exceptionally able students have different learning needs from those of other children. These students benefit, educationally and psychologically, from being involved in educational programs with other similarly able students. In the course of this discussion I have heard many parents say to me that the very first time their child came home after a day at school and was happy about what had happened during their school day was when they were at Perth Mod, surrounded by their peers. I take absolutely no issue with that. I recognise that academic select schools serve a very important purpose and make sure that we treat our brightest and our best in a way that is going to enable them to flourish. We should not assume, which some people do—this was put to me by some parents of exceptionally gifted and talented children—that because these students are academically ahead of their age peers, we just need to accelerate them a bit and give them additional opportunities to learn and that the social environment has no bearing on them. For many of those children, the social environment is far worse for them—they stand out because they are so exceptionally gifted and talented.

I do not want people to assume that our position is that academic select students should not be getting a differentiated kind of education. That is not our position. The argument, folks, is about the site. It is not about whether academically select schools are good or bad. I support them. That is not the position of every other jurisdiction. Some people will remember that in 2011, I think, the Victorian Parliament undertook an inquiry into gifted and talented education in its state. The government responded in due course. The government’s response, as I have read it, was, “We think we need to do better in every classroom to make sure that gifted and talented children get the very best education.” I would not disagree with that; I think that as well. However, I go one step

further and say that we have to recognise the benefit of fully academic select schools and we have to continue to provide them. We have only one completely academic select school right now in Western Australia; I think we need more. When a number of people have come to see me about this issue, I have said that. I actually think we need more. New South Wales has 13 or 18 or something like that. We need more. This is not an argument about a Labor government not supporting the very best educational environment for those children who are exceptionally gifted and talented. It just is not. Secondary selective entrance programs that cater for students with exceptional academic languages and arts abilities and offer the learning environment, differentiated curriculum and expert teaching that these students require is sound policy, and we support it and will ensure that it continues.

I touched on the Victorian situation. I share the view that all gifted and talented children in Western Australia should, as much as it is possible within their classroom, get differentiated learning and acceleration and extension opportunities, but we need to do more in every classroom. We also need to continue to have academically select programs and, where we can do it, we need to have fully academically select programs. I do not share the view that this is somehow a policy that is about reducing opportunities for gifted and talented children. As I said, the argument is about the site. That is the argument. It is not about the fantastic work that has been done, and will continue to be done, in WA's only fully academically select school, wherever it is. Victoria has four selective entry schools and New South Wales has 17 fully selective secondary schools. Queensland has a version of an academy in years 10 to 12 for gifted and talented children. South Australia has three public high schools that provide accelerated learning. However, I reckon it is New South Wales with 17 fully select schools and then WA with one fully academically select school, and a few variations with high levels of academic select.

It is also the case that over the last few years there has been a growth of planning and development of inner urban government high schools. That has come about as a result of choices that people are making about where they live, including more and more people choosing to live and work and raise families in the inner parts of our cities. The development of government schools is also built on the back of a history of a number of private schools running, developing and building schools in inner urban areas and managing all the things that go with that, including transport, traffic flows and being in the city after dark to attend extracurricular activities. Schools have been doing that in private education in cities around Australia for many, many years.

I want to touch on what our policy is not. It is not about abolishing or dumping the policy that fully academically select schools are the appropriate way to ensure highly gifted and talented students thrive. It is not about knocking down, destroying or trashing the Perth Modern School site. It is not about putting our brightest and our best in a prison. It is not about designing a school to be dangerous or a safety risk. The proposition was put that the government was designing a school to be dangerous. It is not about trashing the achievements of the last 10 years of Perth Modern School or, indeed, of the whole history of Perth Modern School. It is not an attack on the western suburbs. It is not a perversion of class warfare. It is not an attack on the elite. I have never used the word "elite", although, frankly, I think we should be loud and proud if people do want to use that word in a positive sense. I have never used that word, but I am being accused of mounting some kind of attack on the elite.

**Hon Donna Faragher:** Not by me.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** No, I do not suggest that, but there are lots of points of view, honourable member, that have been put to me.

This is not a debate about destroying or abolishing a very successful fully academic school, although some would seek to frame it that way. It is a debate about whether there is only one site in this state that is capable of providing the best education for our brightest and our best. Even with all the debate and controversy, if people want to call it that, about this project, there are still parents and students who want to go to our state's fully academically select state school, wherever it is.

We will announce our plans soon. We will give certainty to parents. We will consult on how plans can be implemented. In a constrained economic environment created by the appalling financial management, if one can call it that, of the previous government, this is about addressing the real enrolment pressures at a number of public secondary schools that were allowed to build up their enrolments to an unsustainable level. It is about ensuring that our brightest and best have the best learning environment.

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [2.12 pm]: Thank you, Mr Deputy President, and I would also like to congratulate you on your new position.

It gives me a great deal of pleasure to stand up and support this motion. It is a motion that I feel very strongly and personally about. I generally have a good working relationship with Hon Sue Ellery and I like to think I will continue to do so. There are only two occasions I can remember that I have vehemently opposed any decision she has made. One was personal, on a motion she moved when I had just become Leader of the Government in this place—I will not reflect on that. I think members will remember that I lost a lot of respect for her over that. The second time is the Education Central policy. This is the worst decision she has ever made and shall ever make as Minister for Education and Training—without a shadow of a doubt. It is completely without foundation,

without consultation and without justification. It is completely unnecessary. I urge the honourable member to eat some humble pie and acknowledge she got it wrong and change her decision.

I will briefly address a couple of comments the minister has made. Firstly, with regard to the size of schools and pastoral care, that is without question; that is no-brainer stuff. We all know and understand that. Having a school with larger numbers is not necessarily a bad thing for subject choices et cetera, but then of course, yes, issues do arise with pastoral care and care of the child. Fundamentally, any education system must do what is best for the child. We always do that. Across this chamber, we will always do that.

I think the minister's second point, about the sale of land, was an own goal. She might like to have a look at who sold that land in Scarborough and City Beach.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** What is that? I think members might find that it was one of our newest members who sold the Scarborough land for \$15 million. As for City Beach, we did not sell it. The state still has that land, and that is part of our solution. The argument about that is without foundation. The argument is straight out of the water and does not work.

Of course the numbers at Perth Modern School went up. The school has just won the Beazley Medal for the third time in three years. It is one of the best academic schools in this nation and globally. Of course people want to go to Perth Mod. When did applications close? It was on 6 February. In six days, did a multitude of people all of a sudden see the multistorey building that the Labor Party was going to build and say, "Oh, I'm going to go and be a part of that!" Of course not. The reason they want to go to Perth Mod is because of the history of that school, the heritage of that school and the success of that school. It is not because the Labor Party decided that it would build a multistorey building and chuck everyone on the 15<sup>th</sup> floor so they could abseil for sport. That is not why it is doing it.

When we on this side of the chamber were in government, we did a lot more consultation than the mob opposite will ever do. I would like to point out a couple of things about education. The Liberal–National government faced a multitude of issues on the secondary education level and on each and every occasion we consulted extensively with the community. Let us just have a look at a few of the examples. Freo—that bastion of conservatism—"Those terrible Tories. Should we worry about them?" Of course not. What did we do when we looked at Hamilton Senior High School? What did we do when we looked at South Fremantle Senior High School, which was depleted in numbers? Did we give up on them and say, "It doesn't matter; it's not a winnable seat. We don't care about them"? Of course not. In May 2014, the then Premier and I had a meeting in Fremantle Town Hall with 200 or 300 people and consulted through surveys with every feeder school in the electorate. I consulted with every primary school and every secondary school in that community and asked them what they wanted. They said they wanted a school that provided quality education for vocational education and training and quality education on the academic front. Our government did not impose a decision on those schools; we consulted with those communities and included the local member, Simone McGurk, who was part of the process. In December 2014, I announced the establishment of Fremantle College. At a cost of \$31 million, that new school will open next year. It is a state-of-the-art academic facility in the heart of Fremantle. And those terrible Tories did it. What a great thing.

Armadale is another bastion of conservatism. Did we worry about that? When was the last time people saw a Liberal member down there in Armadale? Never—right? The academic problems in Armadale were profound. Armadale Senior High School was a great school, although its numbers were depleted. Cecil Andrews Senior High School was a great school. We went down there to have a look to see whether we could resolve it. We did exactly the same thing as we did in Fremantle. We held a public meeting at the Armadale Town Hall and put out a survey to all the students of all the feeder schools and asked them what they wanted for their education. We listened to them and then provided \$11 million on upgrades. I visited the school just before the election and took with me the great local member for Armadale, Tony Buti. What a great man he is. I cannot work out for the life of me how he has not been elevated in the Labor Party. We then said that we would do what the people of Armadale wanted. I opened a magnificent new state-of-the-art hospitality centre and also a design and technology area there. The upgrade is magnificent and it will elevate Armadale Senior High School. In addition to that, a magnificent new science, technology, engineering and mathematics centre was built at Cecil Andrews. Members should have a look at it. It is magnificent. Again, we listened to the community. We asked the community what it wanted. It was not the gospel according to Pete; we asked the community members what they wanted and we gave it to them.

In Kalgoorlie, my home town, I desperately wanted to amalgamate the two schools there. I still think Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School as a standalone year 7 through to year 10 facility and a separate Eastern Goldfields College is the wrong way to go. I think many of the behavioural issues at the community high school emanate from the fact that there is not the leadership support at the senior secondary level. In addition to that, any academic on the face of the earth who knows what they are talking about will tell you that the fewer

transition points there are in a child's life, the better. That is why I would prefer to have it that way. But we listened to the community. I held a community meeting up there and surveyed all the primary schools. I visited every primary school in Kalgoorlie, both government and non-government schools, and gave them what they wanted—a magnificent new \$45 million state-of-the-art school in Kalgoorlie–Boulder Community High School. That is another challenge for the current minister. She might like to look at that. I still think that ultimately the best thing to do up there would be to amalgamate those two schools. However, as I said, we listened to the community, because when it comes to education, the parents, the community and the entire area must be part of the decision-making process. Those terrible Tories who do not listen!

In Geraldton there was another split campus with John Willcock College and Geraldton Senior High School. There was enormous dissent over what was the best way to address that. John Willcock was haemorrhaging, many of the students were leaving, and many of the students, particularly at the senior secondary level, were going to the grammar school up there. We went up there and had a public meeting, yet again. We surveyed all the schools and went to all the primary and secondary schools. I did what I should do as a minister. I consulted with the community to find out what was best. We had a look at it and I made the decision based upon all that information. We allocated \$25 million for two discrete schools for students in years 7 to 12. We changed the boundaries to ensure that there was a good cross-section of the community in both schools.

**Hon Darren West:** That's what it used to be.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I beg your pardon.

**Hon Darren West:** That's what it was originally.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Exactly! But we have added \$25 million to enhance the facilities up there.

I did not get one iota of opposition to that—not one! I was applauded for it. I even went to the union and they clapped for me. I could not believe it.

**Hon Donna Faragher** interjected.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Absolutely.

I spoke to the union. I have always had good relations with the union. Do not get me wrong about that. I am saying, again, that I consulted. There is one other area—I did not quite get this part of the jigsaw done—down in Mandurah. The minister has to fix that area down in Mandurah. That split campus school down there, John Tonkin College, is not working. I had a public meeting and we did a survey. There was overwhelming consensus for the amalgamation of those two schools. Hon David Templeman came with me toward the end of last year. I said to him at the time, "Whoever wins next year, mate, we've got to fix this up." It is in the minister's hands. All the consultation has been done and I like to think that she will do something about it.

I will come to the biggest headache that I had for the entire magnificent time that I was Minister for Education and Training. One of the greatest privileges in life, I can tell members, is to be the education minister in Western Australia. We had issues in the western suburbs. There is no use blaming anyone. They were caused by a combination of both parties. Wrong decisions were made in the 1990s and the early part of the 2000s by both Liberal and Labor governments in closing the four schools: Swanbourne Senior High School, Scarborough Senior High School, Hollywood Senior High School and City Beach Senior High School. We kept the City Beach site but the other three were sold off. We replaced them with one school in Shenton Park. Inevitably, there were going to be population pressures, and that came to bite us on the backside from the community. Those population shifts emerged, particularly in the western suburbs, and they are continuing to grow. There is the infill at Floreat, which I am not too keen on, I have to say, but at least it is there. There are population pressures all the way through Wembley, Churchlands and the western suburbs. There are massive population pressures. There are a host of reasons. The independent public school system has ensured that the status of and community involvement in those schools has been elevated. Additionally, in most instances the schools are now academically as good as, and in a lot of instances even better than, those in the non-government sector. Why would parents pay \$30 000 a year to send their children to a private school when they can go to Shenton College or Churchlands Senior High School and get a quality education? That is why a lot of parents voted with their feet. They decided that they were going to, more than ever, support the government sector. The jewel in the crown is Perth Modern School. It is the epitome of what an academically selective and academically successful school should be. It is all of the above. It is a magnificent educational facility. If members go past it, they will see that it oozes class and educational excellence. And these guys want to destroy it!

Several members interjected.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I copped it from the Leader of the House for opening my mouth, so if you don't mind.

With that in mind, the Liberal Party said we should determine what we were going to do. We did an enormous amount. We consulted right throughout the western suburbs over the next two years.

Several members interjected.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** No, members opposite have not learned either. When we get a direction from the Chair, we keep our mouths shut.

We consulted right throughout the western suburbs and throughout the community. We consulted with the Town of Cambridge, the International School of Western Australia, the Department of Planning, Landgate, the Office of the Environmental Protection Authority, the Department of Health, Main Roads Western Australia, the Botanic Gardens and Parks Authority, the Japanese School, Hyogo Prefecture, the City of Stirling, Doubleview Primary School, City Beach Primary School and members of Parliament. The member for Perth had four public forums, all of which I attended. The member for Churchlands did a survey right throughout his community. I visited every school, including every secondary school. I consulted widely to ensure that we got it right. As I said, it was not going to be the gospel according to Pete. I was not going to come along and tell the western suburbs, Perth Modern School, Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School what was good for them. We consulted to find the best outcome. At that stage I had, and I am sure the current minister still has, the best department in the entire government of Western Australia in the Department of Education. It is a magnificent department. It forensically went about its business and came up with some options. I announced those options at the end of 2015 to seek community advice and community support. The department came up with a number of options including the Skyline drive-in site and the old City Beach Senior High School site. The Skyline drive-in has been closed for a number of years but it is an A-class reserve so it cannot be used. Using it would have required an enormous amount of shift and change in environmental approvals. I do not know why; it is just undulated cement. Anyway, it is an A-class reserve. It could have been done but, quite frankly, it would have taken years. We looked at the City Beach Senior High School site and at vacant land near Fred Burton Park, on the corner of The Boulevard and West Coast Highway, and on the corner of Rochdale Road and Wollaston Road.

Again, we talked to the community, the Town of Cambridge, the local schools and the parents. Every time I went to the schools I met with the boards and the parents and citizens associations. Without a doubt, unanimously, there was the overwhelming consensus that another school was needed in the western suburbs. That was a no-brainer. Nobody needed a PhD to work that one out. We were mindful of the fact that we could have a shortage of around 4 000 students by 2026 or a little bit later than that. We could have built a multi-storey school in Churchlands or in Shenton Park or taken the old City Beach site, which is Education land, or one of the other sites, built another school and changed the boundaries accordingly. We looked at it and spent an enormous amount of time coming to a decision. The department, through consultation—we did not impose a decision—came up with a solution. I made that announcement in September last year. I want to make it perfectly clear to everyone that there is no problem. The problem of overcrowding in the western suburbs has been resolved. The Liberal government did it. The changeover of government is always a difficult process, but I know that we handed a Rolls Royce education system to the government. The western suburbs problem had been resolved, so that is one issue the government does not have. Hon Donna Faragher has already commented on this but I will go through a few things. Firstly, we allocated \$182 million. That is big bickies in anyone's language. It is in the forward estimates. The government will not have to pay another cent. It is in the forward estimates so the government does not have to worry about —

Several members interjected.

**The DEPUTY PRESIDENT:** Order! The Leader of the Opposition is addressing the Chair.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Shenton College will receive \$50 million and Churchlands Senior High School will receive \$40 million. That \$90 million will create an additional 1 750 places. That would partly resolve the issue. It will not do it all, but it will partly resolve it. We need a new school and we have the land in City Beach. Why do we not use that for a new school? It will provide an avenue for another 1 600 students. We allocated \$84 million for the new school for year 7 students, which will be completed by 2020. Problem solved! Wait on, we still had a bit of a problem because the International School of Western Australia and the Japanese School were both there. No worries, because six months down the track, after a lot of ferocious negotiation—I got deeply involved in that, I can assure members—we made sure we got it right. We reached a very amicable agreement with the International School of Western Australia. It would move to a very large Doubleview site and have a complete renovation with like-for-like facilities. We would rebuild and create a completely new school for Doubleview Primary School on the same site with plenty of room and that would have freed up the City Beach site, except for the Japanese School. The Japanese School is fine. We reached a very amicable decision with the Japanese School that it would move to City Beach Primary School. The Japanese School is very happy with that. There is plenty of room there for everyone. They are all living in great harmony.

Collectively, it was going to cost \$18.6 million for the renovation of Doubleview Primary School to suit the International School of Western Australia, and \$15.4 million for a new primary school at Doubleview. They are over the moon. They will get a brand new school. The Japanese school will go to City Beach Senior High School, with \$3.6 million for a renovation of that school. They are also over the moon.

But we needed more—there is even more! As I have said, it does not work with just that small component of the tapestry. Remember, Shenton College has had an extension; Churchlands Senior High School has been fixed up, with a new secondary school; ISWA has moved to Doubleview; and the Japanese School has moved to City Beach Primary School. It was starting to come together. I was starting to get excited by about midway through last year that after 20 years we had finally got to the point at which the western suburbs tapestry was coming together.

However, we had another issue as a result of the changes to the boundaries and the closure of those schools in the western suburbs. Therefore, the decision was made to open the boundaries for Carine Senior High School. Effectively, 400 students who live north of Scarborough Beach Road go to Churchlands Senior High School rather than Carine Senior High School. Carine Senior High School is a very good school. We made that part of the tapestry. We allocated \$18.7 million to make Carine Senior High School an academically select school specialising in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. After the current cohort of students have gone through that school, the change to the boundaries will ensure that students who live north of Scarborough Beach Road will go to Carine Senior High School. That is only sensible. In addition, we need significant upgrades to Mount Lawley Senior High School. That is why we announced during the election campaign \$39 million to enable an additional 600 students to attend Mount Lawley Senior High School. That is a massive expansion of that school.

There is even more, Mr Acting President. I think this is your first day in the chair, is it not, Mr Acting President?

**The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Robin Chapple):** This is my first day, yes.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Congratulations, and good to have you there.

**The ACTING PRESIDENT:** Thank you very much.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** In addition, we allocated \$60 million for a complete rebuild of Balcatta Senior High School. That is a lot of money and a lot of schools. I think members get the picture. This was not just plucked out of the air. We did not just decide overnight that this is how we would solve the education issue in the western suburbs. This took well over two years to determine. It involved considerable consultation with all areas of the community. It was embraced unanimously by all members of the community. People who had been hounding me down at my door to do something about schools in the western suburbs were now writing to me and saying that this was a good solution. Everyone was happy. I am painting a picture here. We created a tapestry. It took a long time. However, we all worked together and we were all part of the thread, and there it was.

Do members know what? In creating that tapestry, Perth Modern School was not touched. I did have one thing in mind for Perth Modern School. This is a personal thing, and Treasury used to tell me where to go because Treasury hates any person who is an education minister. I wanted the old Telethon Kids Institute site to become a science hub for Perth Modern School. Ideally, had things gone our way in the election, I would have fought for that in our next term of government. However, we cannot do that anymore because Perth Modern School will no longer exist.

That is the Liberal way of doing things. Our government was not so arrogant as to assume that we knew what was best for the local community. On each and every occasion—at Fremantle, Armadale, Geraldton and Kalgoorlie, and in the western suburbs, and we also need to add Mandurah, because Mandurah is part of this—we did not just say, “It’s our way or the highway.” We were not so arrogant as to say, “This is what we are doing, and we are going to do it whether you like it or not, and we’ll consult afterwards.” We always, on every single occasion, consulted the community. On every single occasion, we brought the community with us. That is because we were dealing with the education of children. We were dealing with the welfare of children and with how to best prepare them for life post compulsory education. That is why it is vital that every education minister listens to the community. I can tell members right now that the role of Minister for Education is very fluid, and it should never, ever be taken for granted. When a Minister for Education makes a decision on education that impacts on children, that minister may be out of that role in four or five years. However, the implications of that minister’s decision are profound.

I have been a lifelong educator. All I ever wanted to do was be a chalkie and Minister for Education. I have had 23 years in the classroom. I have also been Minister for Education. I can tell members right now that my motivation on this issue has nothing to do with being a former Minister for Education. It has everything to do with being an educationalist. I know what is best for education in that instance, and that is to never, ever involve politics—a political decision—with education. However, that is exactly what has happened with Perth Modern School.

Let us look now at the Labor way with education. In politics, quite frankly, every single departing government is labelled with the word “arrogant”. It usually takes a government one term to be labelled with that word. If we go through past governments, state, federal and international, they are always referred to as arrogant. That is particularly the case from the opposition. We used to do that when I was first in opposition. These guys opposite have done it over the past four years. They called our government arrogant. They said we were not listening. That word becomes a cliché that just rolls off the tongue. It is called government. It is called opposition.

It is usually the case, as I said, that after a government has been in office for about one term, it becomes arrogant in the eyes of not just the opposition, but also the community and the media. However, these guys opposite have reached a new record. They became arrogant before they were even elected to government! I have not seen that happen before. They became arrogant on 29 January 2017. The reason they became arrogant is that they decided what would be best for Perth Modern School. They decided what would be best for western suburbs education. They did not consult on Perth Modern School. I will go through that again in a minute. Hon Donna Faragher has very articulately outlined why that puts paid to the notion of consultation. This government became arrogant even before it was elected.

On 29 January, the Labor Party released a document titled “WA Labor Education Central”. I remember that day vividly. I was having a glass of white wine on the night of Saturday, 28 January, and my media adviser rang me and said, “Minister, you’d better get ready for the media tomorrow.” When I asked him what for, he said, “Haven’t you seen the front page of *The Sunday Times*?” The Labor Party did not even bother to let anyone know. It did not bother to let the community know. It decided that it would get this thing on the front page of *The Sunday Times*. We saw on the front page of *The Sunday Times* this magnificent creature—a picture of a 20-storey building called Education Central! That is the Labor Party’s Education Central policy. That is the policy that the Labor Party has purportedly been discussing and consulting on with the community for the previous two years. I would love to know one parent group or one school board that the now Minister for Education consulted on this issue. I would love to know one. I challenge the Minister for Education, through you, Mr Acting President, to name one group to which she showed that picture and asked them whether they liked it. I challenge the minister to do that—one! I can tell the minister right now that they would have absolutely said no, they do not like it. That is arrogance—to put that on the front page of *The Sunday Times*. The Labor Party then engaged in the nonsense of saying it has a mandate! Give me a break!

I turn now to what this document states. This is a pearler of a document. It states in part —

The McGowan Labor Government will build Education Central near Yagan Square in the Perth City Link Precinct. During the construction phase of Education Central 500 new jobs will be created.

That fits into the Labor Party’s mantra for the election campaign. It continues —

The building will incorporate sustainable design features and focus on energy and water efficiency and will achieve design excellence in environment sustainability.

It does not state anything about children or educational welfare.

[Interruption from the gallery.]

**The ACTING PRESIDENT:** I remind the people in the gallery that applause is not appreciated. Thank you very much indeed.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I really appreciated it!

**The ACTING PRESIDENT:** I know.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Thank you, Mr Acting President. I apologise.

It refers to 16 storeys. The current Minister for Education reckons that the government has not determined the make-up of Education Central. With all due respect, that is almost fraudulent. If the government is putting this out here like this, it has to assume that the public—because they voted on this issue and we lost government because of this issue, apparently—voted on this issue and now the government has the audacity to say that it has not made up its mind and it is still working on it. Rubbish! Here it is here. This is it.

**Hon Simon O’Brien:** How could *The Sunday Times* be wrong?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** That is right. *The Sunday Times* could not get that wrong. The policy states that key features include indoor sports facilities. That is wonderful. Students can play badminton, but they can still do that in the gymnasium at Perth Mod, because I promise members that I gave the money for that gymnasium.

Several members interjected.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I did, guys. I gave it that money.

**Hon Stephen Dawson:** Out of your pocket?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** We had a couple of cake stalls. This is a good one. Members will love this key feature —

Outdoor playing and learning space on the roof

I reckon that will be great! Do members believe that? As I said earlier, the government is obviously going to introduce abseiling into Perth Mod. How the building will be big enough for an outdoor playing area is beyond me. This is really good —

Dedicated secure lifts to access the school

That will be wonderful when there are 1 500 kids and the fire alarm goes off. I am sorry to be so flippant, but this is just a crock. This is just nonsense. I said that this is rubbish because this is the policy that the government keeps throwing in our face and saying that it went to the election with and was elected on. I challenge anyone to show someone this policy and ask them whether they chose to vote Labor because of it. I challenge members.

**Hon Darren West** interjected.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** No, you will get your go, mate. As I said, I have limited time.

That is that one. The government told the community about this policy. I have been in this game a long time. I have been in politics all my life and I know that sometimes I can be wrong. In this instance, I genuinely think I am not wrong, but I thought: perhaps I am wrong. Perhaps the Labor Party did consult. I am pretty sure that as Minister for Education I might have heard about it, but the first I heard about it was, as I said, when I was having a white wine on the twenty-eighth and reading *The Sunday Times*. Let us look. We asked the Premier and the minister how much consultation they did. I am going to repeat what Hon Donna Faragher said because, quite frankly, I found these responses offensive. Our mob in the other place asked the Premier about consultation. He said —

Our Education Central model is about creating a school that is larger —

Really? He continued —

with more opportunities for more students, in a location that suits far more people and that is far easier to get to.

We could not make up this stuff. The Premier said —

It is also about making sure that people of the inner city—Perth, Mt Hawthorn, Mt Lawley, North Perth, Nedlands, Subiaco and the like—have the opportunity to access a local school in proximity to where they live. Our consultation process was this:

This is arrogant. I will repeat it. The Premier, talking about Perth Mod, stated —

Our consultation process was this: we published the policy two months before the state election and we were elected on the policy. That was our consultation process. Prior to that I had a meeting with local parents about all those issues with the now Minister for Education, and she had a range of meetings and conversations with local people. What the opposition has to understand is that we put a policy out to the people of Western Australia. We did not hide it—it was on the front page of *The Sunday Times*. We campaigned on it. Members opposite might not have noticed, but it was on the front page of *The Sunday Times*. We campaigned on it and we were elected on it. It is a good policy.

The Premier of Western Australia honestly thinks that his mob was elected because of the Perth Mod policy. I will tell members what! Then we also asked Hon Sue Ellery, the current Minister for Education and Training, and her response was —

I thank the member for her question.

The member will recall that in 2014, 2015 and, indeed, in 2016, Hon Ken Travers and I asked a series of questions in the house, in estimates, and I think in annual reports hearings as well, about the government's proposed ways of dealing with the pressure that was building in the western suburbs, particularly around the city side of the western suburbs. We did that and we held forums with a number of parent groups, in particular from inner-city suburbs—the inner north suburbs. We consulted a range of parents and people interested in the subject, basically from 2014 through to 2016.

Again, I challenge the Minister for Education and Training—I do not mind one little interjection—to say whether on any one occasion she ever, ever flouted the notion of a high-rise building in the City of Perth and to decimate Perth Modern School. Did she?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** I do not accept the premise of what you have just put to me.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Did you ever mention the high-rise building?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** To whom?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** To all these parent groups with whom you met.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Of course we did.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** The minister mentioned a high-rise building?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Don't you remember —

**The ACTING PRESIDENT:** Members! No discussion across the chamber. Direct your comments to the Chair.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Good. Thank you. That is a very good ruling. I have so much to get through. I must contain myself. Anyway, after the election, lo and behold, very few people in the community seemed to know about it. In fact, no-one seemed to know about it. Logically, a lot of people got very, very angry about it—not only about the policy but also that it was inflicted upon them. Apparently, the decision was made and that won the government the election. When former Governor Malcolm McCusker had the audacity to give his point of view, the response from the Minister for Education and Training was —

... the new school would have outdoor spaces, an auditorium and modern science facilities and would continue to produce outstanding results. “While I can appreciate Mr McCusker’s right to express his opposition to a decision to relocate a school, I do find it offensive that he or anyone would suggest that this Government would put students’ health or safety at risk ...

The minister finds it offensive that the former Governor can have an opinion that disagrees with hers. As I said, arrogance has already set in. I am not going to read through all this again, but the current Premier carried on about how he had a mandate for Perth Mod because he took it to the election. Guys, we got it wrong. I take one for the team. I am really sorry. It was not Western Power, Roe 8, the “it’s time” factor, arrogance or leadership; it was Perth Modern School. Perth Mod cost us the election. I cannot believe that I did not pick that up! I was the minister for four and a half years and I got it wrong. I apologise to Liberal Party members. If we could re-run the election campaign, I would go along with that Perth Modern policy just so that we could win government! What a crock. That is an absolute load of nonsense. It is an absolute disgrace for anyone opposite to even suggest that Perth Modern School was even an issue, let alone that it won them government. Members opposite have no respect for this institution of the public of Western Australia at all. It is absolutely disgraceful.

Hon Sue Ellery made a great fanfare about having people in the public gallery in September last year during the education debate. Hon Donna Faragher has already been through this. Hon Sue Ellery said —

In the gallery today are parents of students who attend a number of schools in the western suburbs and the inner western suburbs of Perth. Some of them are part of a Facebook group called “We Need a High School”. The issues that those parents face, which I want to touch on in my comments today, are about the capacity of existing schools, poor planning for future schools, and their aspirations and frustrations, I guess, as parents of students who attend overcrowded schools in our inner-city areas and in the western suburbs in particular. These are not the only parents whom I have had conversations with about these kinds of concerns. Parents in those inner-city areas where density is increasing have real issues. Many of those schools are very old. Some of the first schools built in the state are in those inner-city suburbs. They are on much smaller land footprints than the land footprints that we make for schools that we build in 2016. Those old schools are at capacity.

I can tell members that the footprint of the planned new Perth Mod is a lot smaller. Hon Sue Ellery continued —

Many of them are overcrowded. The parents want real solutions to these schools.

I provided a solution to those parents—there were about four or five solutions—and I would like to think that some of them are here again today. They were happy with the solutions I provided, but that did not include decimating Perth Modern School.

Hon Sue Ellery then went on to state —

I wanted to talk about another group of parents—to a certain degree, there is some overlap—who wrote to me and the Minister for Education in August. These are parents from the inner-city area where there is higher density. The letter is signed by eight parent representatives on school boards. It is about a schools planning forum in August 2016 and states —

On behalf of the School Boards and P&C’s of the signatory schools below, we would like to invite you to participate in the Schools Planning Forum to be held in August 2016.

The letter Hon Sue Ellery quoted goes on to state that parents believed as a result of the discussions —

a two-pronged approach is required to deal with the secondary school problem. The first, a short term solution, would see the opening of a City Beach (or nearby) secondary school along the original time frame of 2019/2020. The second, a long term solution, would see a new inner city secondary school open with a view to easing the pressure on the surrounding secondary schools (including Churchlands, Mt Lawley and the new City Beach SHS).

I totally agree. That letter was read in by the now Minister for Education and Training. She presented a solution that I had provided. I agree 100 per cent with what she read to this chamber. Now she has done a complete backflip.

Yes, we were going to do that—we were going to provide the City Beach school—and we did need an inner-city school. If we really think about it, we can see that we will need an inner-city school by 2028 or 2030, and a good option would be something along the lines of the option that we talked about with the Department of Education.

It could even be located near the Department of Education building in East Perth, where there is a TAFE opposite and plenty of open space on the other side, but it should not be located on Yagan Square, right near the Perth nightclub district. That is certainly not what we or those parents wanted. This government has got it wrong.

Hon Sue Ellery went on and talked more about the parent group that was sitting in the public gallery. I had met with them and I had basically delivered for them, as I said. However, never on any occasion was any parent group that met with the current minister ever told anything about the multistorey building. I might add that there were plenty of opportunities. Three days before the election, a combination of groups, including the Perth Modernian Society, held a public forum at the North Perth Bowling Club. It was a very well-attended public forum. Hon Alison Xamon was there. Those parents were furious. They were really frustrated. At that stage it appeared from all the polling that my mob was going to get kicked out and the other side was going to come in, but there had been no consultation whatsoever. The only party not at the public forum was the Labor Party—the current government. Labor members were invited but they gave that group a two-fingered salute. They said, “We don’t need you”, because Perth Mod constituents are spread throughout the whole of Western Australia and so, politically, it did not really matter. The Labor Party did not need them. If the Labor Party felt so confident about its policy—do not forget this is the same policy that, according to the Premier and the Minister for Education and Training, won it government—surely its members would have come along in their drapes and pearls and said, “This is wonderful. Give us our accolades for giving you such a wonderful policy. You’re going to vote for us in three days because of this wonderful policy. Let’s have a standing ovation.” They would not have got out of there alive because they knew what the parents would have done. They knew what the community felt about this issue. If they felt so confident about their policy, they should have turned up that night. That is arrogance. Remember, they had not even been elected and they were arrogant.

This issue is wrong on every single front as far as the government is concerned. We do not need it because the problem has already been solved, as I have explained quite extensively. There has been absolutely no consultation whatsoever on this policy. It is fundamentally flawed, educationally and politically. There is no pedagogical reason for it. As I have said, I have been in education my entire life. In some instances high-rise education in some cities is relevant, but it is not needed in Western Australia. We are not ready for it and we do not need it. Finally, absolutely no-one wants it. We have got over 6 500 signatures on a petition in a couple of weeks and I assure members that this issue is a sleeper. However, the ALP has form in this area. A former ALP Minister for Education and Training tried to inflict an ideological curriculum base on the Western Australian community called outcomes-based education. That OBE experiment failed dismally and pretty much cost that minister her job. I say this to the current minister: this could cost her her job. She will have to carry this legacy around her neck for the entire time that she is the Minister for Education and Training unless she eats a little bit of humble pie and backs down.

Members opposite do not have a mandate for this nonsense. I challenge them to look in the mirror and say to themselves, and believe it, “I have a mandate for this policy”, because they do not. I acknowledge that our government was on the nose, but it was certainly not the issue of Perth Modern School that cost us the election. Eminent Australians such as Bob Hawke, Malcolm McCusker and Janet Holmes à Court, who are very significant in the big picture, attended Perth Modern School. Every single child, teacher and administrator who has gone through that school is significant and has helped to develop the rich tapestry that is called academic excellence. They do not deserve to have the rug pulled from under their feet and beaten around their heads, having created that magnificent school. That is exactly what has happened. They are being ignored by an arrogant government.

Perth Mod is steeped in history, heritage, culture and excellence. I plead with the government to not destroy that unnecessarily. The government does not need to do this. There is a solution for the government. It can keep on giving everyone other than itself the two-fingered salute, but it does not need to do this. The government does not need this. I tell the government now that the rot has already set in. Its arrogance has been on stark display since 29 January and this matter will carry the government right through its entire term. I ask the Minister for Education and Training to please rethink this absurd policy or she will go down as the education minister who destroyed Perth Modern School.

**HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan)** [2.57 pm]: I rise on behalf of the Greens to indicate that we will also be supporting this motion. I want to unpick a number of the elements that have got us here today. It is unfortunate that so many different issues have, effectively, been conflated into this one matter, which has raised the concerns of so many parents and students at Perth Modern School, as well as former students. I have received huge amounts of correspondence on this issue, despite being yet to receive my member of Parliament email address three days into my term. Therefore, I am letting parents who may be sending me emails know that I have not received my official email address yet. I am dreading when I finally do get my laptop and open it to see what is waiting for me. Regardless, I have been contacted by many people via the address that I had during the election campaign. The relocation of Perth Modern School has universally caused distress and despair. We should not understate the extent to which people are feeling that.

I also point out that I am starting to receive quite a bit of correspondence from people who are disappointed about the decision not to proceed with the reopening of City Beach high school. That is from another cohort of parents. Those people were excited that finally there was going to be a solution to that problem and now they are despairing about what is going to happen. Based on the correspondence I have received and the discussions I have had—as Hon Peter Collier pointed out, I was also at the meeting of concerned parents before the election—I do not believe that simply revealing the detail about what is going to occur with a new inner-city build will assuage the concerns of people currently attending Perth Mod. I think we need to find a way to pull out the various elements. The first element is reopening the City Beach school. The second element is whether we need a new inner-city high school that will cater for the people who are moving closer to and into the city. There is the issue about where Perth Modern School should be best placed. There is the issue of high-rise buildings, and I will suggest to this place that the Greens have a different position on high-rise buildings. There is also the broader issue about planning and how these decisions are made.

First, I will make some comments about the issue of consultation. I suggest, with respect, that the consultation that I would have expected on a decision as enormous as this, particularly with the impact on an existing school such as Perth Mod, has not been as I believe it needed to be or as I would have expected a government to conduct consultation. I am hearing claims from the government that it believes it has a mandate to proceed with the proposal it has now presented, but I suggest, with respect, that that is not the case. Consultation is more than simply announcing a proposal. Consultation is also about seeking feedback from affected stakeholders and being prepared to be open to changing that proposal into the future. I do not see any evidence that this has occurred, and I think that is why people are feeling so distressed. They are distressed not only about what has been proposed, but also because there was no input from people who will be directly affected by this decision. Simply publishing a policy on the Labor Party website is not consultation. It is really important that this government recognise that. I come into this place insisting that we engage in consultation on a whole range of issues. I said in this place on my second day back in Parliament that we need to look at genuine consultation around the Criminal Law (Mentally Impaired Accused) Act and the National Disability Insurance Scheme model. I say very clearly that if consultation on those two areas resembles anything like what is being attempted to be passed as consultation on this issue, the government will have a real problem on its hands, because there is no way that anyone can consider that to be genuine consultation.

I also note that in the correspondence that has managed to get through to me, despite the fact that I do not have my MP email address yet, I have received concerns from some parents within the Perth Mod community about the nature of this proposal. This is something that I have discussed with Hon Donna Faragher. The reason for that is that it is quite clear to me that a number of parent groups are trying to grapple with this decision. People desperately do not want their concerns to be seen as being party political. I know that some people who were involved with the massive petition that was tabled today have expressed concern and they want members in this place to be assured that a decision to bring on this motion was not intended to be party political. I suppose I was contacted because a number of parents believe that as I am in the Greens rather than in either the Liberal Party or the Labor Party, I can somehow broker through that. It is important to note that this issue is not being fought along party political lines; it is very heavily coming from just very concerned people.

I acknowledge the work of the Save Perth Modern School action group. It is working really hard to try to ensure that people listen to what it is saying. I understand that it is also planning a peaceful walk to Parliament tomorrow, so I look forward to having the opportunity to talk to more people then. I also acknowledge the work of the We Need a High School group, which has been tirelessly campaigning for a new high school in the western suburbs. It is obviously quite upset by this decision.

I believe the community has a clear expectation that Perth Modern School should remain in its current location and as an academically selective school. I feel very confident that that is the general perception of the community. Having said that, it is really disappointing that we cannot just leave Perth Mod as it is and still have a really important discussion about the need for an inner-city school, because, my goodness, we need it. We know that Perth Modern is renowned and that people take huge pride in the school's achievements. I very much agree with the comments of the Minister for Education and Training about the need to have more of these types of schools. I thought that that was a very important comment. Certainly, the Greens would support an expansion of options for students from around the metropolitan area and, indeed, from around the state to have access to similar sorts of schools. We hope that can be looked at at some point in the future.

Going back to how we got here in the first place, I want to be very plain: we do not believe that City Beach high school should have been closed in the first place. It was a poor decision. We believe the closure of the school in 2005 demonstrated a real lack of foresight and planning. This has been further aggravated by the closure of other western suburbs schools. The closures of Hollywood, Swanbourne and Scarborough senior high schools were also extraordinarily poor decisions. This happened under both Labor and Liberal governments and, of course, led to the situation that we have now in which schools are incredibly overcrowded. I certainly accept the comments by the Minister for Education and Training on the concerns about having high schools that are simply too large.

We have a problem with overcrowding in our existing schools. The situation has become untenable, particularly for Shenton College, Churchlands Senior High School and Mount Lawley Senior High School. I also share the concerns of the parents of the children in those schools about what is going to happen. We need to understand that this will have a flow-on effect on decisions about what will happen.

I do not accept that we do not need a school in City Beach. That has been very much backed up by the commentary that I am hearing from people who live in that area. The Greens are of the view that a lot of planning has already gone into that. Too many schools were closed in that area and we should look at reopening at least one of them so that we can take some of the pressure off the other schools in the first instance.

I acknowledge that we need another inner-city school; there is no question about that. As someone who lives in the area and has had children and experienced that situation, I know it has been a real problem that the people who live in the city have not had an appropriate public high school to which they can send their children because the catchments are such that the options are extremely limited. There is no question that we need to look at another inner-city school. However, I note that in the past other planning has occurred on where inner-city schools could potentially be built. One lot that comes to mind is the early planning that occurred around Claisebrook and setting up a school in conjunction with the TAFE.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

#### *Motion*

Resumed from 23 May 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 MATTHEW SWINBOURN (East Metropolitan)** [3.10 pm]: I congratulate you, Mr Deputy President, on your elevation to the position. I am sure you will do a fine job.

I wish to acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land we are meeting on today, the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation. I wish to acknowledge and respect their continuing culture and the contribution they make to the life of this city and this state.

I come to this place from modest means and humble origins. Mine is not a family of high class and privilege; rather, we are a family of workers, small business people, contributors and community-minded people. I was born at Swan District Hospital in Upper Swan, delivered by a female obstetrician, which I imagine was unusual for those times and, unfortunately, is not as usual in these times as it should be. It would be fair to say that we were a working-class family. My father, Greg, was a carpenter and my mother, Lyn, a secretary. Unfortunately, my early life was dominated by the disruption of a marriage breakdown, but notwithstanding my own experiences, I remain a supporter of no-fault divorce. Surely it is better to have divorced parents than married parents living together who cannot stand each other. One of the benefits of the breakdown of my parents' marriage and their new relationships was the introduction of new family members. We were thrown together in South Australia. My two brothers, Trevor and Royce, were joined by a new brother, Andrew, and a sister, Michelle. Notwithstanding my youth, I still remember that day, mostly because I got sick and had to throw up on the side of the road, but also because of the excitement of meeting new family members. Although Michelle has chosen not to continue to be part of our lives, Andrew, you are my brother and I am proud to describe you as such. In 1980 we were joined by my baby brother, Kerry.

South Australia was a place of happiness, adventure and struggle. I know I speak for all my siblings when I say that they were the best of times and they were the worst of times. In 1983 we returned to Western Australia upon the untimely death of my grandfather from cancer. It was very different in WA from South Australia and this was probably my first experience of some of the more ridiculous examples of dysfunctional federalism. My handwriting suffered quite significantly when we returned to WA, as for reasons known only to those education bureaucrats who jealously guarded their fiefdoms, year 3 students in Western Australia were required to write on paper with very large spaced lines while in South Australia I had been writing on normal-lined paper. I have to say that it angered me as an eight-year-old, probably more than it should have, for its sheer stupidity! We moved to Gosnells in 1984 where we built a new house, and for the first time in my life I had my own bedroom. After sharing a room with three of your brothers for most of your life, it took some getting used to. Life in Gosnells

was again a struggle. My stepfather, a carpenter, struggled between periods of work and unemployment—a pattern that is still endemic in the construction industry today. We enjoyed our times as boy scouts and members of the St John Ambulance cadets.

In 1989 the relationship between my mother and stepfather ended and we went our separate ways. This again was a time of struggle. It was hard being a teenager when your mother was trying to make a new family. It resulted in tensions, and when I was 16, I moved out of home. I moved in with my nanna, who supported me through my remaining years of school. I must confess that I was not a very good student at times—nothing disruptive, just not particularly diligent. I finished year 12 and found I was trying to enter the job market at the tail end of a recession; there were no jobs and there were no apprenticeships. I went back to school for another year to repeat year 12 and only did marginally better than the first time. What followed was a period of uncertainty in my life. I was living by myself, unemployed, in a cockroach-infested bedsitter in Victoria Park trying to find out where I was going in life. I had no skills and no qualifications. Like many working-class people, the military offered me an opportunity to get a trade and earn a living. I tried out for the Navy and was accepted in 1994 to go to HMAS *Cerberus* as an aircraft technician. I was ready to go and ready to commit to my six years of naval service. Before I left, I met a woman—very importantly! I told her of the deal and she accepted that I would be heading off. I headed off to the Navy in September 1994. Well, it did not last. When you first enter the Navy, your commitment is only for the basic training and during the eight weeks you are asked to sign on for your full term. I had decided to sign on for my full term and when I told this particular woman, she became very upset. When you are 19 or 20, six years seems like a very long time. I was pretty keen on this woman, so my naval career ended after 10 weeks and my relationship with my wife, Glenda, has continued for the last 23 years.

I came home with a plan: I was going to study as a mature-age student, get a job and get into university. I achieved all of this, attending Canning College in the day and working as a commercial milkman during the evening and early morning. I got into the University of Western Australia in 1996, obtaining a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in political science and anthropology—one of those will help me here I am sure! I was then accepted into the graduate law program in 2000, finally completing my law degree in 2009 and being admitted in 2014. During this period I found time to marry my love, Glenda, and father three great children, Harrison in 2002, Mitchell in 2005, and, finally, Darcy in 2008.

When my parents split, I spent a significant period without seeing my father, Greg, and that side of my family—16 years in total. I made the move to reconnect with my father in 1993. It was scary and it was hard, but I do not regret doing it for one day. I know there was always love there and we continued to build our relationship.

I am proudly from a union background. Both my parents were union members during their working lives. My father even remained a member of the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union when he was an employer, and although I cannot say he was always a supporter of what the union did, I believe that he always thought that it was the right thing to be a union member. My own involvement began when I was a student. I started university in 1996, the first year of voluntary student unionism at UWA. While others saw the voluntary aspect as an opportunity to freeload off those who continued to contribute, I chose to continue to be a member of the guild, supporting its activities on campus. I came to work for unions in 2002 when I was employed by the then Australian Liquor, Hospitality and Miscellaneous Union—or the missos, as it was more commonly known at that time. I started as a workers' compensation officer. I worked for the missos for five years and I learnt much during my time there as a workers' compensation officer, then as the prosecutions officer, representing workers who had been unfairly dismissed or not properly paid by their employer, and finally as an industrial officer, looking after workers in the aged care and private health sector. It was there that I met two of my great friends, Jack Nicholas and Elyane Palmer. They have been a great support and encouragement to me over the years. In 2007, I took up an invitation from the CFMEU to join as an industrial officer. I was with the CFMEU for three years before I took on the role of senior industrial officer with the Health Services Union for 18 months, before finally returning to the CFMEU in 2012 after Mick Buchan became secretary. During my 15 years working for unions I have learnt many things, not least of which is how important unions are at helping give workers a voice, addressing the uneven balance of power in the workplace. I learned how passionate and committed the people who work for unions are about improving the working conditions of the men and women they represent. This passion is not rewarded with exorbitant salaries or lavish conditions; on the contrary, most people who work for unions are on rather modest salaries and often have to work under very demanding conditions. Of course, unions and the people who work for them are not perfect, but, then again, who is? At their core, unions and the people who work for them are fundamentally decent and have been one of the greatest drivers of social and economic change in this country. In Australia, unions do not exist simply to disrupt the economy, ferment for the revolution or protect the privileged. On the contrary, unions exist to give a voice to workers, to even up the power imbalances that exist in both our workplaces and society, to ensure a fair go all round and, at the very least, to knock the hard edges off capitalism and curb its excesses.

I am, and always will be, proud of my union heritage and background. It was a privilege every day to get up and go to work and try to make a difference in somebody else's life. Naturally, members can imagine that I have very strongly held views on workers' rights. I have had a long interest in workers' rights and social justice. What probably galvanised this interest in workers' rights into a passion was an incident that happened to me while I was a commercial milk truck driver. I was involved in an incident with an almost fully loaded milk truck. I was delivering milk to a supermarket at Canning Bridge. I had just finished a delivery and got into my truck to go. Unhelpfully, the Tip Top truck driver had blocked me into the loading ramp. I jumped into my truck to wait for him to finish when I noticed a number of shopping trolleys on the side of the truck that had started rolling down the incline towards the road. Sensing that this might cause an accident on the road, I quickly jumped out of the truck to stop the trolleys. Unfortunately, I had taken the truck out of gear and taken off the handbrake in anticipation of leaving, and in my haste I had not put it back in gear or put the handbrake back on. The truck was supposed to have an alarm to tell the driver when the handbrake was not applied. That alarm had malfunctioned some time ago and instead of fixing it, my employer had simply disconnected it. As soon as I jumped out of the truck I realised my error, and tried to get back into the truck to stop it from rolling into the other truck. Unfortunately, the door handle on the truck never worked properly and I could not get back in the truck soon enough. Stupidly, I then tried to stand in front of this fully laden truck weighing about eight tonnes to try to stop it rolling into the other truck. Thankfully, I realised what a mistake that was, or was going to be, and I was able to only just avoid getting squashed between the two trucks.

The damage to my truck was of a superficial nature—a few bent panels and a broken light. The other truck was fine. I reported the incident to my manager and went about delivering the rest of my milk that day. Clearly, I had made a number of errors of judgement that were compounded by the poorly maintained vehicle that I was driving. I apologised to my employer for my part in the accident. My employer's response was not, unfortunately, as contrite. After giving me a verbal blasting the next working day, I was later to find out, when I went to begin my deliveries, that a note had been left on my seat. That note informed me that my pay was to be slashed by \$150 a week, which represented about 30 per cent of my income at that time. The reason for the slashing was that I had to make a contribution to his insurance excess for the accident, and punishment for the accident in itself. The rate now proposed was below that in the award, but this seemed of little concern to my employer, nor was he concerned by the fact that if the truck had been probably maintained, the accident may have been avoided. I learned several important lessons that day, not the least of which was that those who control the purse strings in the employment relationship exert far greater power than those who do not, and that they have the ability to unilaterally take away from workers what they rightfully earn, even though it may not be fair or lawful. I did stand up for myself. I was able to get some of my wages back, but from that point I decided to find another job before that one killed me. I also decided that I wanted to stand up for workers and their rights. It is high time that we recognise that when employers willingly choose to not pay workers their lawful entitlements, it is theft and it ought to be dealt with in the same manner as theft by a worker under criminal law. There is almost always a power imbalance in the employment relationship. Much of our legal system entrenches the imbalance by protecting and promoting the exercise of managerial prerogatives. Although it remains the responsibility of management to manage, workers should be entitled to have a say on those things that impact upon them, particularly those things that relate to their safety, working conditions and pay. Although much of what the state was able to achieve in the industrial relations sphere here in Western Australia was taken away from it by WorkChoices and the consequential move of powers to the federal jurisdiction, what does remain should ensure that workers are not subject to employer unilateralism and that there remains a place for pluralism in our workplaces, including those workplaces where the state is the employer.

A further issue that I am passionate about is the provision of health services to our community. We should all zealously guard our public health system for it has delivered to us the ability for any person, regardless of their means, to receive the care and attention that they need. This is especially so for our children. No child chooses to be sick or injured. There are no lifestyle diseases for them. Those children who are unfortunate enough to fall ill or be injured should always be able to receive the care that they need. As is often the case with matters that people feel passionate about, my passion is informed by my personal experiences. Our family has been cursed with a genetic mutation that has resulted in some of us dying before our time. This mutation, known as familial paraganglioma syndrome, manifests itself in cancerous tumours. This cancer took my youngest brother, Kerry Thomas-Evans, last year at the age of 36, leaving behind his family, including his wife, Nicola. He was diagnosed in 2008 and fought very hard for as long as he could. He benefited from our public health system and received the treatment he needed. If he had been born in any number of other countries, it is unlikely that we would have had the extra eight years we got with him owing to either the unavailability of treatment or the prohibitively expensive cost of the treatments he underwent. In that respect, we were lucky that he was born here in Australia. Unfortunately, the cancer has not given us any breathing space. In April 2015, my middle son, Mitchell, started to show symptoms of the disease. Although we struggled to get the proper diagnosis, owing in part to the extreme rareness of the disease, he was eventually diagnosed with two tumours: one a paraganglioma attached to his vena cava, and the second a gastrointestinal stromal tumour, otherwise known as a GIST, in his bowel. There are no other cases of these two tumours being present in a child in Australia, let alone in WA. In

fact, worldwide, only a handful of people have the condition. The condition was only formally described in medicine in 2009 as Carney-Stratakis syndrome. It is truly rare in the strictest sense of the word. In July 2015, Mitchell underwent surgery at Princess Margaret Hospital for Children to remove the tumours. The surgery was successful in removing the tumours. However, last year, Glenda and I were to discover that the tumours had spread to his liver. Unfortunately, the kind of tumours that he has cannot be treated by radiotherapy or chemotherapy, and our surgical options have now been exhausted. We are now trying a new drug, Pazopanib, and we wait with some significant degree of anxiety on our next round of tests and scan results to see whether it has helped to stop the growth of the tumours. Throughout this, we have been supported by the excellent staff at Princess Margaret Hospital and the Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital's interventional radiologists. Those who are interested in Mitchell, his condition and the progress that we are making can follow it on Facebook. My wonderful wife has set up a page, "Team Mitchell", and you have only to type it into the search field and you will see our story.

We have a good but not perfect health system. We are lucky to have such a system and we should all be grateful for it, particularly when there are so many who have so much less. In saying this, some might suggest that we should not complain or agitate about the system we have. This is simply wrong. We should all be both defending what we have and agitating to improve it. We should be helping those with less when we can, as many health professionals do, but just because others have less is not a reason for us to accept less. The continuous improvement of these services should be the goal of all in this and the other place.

Perhaps because I am a parent and perhaps because we live with the education system every day, I feel strongly about it. I would like to think that it also goes beyond that. I have been the beneficiary of a public education, and it is public education that is the vehicle through which we can provide the equality of opportunity and outcome that is the marker of an advanced society. We should be striving for a public education system that provides the opportunity for a child from any background and means, whether disadvantaged or privileged, to enter and come out of that system with the ability and opportunity to achieve their potential. Whether this is to study at university or to secure a trade, it does not matter. In order to achieve this we must ensure that those schools of greatest needs are funded and staffed according to that need. It is not good enough for the public education system to entrench disadvantage and promote privilege.

It is my honour and privilege to be a representative for East Metropolitan Region. I have a lifelong connection to the region, having been born in the Swan District Hospital and having brothers born in the Armadale-Kelmscott Memorial Hospital. The Swinbourn family also has a long connection to the region. Until my grandparents Kevin and Maureen moved out of the family home in Bassendean, there was a Swinbourn resident of the suburb of Bassendean for around 100 continuous years. Many of the Swinbourn clan still live in the region, including my family in Kenwick. On my mother's side of the family, the connection with the region began in 1967, when the Newman family, my grandparents Denis and Grace, my uncles Kevin and Ian, and my mother, Lyn, migrated to Western Australia from the United Kingdom and built a house in Armadale. My uncle Ian and my nanna still live in that house today. My brothers and I were schooled, at least in part, in the region. On my part, I attended both Seaforth and Ashburton Drive Primary Schools in Gosnells. My brothers, Andrew, Trevor and Royce, attended Gosnells Senior High School, as it was once known, or in Trevor's case it might be fairer to say he was enrolled there and only occasionally attended—love you, bro. Royce also attended Kelmscott Senior High School and my younger brother, Kerry, attended Westfield Park Primary School and Kalamunda Senior High School. On my part, I did break the schooling connection with the region in going to high school at Kent Street Senior High School, where I met my great mates Rhian Healy and David Hodges.

It is with pride that I can stand here today and say that every seat in the east metropolitan region in that other place is held by members of the Australian Labor Party. This was not some fluke. The region has often been neglected by non-Labor governments and the seats that they held taken for granted. It is a region that needs support and investment. It is a region of growth and opportunity. By way of example, Byford, in my friend Barry Urban's seat of Darling Range, was once a sleepy town that marked the boundary between city and country. It has become a bustling suburban hub that is continuing to grow at a rapid rate, as it offers affordable housing for working people. This suburb, like many in the east metropolitan region, needs investment in infrastructure, and I am proud to be part of a government that has promised to extend the Armadale line to Byford so that the people of Byford can enjoy the benefits of Metronet and be connected to the rest of the city.

One of the other areas that needs urgent attention in this state is workplace safety. It is simply not good enough that there are workers who are not returning home from work because they have been severely injured or, worse, they have died on the job. There is no acceptable number of workplace deaths. Safe Work Australia says that as at 22 May this year, 63 Australian workers have been killed at work. In the 16 years from 2000 to 2016, 315 work-related traumatic injury fatalities were notified to WorkSafe, equating to an average of 19.7 deaths a year in Western Australia for that period. There have been 199 work-related traumatic fatalities notified to WorkSafe since 2006–07—an average of 19.9 deaths a year. We must ask: why are these figures not decreasing? Rather, they are increasing. It is just not good enough. Where is the outrage over these figures? In the same

period, 15 people have been killed in shark attacks off the WA coast, and although nothing I am saying here is about diminishing the loss of those people and the pain felt by their families and friends, surely the families of the 315 people who died at work in the same period deserve the same attention and demand for action that we have seen for those taken by sharks. Their loss and pain is no less. Like the shark attack victims, the workers who died expected to come home to their families, and tragically they did not. Unlike the shark attack victims, there was no voluntary assumption of risk on the part of these workers. No job is worth somebody's life. It is a damning fact that in the construction industry, a worker is more likely to be prosecuted for taking industrial action over safety than an employer is for an unsafe workplace. In this state, a worker is only able to refuse to work when they have reasonable grounds to believe there is a risk of imminent and serious injury or harm to their health. This means that a worker must continue to perform a task or duties when the risk is not imminent and the injury not serious. Under these laws, the workers of Wittenoom could arguably not have refused to perform their duties, because the risk of contracting an asbestos-related disease, although serious, was not imminent. I have been involved in cases in which employers have docked the wages of workers for refusing to work because they were being exposed to chlorine gas—the employer's argument being that the risk from the gas was not imminent or likely to result in serious injury. It is worth remembering that chlorine gas was a chemical weapon used during the First World War and was banned as a weapon.

What can be done? We must strengthen WorkSafe as an agency to empower it to take on employers and occupiers who do not provide safe workplaces. We can better support workers who stand up for safety in the workplace. We can ensure that the barriers that prevent unions from performing their important and critical safety role are removed. We need more stick and less carrot. The onus must be removed from the worker who has stopped work because they believe it to be unsafe from proving that it was in fact unsafe. Workers must be entitled to take collective action on safety to support one another in the workplace, and we must introduce into the Western Australian legal system the crime of industrial manslaughter. It is not good enough that a person who is responsible for workplace safety can be grossly negligent in the performance of that role and yet only face the prospect of civil sanctions just because the death occurred in the workplace. As is often stated, safety is everyone's business, and it needs to be the business of this Parliament.

I now move to my thank-yous. None of us make it to this place without the support of others. My time is too short to be able to thank all those who helped me get here. To those people, I thank you. My first thank you is to my union, the mighty Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union. I thank its members, officials and leadership for the support, encouragement and opportunity that they have given me. I will not forget where I came from and I will not let them down. I particularly want to thank the secretary of the CFMEU, Mick Buchan, for his friendship, inspiration and faith in me. Mick, you have laid the foundations for me getting into Parliament. Together we can work to make the changes we have talked about to make this state a better place for working people, particularly those in the construction industry. To Mia Onorato-Sartari, I thank you for your support and encouragement in helping me to get here.

The CFMEU did not give me my start in the labour movement. For that I have to thank Chris Evans, Dave Kelly and Ken Travers. I recall that when my wife first became pregnant with our son Harrison in 2002, I received a call from Canberra from the then Senator Chris Evans, who I had worked for as a part-time and relief electorate officer while studying law. After the obligatory congratulations, Chris went on to ask me what I was planning on doing now. In my naivety, I had thought I would continue plodding on with the law degree and continue to support my growing family through the part-time work I was doing at Chapmans law firm. On hearing this, Chris, in what I thought was a rather stern voice, said there was a job going down at the missos and I had better call them to arrange an interview. Dutifully, I contacted them and I got an interview. I thought that my chances of getting a job were pretty slim. I thought there would be far better candidates out there. Fortunately, Dave Kelly saw something in me that day that perhaps I could not, and he offered me the position of workers' compensation officer. To Chris and Dave, thank you for seeing something in me that I did not see in myself, and thank you for giving me my opportunity in the labour movement.

I would like to thank my two friends Rhian Healy and Brent Savage for their support and giving up their time to come campaigning with me and to hand out how-to-vote cards on election day. I would also like to thank the Labor Party. I first joined the Australian Labor Party in 1999 while at university. I had always been a supporter of the Labor Party, and I thought it was time to join up and be a part of it. For me, the Labor Party has been the political party that has driven positive and progressive social and economic change. Whether it was the leadership of the Labor Curtin government during the Second World War, the drive and energy of the Whitlam government in the 1970s or the Hawke and Keating governments of my youth, the Labor Party represented that light on the hill that appealed to my sense of what was right and proper. I am grateful for the support of my party and for inspiring me to become a member of this place.

I come now to my children, Harrison, Mitchell and Darcy. Today I get to tell the world how very proud I am of each of you. To Harrison, my headstrong eldest child, you have the world at your feet. Do not hold yourself back, son. You have all the gifts to achieve anything you want and I am certain that with hard work you will get there. To Mitchell, my courageous middle son, you inspire so many people, my boy. Your fight and resilience

gives me strength. You also give the best cuddles—for those who have not tried one, do not miss your chance. To Darcy, my youngest child, you are so smart, earnest and caring. The world is also at your feet. I know you will leave your mark. Boys, I love you so very much and you are one of the reasons I am here.

Finally, to my wife, Glenda, who has been with me since we were teenagers, you have allowed me to indulge in this political world, even though you do not really understand it. We have faced and continue to face matters that are far more daunting than anything this place can throw at me. Together, we will continue, making the most of what we have and cherishing what we were privileged enough to have. You have, and always will be, my flower in a sea of grass. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**HON AARON STONEHOUSE (South Metropolitan)** [3.40 pm]: Madam President, honourable members and Western Australians. It is tradition for new members to use their first speech as an opportunity to introduce themselves and tell their story of how they came into politics. My story is short. I have no prior political experience and have never been groomed for public office. I have never worked as a union lawyer or a party staffer. I come from a rather modest background, having been raised by a single mum, working in retail, and living in Rockingham for most of my life. I have never had any grand political aspirations. In fact, at just 26 years of age, I may well be one of the least qualified members in this chamber. So, when I stand here today, I do not do so in a haughty spirit. I do not say in heart, “My power and the might of my hand has gotten me this!” No. I stand here humbled—humbled by being tasked with the most noblest of duties, that of effecting good government of the people, by the people and for the people. I do so, alone, with no fellow party members in this house to lean on.

That said, it is not the man that matters, but his ideas, and what I lack in age I make up for in conviction. What I lack in experience I make up for in principles. So although one part of me trembles at the responsibility of my role as the representative of liberty in this house, another part of me is comforted by the fact I stand here today not alone but on the shoulders of giants.

In my battle for the values of liberty, I am not young at all; I am as old as the ancient thinkers. In my quest for limited government, individual liberty and lower taxes, I have the arguments of John Locke, who said, “The end of law is not to abolish or restrain, but to preserve and enlarge freedom.” When I stand in this chamber and argue for free markets, you will hear not only my voice, but also the voice of Adam Smith, who taught us that, “It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest.” When I speak in defence of freedom of speech, I will draw upon the work of John Stuart Mill and his argument that, “If any opinion is compelled to silence, that opinion may, for aught we can certainly know, be true. To deny this is to assume our own infallibility.”

The values I represent, and those of my party—the Liberal Democrats—are the classical Liberal ideals of the Age of Reason. We now often refer to these as being “libertarian”. That word may be more suitable, as the word “Liberal” has gradually lost its meaning over time. Indeed, modern liberalism is a far cry from its roots in the enlightenment. Libertarianism is often summarised as being fiscally conservative and socially liberal. But it is a much deeper idea than that. Libertarianism is a philosophy that deals with the relationship between the individual and the state. Libertarianism, as we know it today, was the foundation of the American Revolution and the basis of our western civilisation. Libertarianism is the philosophy of freedom.

Freedom is best understood as the absence of coercion. F.A. Hayek, that great economic thinker of the twentieth century and a Nobel Laureate, described freedom as “the possibility of a person’s acting according to his own decisions and plans, in contrast to the position of one who was irrevocably subject to the will of another, who by arbitrary decision could coerce him to act or not to act in specific ways”. Therefore, to be free is to not be subject to the arbitrary will of another—to be free to live our life and do with our own person and property as we will.

Freedom allows each of us to define our own meaning of life and what is important to us. Each of us should be free to think, speak and write, to marry, associate and worship, and to eat, drink and smoke as we choose. When we are free, we can construct our lives as we see fit. It is freedom that allows us to lead a full human life. We need not approve of our neighbours’ behaviour, but merely practise tolerance and respect the moral autonomy of each person, seeing each person as the owner of his or her own life. It was John Stuart Mill who proposed that, “The only purpose for which power can be rightfully ever exercised over any member of a civilised community against his will, is to prevent harm to others.” To simply disapprove of someone else’s behaviour is not justification to interfere in their life or use the coercive power of government to force them to live by our standards.

A free economy allows us to produce and to exchange with others. Prices carry information throughout the economy about what people want and what can be done more efficiently. For an economy to function, prices must be free to tell the truth and be free from government distortions. A free economy gives people incentives to invent, to innovate, and to produce more goods and services for all of society. That in turn means more economic growth and a higher standard of living. In fact, in the entire history of mankind, nothing has done more to lift

humanity out of poverty than free markets. To those who cling to romantic notions of a socialist utopia, I respond with the immortal words of Ludwig von Mises, “Socialism is an alternative to capitalism as potassium cyanide is an alternative to water.”

Let me be clear—I am not an anarchist. I concede that the state has a legitimate role in protecting our natural rights to life, liberty and property. It was the Enlightenment scholar, John Locke, who expressed the radical view that government is morally obliged to serve the people by protecting their life, liberty and property. John Locke denounced tyranny and insisted that a government that violates an individual’s rights must be opposed.

As a libertarian, I am sceptical of power—the greater the size of government, the greater its capacity for tyranny. As the old adage goes, power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Those who value liberty must also seek to limit the size and scope of government so that government would serve the people, rather than the people serve government. Thomas Paine warned us of this when he said, “Government, even in its best state, is but a necessary evil; in its worst state an intolerable one.”

In the fight for freedom, there is much work to be done. I will commit my time in public service to advancing the cause of liberty, not just for myself but for all Western Australians. When the onus of proof is reversed through so called “proceeds of crime” laws that undermine the principle of the presumption of innocence, you will find me making the case for liberty. When the legislative branch undermines the independence of the judiciary through the imposition of mandatory minimum sentences, I will be making the case for responsible government and the separation of powers. When the rights of property owners are violated by the very institutions created to protect them, through zoning laws, regulations and green tape, you will find me fighting for the most basic of human rights—private property. When both major parties push on with the disastrous war on drugs, using the police as a blunt-force instrument in an attempt to arrest our way out of the problem, and when the black market continues to thrive, enriching organised crime, while some of the state’s the most vulnerable, suffering from substance addiction, are treated like criminals, rather than patients, I will be making the case for policies that focus on harm reduction. Western Australia could learn a lot from places such as Portugal, which have adopted a decriminalisation approach with profoundly positive outcomes.

When our most basic rights and freedoms are being chipped away at on a daily basis through nanny-state regulations and big-government paternalism, with smoking indoors banned, irrespective of what the owner of the property thinks; with bicycle helmets mandatory, despite the rest of the world agreeing that they are really not worth the effort; and with e-cigarettes, a potentially life-saving alternative pathway to quitting smoking, practically banned, I will be there, making the case for personal choice and personal responsibility. When governments distort markets, creating perverse incentives through price-fixing, restrictions on competition and other market manipulation, I will be there, making the case for free markets. When government spends money it does not have, passing the debt to our children to pay off, I will be making the case for fiscal responsibility and good stewardship.

Western Australian businesses are doing it tough, straining under the burden of excessive regulation and high taxation. Many are struggling to cover the payroll month to month. Although the major parties love to talk about economic growth and job creation, they seem to offer only vacuous rhetoric. They shy away from showing real political courage or the testicular fortitude required to implement real reform that will provide an environment for businesses in the state to grow and flourish. During my time in Parliament, I promise to continue to make the case for genuine economic reform. I will fight to slash red tape; I will fight to lower the tax burden on Western Australian businesses. I look forward to working with my colleagues in this house to help make WA the most prosperous and business friendly state in the country.

Before I finish speaking, I will take a moment to acknowledge some of those people who have helped me along the way. I thank the WA branch of the Liberal Democrats, its members and its candidates, in particular, Jared Neaves and Angadjeet Sanghera, and former branch president Connor Whittle and new branch president Stuart Hatch. I thank Senator David Leyonhjelm, Duncan Spender and Eli Bernstein for their continued support. I thank my friends and family, in particular, my grandfather Sydney Stonehouse, who passed away several years ago. Sydney, or “pop” as we knew him, was a role model for me and my brothers. He was a stoic, principled, upright man. Although perhaps I did not know him as well as I might have liked, I have always tried to live my life by the examples that he set, to live a life of honesty and integrity.

Before you all today, I make the following commitment: that I will never compromise on my principles and that I will uphold the values of limited government, individual liberty and lower taxes. I will close now with what is perhaps my favourite quote from Thomas Jefferson —

In matters of style, swim with the current; in matters of principle, stand like a rock.

Thank you.

[Applause.]

Debate interrupted until a later stage of the sitting, on motion by **Hon Ken Baston**.

[Continued on page 477.]

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION***Message to Legislative Assembly — Motion***HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [3.54 pm]: I move —

That the Legislative Assembly be invited to agree to the rules and orders of the Legislative Council contained in the schedule for the constitution, powers and procedure of a Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation.

If the house will forgive me, I will not read the schedule attached to that motion.

Question put and passed.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON AUDIT***Message to Legislative Assembly — Motion***HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [3.55 pm]: I move —

That the Legislative Assembly be invited to agree to the rules and orders of the Legislative Council contained in the schedule for the constitution, powers and procedure of a Joint Standing Committee on Audit.

If the house will grant me the indulgence, I will not read out the terms of the schedule, but they are attached to the business program.

Question put and passed.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE CORRUPTION AND CRIME COMMISSION***Message to Legislative Assembly — Motion*On motion without notice by **Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That in response to Legislative Assembly message 2, the Legislative Council agrees to the Legislative Assembly's resolution and appoints the following members to the Joint Standing Committee on the Corruption and Crime Commission: Hon Jim Chown and Hon Alison Xamon.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE COMMISSIONER FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE***Motion*On motion without notice by **Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That in response to Legislative Assembly message 3, the Legislative Council agrees to the Legislative Assembly's resolution and appoints the following members to the Joint Standing Committee on the Commissioner for Children and Young People: Hon Dr Sally Talbot and Hon Donna Faragher.

**ADDRESS-IN-REPLY***Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary)** [3.58 pm]: Thank you, Madam President. That is the first time that I have had the opportunity to say, "Thank you, Madam President." It is very befitting that I acknowledge today your ascension to that role. What a fantastic achievement, after 185 years and 40 Parliaments, that we finally have a female—a woman—President of the Legislative Council. After such a long time, to have our first female President is, I think, a more historic moment than many of us realise. Congratulations to you, Madam President, and I am sure you will lead us with style and grace over the next four years.

It is also befitting to note that for the first time—she has just ducked out on urgent parliamentary business, as has been acknowledged—our Leader of the House is a woman. That is a very historic occasion as well. Also, for the very first time, the Governor's address was read by a woman. A triumvirate, members, of historic occasions have fallen before us as members of the fortieth Parliament. We are off to a great start in creating history and may those historic occasions continue.

I want to focus a bit on Hon Sally Talbot's original contribution to this debate in which she, too, also touched on the significance of the roles of women in public life and in society in general. As members know, I have two children. I have a 22-year-old daughter and a 20-year-old son. I look at both those children as a parent and wish them both the best and give all that I can to further their roles and contributions to life so that they can get the best for themselves. Becoming a member of Parliament in 2013 has made me realise the stark differences in opportunities for women and for men through to 2017. I look at my daughter and wonder why she does not, or

will not, have the opportunity to be a CEO. We know that she can be the President of the Legislative Council or the Leader of the House, and we now know that she can be the Governor. She can in fact become the Prime Minister, because we have had a female Prime Minister in Australia. However, there are many things in 2017 that she does not have the opportunity to do. This contribution I make today will jump around a little, but I will always come back to the focus of the role —

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** That is normal then.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Yes, that is right. If members want a sterile, staid debate, I will leave that up to members of the National Party. But if they want something that covers a lot of issues, they can look to me and I will happily cover them.

**The PRESIDENT:** I will look to you occasionally, I am sure.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Thank you, Madam President; that is the nicest thing you have said to me.

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** All happy in the Labor Party then!

**Hon DARREN WEST:** It is the first time Madam President has addressed me and I acknowledge that; thank you.

I will keep coming back to the theme of this contribution today, which is the role of women in public life and in society in general. I am sure members realise that outside this Parliament 51 per cent of the people are women. When I look to the Labor Party's make-up of members, for many years we have been criticised—pilloried in fact—for setting quotas. I have heard the term “quota fillers” come across the chamber, aimed at some of our women members of Parliament. But it has resulted in 50 per cent of the Labor caucus in the Legislative Council being made up of women, which mirrors the 50 per cent of women outside of Parliament. I note that the Greens also have a 50 per cent make-up of women in the Legislative Council, but the other parties have a bit of work to do. I will cut the crossbenches some slack because a couple of the parties have only one member, which makes it difficult to have 50 per cent women. I note that the members from the One Nation party are a fairly new re-established force in Western Australian politics and that perhaps it will take a little while for that to filter through to their caucus, but I note that their federal leader is a woman. There is a lot of work to do, especially for those in the Liberal Party, or should I be hoping that the Liberal and National Parties stay out of touch with modern society? Although I have a high regard for Hon Donna Faragher and Hon Jacqui Boydell, two women out of a total coalition caucus of 13 —

**Hon Donna Faragher:** And we stand tall amongst them all, don't you worry about that!

**Hon DARREN WEST:** I do note that the honourable member brought a petition of 6 000 names before the house today. I have not seen her male colleagues bring any petitions of 6 000 names before the house. Maybe they will, but to date they have not.

**Hon Donna Faragher:** So long as you listen to the petition, that is the main thing.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** The member may recall that on my first day in Parliament I tabled a petition with over 4 000 signatures from the regional parts of Western Australia—it is always a bit more challenging to get signatures in regional Western Australia—against the year 7s in high school, and the government did not take much notice of those 4 000 people.

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** Are you going to reverse that decision?

**Hon DARREN WEST:** We will have to have a talk to the minister about that. I do make the point that I brought a petition of 4 000 signatures to the house and the government of the day was not exactly bending over backwards to accommodate those 4 000. Hon Martin Aldridge raises an interesting point. I am quite sure that in the future we will debate that point.

I would like to make a special recognition of our former President, Hon Barry House, who was the President of the Legislative Council for my entire parliamentary career, except for this week. I found Barry to be a very fair man and an outstanding President. He had a command of the house that I am sure this President will also enjoy and was able to enable for robust debate, entertaining at times, but with a sense of order and decorum that befits the institution of the Legislative Council. I would like to pay special acknowledgement to Hon Barry House. He contributed 30 years to the Legislative Council and has been a strong voice for the South West Region. I beg to differ that it is the best corner of the best state of the best country in the world. I think two of those are right. His commitment to his communities and electorates and his service to the house cannot be questioned. He was fair and impartial and I found him very helpful. A couple of issues I had were not easy. He is a good man and a class act and I wish him well. I look forward to bumping into Barry in the south west over a glass of the region's finest from time to time.

Between 7.00 pm and 7.30 pm on Saturday, 11 March I am sure all members could hear the collective sigh of relief from the people of Western Australia when they learned that there would be a change of government.

A collective sigh of relief: “Thank goodness that’s over. Thank goodness the Barnett Liberal–National government has been defeated.” It was overwhelming. Forty-one electorates put their faith in the McGowan Labor government. I make that point to the new crossbench that the people of Western Australia have given the McGowan Labor government a thumping mandate. They have taken their disapproval of the coalition out in spades and have turned to Labor to turn the state’s economy around, to provide real jobs, to deliver on Metronet, and to deliver in the regions, and all the election commitments that we made that we will honour. The defeat of the Barnett Liberal government marked a turning point in Western Australian history. It was the biggest single Labor win recorded in history.

Despite 41 of 59 seats allocated to Labor by the people of Western Australia in the other place, when I look around this chamber of 36 members, only 14 of 36 are Labor members. The same people were voting at the same time, with two ballot papers, and presumably voted in a similar fashion on both ballot papers—I am sure that in most cases that happened. The people of Western Australia, despite delivering a thumping mandate to the McGowan Labor government in the Legislative Assembly, were not able to deliver that mandate in this place. I think there is something undemocratic about that. Why would it not be that a government with 41 of 59 seats, getting close to three-quarters of the seats, would get only about one-third of the vote, or slightly more in the Legislative Council?

**Hon Peter Collier:** They’re your electoral laws; you put it in place.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Maybe those who spoke last week in this place about electoral reform were on to something.

**Hon Peter Collier:** Did you get it wrong in 2000 when you made the changes?

**Hon DARREN WEST:** I think the reforms to the Electoral Act could have gone further—I do, and I said that at the time. I was a very small voice at that time, but I said that to anyone who would listen. Of course, that legislation had to be navigated through a hostile Legislative Council as well, as Hon Peter Collier would be aware. Electoral reform should be a priority for this government, and I am sure that will be debated further as well.

For me, that thumping mandate, however, provided some of the best news I have had since I have been a member of Parliament—that is, the election of Hon Laurie Graham into the Agricultural Region. Until now, Labor has not held two upper house seats in the Agricultural Region since its inception; I believe that was in the late 1980s. The people of the Agricultural Region have turned to Labor. They have delivered a stunning increase in the primary vote across the Agricultural Region and significantly we are now two. I look forward to working with Hon Laurie Graham, who will tell members in the course of the next day or so about his background, but I am sure members will agree that a fine member of Parliament has been elected.

That came about from a phenomenal amount of work right across the region. As members in regional seats would know, the distances are vast. Lots of disparate communities spread out over large areas, many with small populations, are fighting to save their local school or railway line, or whatever the case may be. When a member of Parliament covers vast areas, as I have done for the last four years, stretching from Kalbarri to Bremer Bay, it is challenging to meet the needs of those communities. I was humbled to get a tick from the Agricultural Region for the efforts that we—my staff, hundreds of supporters and I—have put in over the last four years across the Agricultural Region. It is very humbling, to the point that the community in the Agricultural Region said to us, “As a matter of fact, we think that you are so good we think there should be two of you.”

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** Let me check your hometown votes.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Hon Martin Aldridge can check my hometown votes, and perhaps he can check his as well.

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** I am very happy with my hometown votes.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** I will give Hon Martin Aldridge a particular place of interest to check. The honourable member should check the electorate of Geraldton while he is looking.

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** I am bringing it up now.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** We received a massive increase in our primary vote.

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** It’s 48 votes, to the Nationals’ 209. That’s a ringing endorsement!

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Thank you, Hon Martin Aldridge.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Members, I am going to set the tone really early. Only one person has the call, and it is Hon Darren West. Other people will have an opportunity at a later stage, so let us listen to what he has to say in silence, please.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** Hon Martin Aldridge makes a good point. I wonder why the people of Goomalling, my hometown, which is a fairly rusted-on, conservative community, continue to support a party that offers them nothing. They continue to support a party that would have sold their electricity supply network from under them. It is a community that people are leaving in huge numbers. If Hon Martin Aldridge looks back through the polling booth figures for Goomalling over the last successive elections, he will find that at every election the number of voters has been decreasing; he will find that occurring across the areas in which people predominantly vote National. I do not know why they keep supporting the National Party, because they are leaving. The National Party was able to sustain its two members in the Agricultural Region and was able to see in the election of Hon Colin de Grussa, who I am sure will make a fine contribution, but the National Party is not actually going anywhere. It is not offering the Agricultural Region anything to speak of, and the electorate has voted thus. There are booths in the Agricultural Region in which Labor won for the first time. There are booths in the Agricultural Region in which Labor ran second. In fact, Labor ran second in the whole seat of Central Wheatbelt. I am going to talk more about individual electorates and the fantastic candidates we ran in those electorates when I talk more about the problems of the Liberal and National Parties.

**Hon Martin Aldridge:** Tell us about Geraldton.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** I certainly will talk at length about Geraldton. I think we were outspent in Geraldton. It is interesting that the member brings that up. In the few minutes before we suspend I will start talking about Geraldton.

For the last eight years under the coalition government Geraldton has languished. Members of the coalition government have made repeated promises for Geraldton. I will refresh the minds of members of the National Party by pointing out this headline that refers to a commitment made by the National Party in 2013 to build a \$120 million hospital in Geraldton. I do not know whether members recognise the people who appear on this copy of the front page of *The Geraldton Guardian*, titled “Last-minute \$120 million hospital plan”. One of them is the former member for Pilbara and former Leader of the National Party, Brendon Grylls, and the other is the Mayor of Geraldton, who was then the National Party candidate. If members visit Geraldton Hospital, they will see that it looks just like it did when it was built by the Gallop Labor government in 2006. The former coalition government did not spend \$120 million on that hospital. It did not spend \$100 million, \$20 million or \$1 million on Geraldton Hospital. It spent not one dollar on Geraldton Hospital. Geraldton has been led along by the coalition for many years now. Many promises have been made to the people of Geraldton. I refer to another article that refers to a 2015 commitment made to the people of Geraldton for hospital funds. It was not done.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 487.]

*Sitting suspended from 4.15 to 4.30 pm*

## QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

### MINISTERIAL CODE OF CONDUCT

#### 100. **Hon PETER COLLIER to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I refer the Premier to his response to question without notice 80 asked on Tuesday, 23 May 2017. Will the Premier identify which chief of staff of any minister, including the Premier, is related to which Labor member of the Legislative Assembly or Legislative Council; and, if not, why not?

#### **Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I am delighted to provide an answer to the honourable member. I thank him for some notice of the question. The department is able to confirm that the chief of staff to the Minister for Tourism; Racing and Gaming; Small Business; Defence Issues; Citizenship and Multicultural Interests declared that he was related to a member of the Legislative Assembly, Hon Rita Saffioti, MLA.

### COMMISSION OF INQUIRY — PERTH FREIGHT LINK

#### 101. **Hon PETER COLLIER to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I refer to the answer to question without notice 79 asked on Tuesday, 23 May 2017 and ask the following questions, in the spirit of openness and transparency, I.

- (1) In which ministerial office was the document found?
- (2) Who transferred the document from the ministerial office to the media?
- (3) Was the document transferred to the Premier’s office or other ministerial offices; and, if yes, by whom and to which offices?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

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

- (1)–(3) The document was discovered when the new government was moving in. The information is now out in the public arena for Western Australians to make their own judgement on the previous government’s decision to choose the most expensive and environmentally reckless option when it proceeded with Roe 8 so close to the election.

## INGHAM’S GROUP LTD — RELOCATION AND EXPANSION

**102. Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to the media release issued by the minister on 15 May 2017 welcoming Ingham’s plan to expand its operations in Western Australia.

- (1) Does the McGowan government claim credit for Ingham’s decision and claim that any prospective jobs or its achievement of its election commitment should be counted towards the number of jobs it has committed to create?
- (2) If yes to (1), on what basis does it claim credit?
- (3) With reference to the minister’s statement that “WA Labor started discussions with Ingham’s last year and committed to facilitating this relocation and expansion—now we have fulfilled that commitment”, when and what were those discussions; by whom were they conducted and with whom at Ingham’s; what did WA Labor say it would do to facilitate the relocation and expansion; and, what in fact has it done and on what terms that allow it to claim that it has fulfilled that commitment?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

- (1)–(3) I am sure that members on the other side of the chamber are very happy that we have achieved this very positive outcome. I will explain how this came about. As members know, I was the candidate for North Metropolitan Region, working with Sabine Winton, our fabulous then candidate for the seat of Wanneroo. She drew my attention to the fact that for many years there had been a lot of disquiet and the view that it was time for such an intensive agricultural use to move out of the heart of Wanneroo.

Several members interjected.

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** I am answering the question. I am saying this is what happened.

We reached out to Ingham’s. We found a contact in Ingham’s in the eastern states and we rang them up and we said, “We would like to know what you are proposing to do with Wanneroo, because we believe that much more could be done in the Wanneroo town site” and that it was time to move these issues on. They said, “Funny you should talk about that, because we have been thinking the same thing and we have had some complexity in trying to deal with these issues. We would love to come over and talk to you.” We reached out to this company, as good oppositions and, indeed, I would imagine, good governments would do.

When the contacts in Ingham’s came over to visit Western Australia, they met with me and the now Premier and they advised us that if they were able to dispose of their site in Wanneroo, they wanted to double the size of their operation in Western Australia. They did not want to continue to bring chickens across the Nullarbor; they wanted to expand their production to double. We did that and we said that we would ensure that all decisions were made in a timely way. Obviously, there are due processes, but we will be there, as a good government, as we were last time we were in government, to make sure that projects like this move ahead and that we create these extra jobs in Western Australia.

*Point of Order*

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** This was all very interesting and it sort of went some way towards answering the question, but I was quite specific about what the discussions were, by whom they were conducted, with whom at Ingham’s, what WA Labor said it would do to facilitate the relocation and expansion, and what in fact it has done and on what terms that allow it to claim it has fulfilled that commitment.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** You don’t like the answer.

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** No; I am saying that I did not get an answer. It has been part of the practice of the government to date not to answer the questions.

**The PRESIDENT:** Deputy Leader of the Opposition, you of all people should know, having been on the other side, that albeit you might ask a question, the minister has provided a response. I repeat the words of my predecessor: you may not like the response, but that is the response. If you want to re-ask the question in a different way, you will have another opportunity on another occasion.

## EDUCATION CENTRAL — CITY BEACH SITE

**103. Hon DONNA FARAGHER to the Minister for Education and Training:**

I refer to the government's Education Central policy. Given the government is not intending to construct a new school at City Beach on the site of the old City Beach senior high school, what does the government intend to do with this site?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for the question. We have yet to make a final decision on what we are going to do with the City Beach site. In fact, we said in our election promise that we would make a decision about what we were going to do about the City Beach site in government.

## MEDIA STATEMENTS EMAIL SERVICE

**104. Hon NICK GOIRAN to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I refer to the answer to my question without notice on 16 May 2017 in which the Leader of the House informed the house that the director of communications is responsible for authorising media statements prior to public release.

- (1) Is Daniel Pastorelli the director to which she referred?
- (2) If no to (1), to whom was she referring?
- (3) If yes to (1), from what date was he appointed?
- (4) Further to (3), did his responsibility for the authorisation process for government media statements commence on the date of his appointment?
- (5) If no to (4), on what date did this responsibility commence?
- (6) Further to (1), is she able to confirm the assessment in *The Weekend West* of 20 May 2017 that Mr Pastorelli is "good on detail"?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of his question. I am sensing another beautiful obsession developing here, but I will provide the answer provided to me.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) It was 20 March 2017.
- (4) Yes.
- (5) Not applicable.
- (6) Further to standing order 105(1)(b), it is my understanding that questions in this place may not seek an opinion.

## ROAD SAFETY COMMISSIONER

**105. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the minister representing the Minister for Road Safety:**

I refer to the Road Safety Commission, which is set to be abolished as a result of the state government's machinery of government reforms.

- (1) Will there be a Road Safety Commissioner from 1 July 2017 and ongoing?
- (2) What will be the Road Safety Commissioner's functions and responsibilities given there will be no Road Safety Commission?
- (3) If a Road Safety Commissioner is retained following machinery of government reforms, to whom will they direct their report?
- (4) How will the Road Safety Commissioner's independence be protected following its functions becoming amalgamated with WA Police?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Road Safety.

- (1) Yes.
- (2) These matters are still to be finalised.
- (3) The report will be directed to the Minister for Police; Road Safety.
- (4) It is not anticipated that these changes will impact on the independence of the Road Safety Commissioner; they are about administrative efficiencies and better co-ordination across agencies.

## FIREARMS REGULATIONS 1974

**106. Hon RICK MAZZA to the minister representing the Minister for Police:**

I refer to the Firearms Regulations 1974 that mandate the safe storage of firearms by firearms dealers. These regulations are widely acknowledged as being among the most stringent in Australia.

- (1) Can the minister advise whether there are any plans to alter the current regulations in regard to the safe storage of firearms by dealers?
- (2) If yes to (1), can the minister advise why changes are required?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Police.

- (1)–(2) The Law Reform Commission made a number of recommendations regarding firearms storage in a recent review of the Firearms Act 1973. These recommendations are under consideration by Western Australia Police.

## RACING AND WAGERING WESTERN AUSTRALIA — POINT-OF-CONSUMPTION WAGERING TAX

**107. Hon COL HOLT to the minister representing the Minister for Racing and Gaming:**

- (1) Will the government be introducing a point-of-consumption wagering tax?
- (2) If the government does introduce such a tax, will it return all revenues raised to the racing industry?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

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

- (1) The point-of-consumption tax will be implemented in South Australia on 1 July 2017. Should other states or territories introduce a similar tax, the government, in conjunction with Racing and Wagering Western Australia, will reassess its position.
- (2) Given the response to (1), not applicable

## HYDRAULIC FRACTURING

**108. Hon DIANE EVERS to the minister representing the Minister for Mines and Petroleum:**

I refer to the Premier's pre-election promise to ban hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, in Perth, Peel and the south west.

- (1) Will the government also ban exploration for unconventional gas in these regions?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Will the government allow other methods of onshore gas extraction to be used in the south west, Peel and Perth regions besides fracking?
- (4) If yes to (3), will the Premier please name these methods?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Mines and Petroleum.

- (1) No.
- (2) The government's policy is a ban on hydraulic fracture stimulation in the south west, Peel and Perth metropolitan regions, not a ban on exploration for future gas supplies for the Western Australian community.
- (3) Yes, providing the application in question is environmentally acceptable and meets the government's stringent regulatory approvals processes.
- (4) These methods can include geophysical and geological surveys, conventional drilling and data analysis.

## LIVE EXPORT — MEMBER FOR BALCATTAS COMMENTS

**109. Hon COLIN DE GRUSSA to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to recent comments by new member for Balcatta, David Michael, in his inaugural speech that live export is a sunset industry that deserves to be shut down.

- (1) Does the minister agree with the Member for Balcatta's comments regarding live export?
- (2) Does the minister still believe that live export to the Middle East and Africa could never be made humane, as suggested on her social media in 2013?

- (3) Can the minister confirm that WA's live export industry will be permitted to continue to operate in its current capacity while she holds the agriculture portfolio?
- (4) Will the minister continue to pursue new live export markets on behalf of the WA livestock sector and build relationships with existing markets to diversify market options for industry?
- (5) Has the minister consulted with representatives from the livestock or live export industries since taking over the agriculture portfolio?
- (6) If yes to (5), which representatives has the minister met with?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(6) The member for Balcatta was expressing a personal opinion, an opinion that no doubt reflects the views of many people in his electorate. Labor's policy, which I am committed to implementing, recognises the part played by live export in the Livestock industry in WA. Labor is committed to ensuring that we maximise the opportunities for processing of meat grown for export creating jobs. Hence, we are actively encouraging Harvey Beef, Pardoo Beef Corporation and Kimberley Meat Company in their work in developing branding that leverages WA's environmental credibility. I draw the member's attention to the fact that one of the biggest problems in the sheep meat industry is the shortage of supply, not the shortage of demand. I have met with the Pastoralists and Graziers Association, Western Australian Farmers Federation, Sheep Alliance of WA and the industry funding scheme, as well as many individual growers. We are changing the Animal Welfare Act to ensure that we can enforce national standards and guidelines for the transport of livestock.

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENT FOR REGULATORY AND OPERATION REFORM  
IN OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

**110. Hon ALISON XAMON to the minister representing the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations:**

I refer to the Inter-Governmental Agreement for Regulatory and Operation Reform in Occupational Health and Safety, the harmonisation agreement, signed in 2009.

- (1) Given that eight years has now passed since WA entered into the agreement, is the government committed to introducing work health and safety uniform legislation as a matter of urgency?
- (2) If yes to (1), please specify the intended process and time line for the development and introduction of the legislation?
- (3) If no to (1), why not?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations —

- (1) The modernisation of occupational safety and health laws is a priority for this government.
- (2) The Minister for Commerce and Industrial Relations is currently seeking advice on these matters. Announcements about time lines will be made in due course.
- (3) Not applicable.

PERTH AIRPORT — THIRD RUNWAY

**111. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:**

- (1) Are there any plans under consideration for the construction of a third runway in the vicinity of Munday Swamp?
- (2) Are there any other plans under consideration for construction near Perth Airport in the vicinity of Munday Swamp?
- (3) If yes to (1) or (2), have there been any heritage surveys in the area and consultation with traditional owners over these plans?
- (4) If yes to (1) or (2), will the minister please table these plans?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The following information has been provided to me by the Minister for Transport; Planning; Lands.

- (1)–(3) Yes.

- (4) Planning and construction of any works at Perth Airport, including a proposed third runway, is the responsibility of Perth Airport Pty Ltd. PAPL is the lessee and operates under the oversight of the commonwealth Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development. Environmental approvals are the responsibility of the commonwealth Department of the Environment and Energy. Any requests for plans or other information should be directed to PAPL, DIRD or DEE.

MEDIA STATEMENTS EMAIL SERVICE

**112. Hon JIM CHOWN to the Minister for Regional Development:**

I refer to the minister's answer to the question without notice from Hon Nick Goiran asked on 23 May 2017 in which the minister informed the house that she would take responsibility for the content of her media statements, but in which she failed to commit to tabling a copy of her media statements since the time of her appointment as minister.

- (1) Is the minister aware that it is a contravention of the custom and practice of the house to refer the house to a website in lieu of tabling requested documents?
- (2) If no to (1), why not?
- (3) Will she now table a copy of the requested documents?
- (4) If yes to (3), when?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(4) In order to assist the member, I table all 12 media statements.

[See paper 230.]

PUBLIC SECTOR RESTRUCTURE

**113. Hon TJORN SIBMA to the minister representing the Minister for Public Sector Management:**

I refer to the minister's media statement of 28 April concerning "major changes" to the public sector, and, in particular, the intended reduction in the number of government departments from 41 to 25 by 1 July 2017, to "create a more efficient public sector to deliver better services for the community".

- (1) Has the government undertaken a services gap assessment and drafted a business continuity plan to ensure that services to the public do not suffer during the transition to the new arrangements and after the proposed implementation date of 1 July 2017?
- (2) If yes to (1), will the government table these documents?
- (3) If no to (1) and/or (2), why not?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Public Sector Commission advises the following —

- (1)–(3) Chief executive officers of entities affected by the machinery of government changes are responsible for ensuring business continuity at all times, including during the transition process and after 1 July 2017.

PUBLIC SECTOR RESTRUCTURE

**114. Hon MARTIN ALDRIDGE to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I ask this question on behalf of my colleague Hon Jacqui Boydell, who is away on urgent parliamentary business. I refer to the public sector renewal process being undertaken by the government.

- (1) Will a consultation process be undertaken prior to the amalgamation of departments?
- (2) Which consultants are being retained to undertake this work?
- (3) How much will this consultation process cost?

**Hon SUE ELLERY replied:**

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

- (1)–(3) Changes to the machinery of government structure of the Western Australian public sector were announced by the Premier on 28 April 2017. This included the planned amalgamation of departments. The Premier has also indicated further changes may be made in the future. All these processes have and will involve consultation with the relevant parties. Agencies are expected to conduct this work in-house.

## RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION SERVICE — SOUTH WEST

**115. Hon ALISON XAMON to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Mental Health:**

I refer to the need for a 55-bed residential rehabilitation service in the South West Region identified in the “Better Choices. Better Lives: Western Australian Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Services Plan 2015-2025”.

- (1) Will the government commit to abiding by the original time line proposed for the development of this facility?
- (2) If no to (1), how does the government propose to support people who are desperately in need of alcohol and other drug services in this region, particularly in light of recent findings that Bunbury has the highest incidence of methamphetamine use in Western Australia?

**Hon ALANNA CLOHESY replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. I am informed of the following —

- (1) The state government has committed to residential rehabilitation and treatment services in the South West Region as part of its election commitment to a comprehensive and integrated whole-of-government methamphetamine action plan.
- (2) Not applicable. However, it should be noted that the assertion that Bunbury has the highest incidence of methamphetamine use in Western Australia may be misleading as it is one of only two regional sites being subject to state-based wastewater analysis.

## BOVINE JOHNE’S DISEASE

**116. Hon KEN BASTON to the Minister for Agriculture and Food:**

I refer to Western Australia’s status on the management of bovine Johne’s disease. Western Australia is moving to implement the Johne’s beef assurance score of eight protocol, referred to as J-BAS 8, on 1 July.

- (1) Can the minister confirm which J-BAS score will be used by Queensland and the Northern Territory from 1 July?
- (2) What restrictions will a J-BAS 8 have on Western Australian cattle producers wishing to purchase stock from these states?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN replied:**

I thank the member for the question.

- (1) I am advised that BJD is not regulated in Queensland; therefore, no J-BAS will be required for cattle entering Queensland from other states. The Northern Territory has announced a minimum entry requirement policy of J-BAS 6 from 1 July 2017.
- (2) As explained yesterday, the WA cattle industry was widely consulted throughout 2016 and the majority of producers indicated that they wish to maintain WA’s border controls. These border controls are currently being finalised and it has not been determined that all cattle entering WA will need a J-BAS 8. For example, cattle coming into WA for slaughter or export will not be required to meet J-BAS 8. The requirements for bringing in breeding cattle from the Northern Territory or Queensland are currently being finalised and will be approved by the cattle industry management committee on behalf of the industry.

## PRESCRIBED BURNING — VASSE ELECTORATE

**117. Hon STEVE THOMAS to the Minister for Environment:**

- (1) What is the Department of Parks and Wildlife’s target for prescribed burns in the Vasse electorate in autumn 2017?
- (2) Which areas or localities in the Vasse electorate have been targeted specifically by DPaW for prescribed burns in autumn 2017?
- (3) What actions have been undertaken by DPaW in 2017 to address fuel loads on Yallingup hill?
- (4) What actions have been undertaken by DPaW in 2017 to address fuel loads in the Vasse electorate generally?

**Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:**

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

- (1) There is no specific target for prescribed burns in the Vasse electorate; rather, the Department of Parks and Wildlife identifies a suite of burns and works through these on a priority basis, as fuel moisture and weather conditions permit.

- (2) The following localities were identified as priorities in the Vasse electorate in autumn 2017: Bramley—BWD 005; Bramley—BWD 032; Upper Capel—BWD 079; MacGregor-Millbrook—BWD 102; Mowen—BWD 071; Treeton—BWD 104; Yallingup—BWD 076; Yallingup—BWD 096; and Blackwood Pine Heaps—BWD 105.
- (3) The department has undertaken the following actions: ongoing liaison with the Yallingup Bushfire Advisory Committee and fire control officer on local fire management issues, burn preparation and timing; completed mechanical fuel reduction of the BWD 076 burn boundary; planned additional mechanical fuel reduction for the current Yallingup town site strategic firebreak and access roads; and accessed the National Bushfire Mitigation Program funds to assist with the additional mechanical fuel reduction around the town site.
- (4) The department has undertaken the following actions. It has completed boundary preparation on the prescribed burns planned for autumn and spring 2017 in the Vasse electorate; completed the master burn planning review for the next three-year prescribed burning program; planned for mechanical fuel reduction maintenance of strategic access and firebreaks in Leeuwin-Naturaliste National Park; completed planning for the major upgrade of Baker Road as a strategic access way and burn boundary; and continued to participate in bushfire risk mitigation planning in conjunction with the Department of Fire and Emergency Services, the City of Busselton and the Shire of Augusta-Margaret River.

#### TRANSPERTH BUS FLEET

#### 118. Hon SIMON O'BRIEN to the minister representing the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Transperth bus fleet.

- (1) How many new buses have been purchased annually in each of the past four years and what has been the total bus count in each of these years?
- (2) Does the government intend to increase the bus fleet in any of the next four years; and, if so, by how many vehicles?

#### Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

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

- (1) In 2012–13, 117 new buses were purchased and the total number of buses was 1 257. In 2013–14, 106 new buses were purchased and the total was 1 302. In 2014–15, 137 new buses were purchased and the total was 1 362. In 2015–16, 120 new buses were purchased and the total was 1 429.
- (2) The current forecast shows an increase of between 15 to 20 buses per annum.

#### PUBLIC HOUSING WAITING LISTS

#### 119. Hon PETER COLLIER to the minister representing the Minister for Housing:

- (1) What was the average waiting list for state housing in 2014, 2015 and 2016?
- (2) What is the current waiting list for state housing?

#### Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The Housing Authority advises the following —

- (1) The wait list for public housing at 30 June 2014 was 20 013, at 30 June 2015 it was 20 127, and at 30 June 2016 it was 18 530.
- (2) As at 30 April 2017, 17 006 applications were on the public housing waiting list.

#### BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

*Statement by Leader of the House*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [4.59 pm]: I ask that the business of the house be resumed. I note that this is because we have a number of inaugural speeches to get through. I would not normally shut down question time at 5.00 pm.

#### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

*Motion*

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.00 pm]: I seek leave to continue my remarks at the next sitting of the house.

Leave granted.

**HON DIANE EVERS (South West)** [5.01 pm]: Thank you, Madam President, for giving me this opportunity to address the fortieth Parliament of the Legislative Council of Western Australia. I acknowledge that we are standing on Whadjuk Noongar boodja and pay my respects to the elders, past, present and emerging, and note that this land was never ceded. I also acknowledge and support the comments by the Governor of Western Australia, Hon Kerry Sanderson, AC, in her opening address to this Parliament. It is a great honour and an incredible privilege to take a seat in this esteemed chamber. This is something that I never really expected until late last year when it became apparent to me that there was a very real chance that the Greens WA might earn enough votes to once again claim a seat for the South West Region. It is eight years since we last had Greens representation in the south west and much ground has been lost in this time, figuratively and literally. I am humbled by the road ahead and by the many people who have held this seat before me. My mentors in this role will include previous members Chrissy Sharp, Giz Watson, Paul Llewelyn and, most recently, Lynn MacLaren.

I admire their past contributions and look forward to their guidance in the future. In addition, I will have the experience of my colleagues, Hon Robin Chapple, MLC, member for Mining and Pastoral Region, and Hon Alison Xamon, MLC, member for North Metropolitan Region. With their support and guidance, I am certain that my colleague Hon Tim Clifford, MLC, and member for East Metropolitan Region and I will quickly learn the ropes to become effective members of this Parliament.

Members may notice that I am working hard to manage the formalities of the English language used in this Parliament and I pray that all my esteemed colleagues will afford me leniency when I neglect to speak properly or use colloquialisms that do not quite reflect my point as I would like to. I came to Australia as a 20-year-old from another place and here I found my home. I have been a citizen for over 20 years and I feel most fortunate to be here.

First, to the thankyou. I could not be here without the support and trust of my husband, Tony Evers. Back in August, he said to me, “If you are going to this, don’t go in half hearted.” Not only did he give me encouragement, he also gave me the next six months of his time to travel the 45 000 square kilometres of the region, reaching out to the more than 250 000 people, 19 local governments and many individual communities. The South West Region extends along the coast from Mandurah to Augusta and east to Bremer Bay, then inland to cover Jerramungup, Mt Barker, Rocky Gully, Boyup Brook, Collie and Dwellingup, also taking in Margaret River, Manjimup, Denmark and my home town of Albany. Tony has stood by me through the past 29 years of our marriage and I feel I can count on him for love and encouragement through my time in Parliament. My four adult children, Tia, Carl, Rose, Jessica, and her partner, Shane McNeice, will be there for me to offer encouragement and support to ensure that my mental and physical health is kept in good shape. Their love and strength will provide the rock that keeps me balanced and stable when under the enormous pressure that may come with being a member of Parliament. My family makes me whole. They are who I am doing this for. It is their generation that I hope will see a lasting benefit from my time in Parliament—benefits such as social equity and environmental stability.

My thankyou must now extend to the incredible team of Greens members and supporters who got me to this position. From my local Albany group, to the south west region and WA state group, and even some support interstate, I thank all of you, and cannot express how proud I feel to have your support and to be representing the Greens and the values we share. I would not be here without the work of each and every one of you. My thanks extend to each person who voted Green, especially those who took the chance and voted Green for the first time. I do not intend to let their voices go unheard. In particular, I would like to thank my campaign manager, Donald Clarke. He put his life on hold for three months to work tirelessly on the campaign, and even brought in his daughter, Sarah, to build our Facebook presence. His skills in managing people were greatly appreciated as he held the team together and moved us forward toward our success. His support was unwavering and I am truly humbled by his contribution. I must also thank my eight lower house Greens candidates, David Rastrick, Jodie Moffat, Luke O’Connell, Gordon Tayler, Callum Burwood, Andy Huntley, Aeron Blundell-Camden, Michael Baldock, and my colleague on the upper house ticket, Hsien Harper. I must comment on and offer my great respect for Michael Baldock in particular, as it is through his valuable efforts over the past eight years to keep the Greens membership of the south west informed and active, and over this time maintain a cohesive group who were able and willing to run such a strong campaign. His past work will not be forgotten. I would also like to thank Brenda Conochie, a good friend, who pulled the team together at the last moment to ensure that we had the highest likelihood of success on the day of the election. Throughout the campaign I felt loved, respected and supported, and this made my work easy. The South West Region is populated by caring, thoughtful people and I feel honoured to represent them.

Well, that is it; that winds up my thankyou. Now to get on to the nitty gritty: my plans for the next four years. I will start with a bit of background on myself. Some people know their calling early in life and I knew mine. I was born to be an accountant. I loved math from very early in my life and was working the odds of nickel and dime poker by the time I was five years old. At 12 years old I went to the school library to look up exactly what

an accountant did to confirm my choice of career. I was convinced; counting money for a job seemed perfect. Some members may be familiar with *Monty Python's* sketch in which an accountant wants to become a lion tamer for some excitement, and then realises it would be better to remain an accountant. For me, as an accountant, this is the best of all their work. There is another accounting joke, although I cannot remember where to give credit. It pictures a person talking to a clairvoyant, and as she gazes into the crystal ball, looks up at the person and says, "I'm sorry, but you were an accountant in all your past lives." This is how it feels. I illustrate this thought to demonstrate to each member sitting in this room that I am a numbers person, and I hope I have some companionship in this regard, to balance out those people who rely on words to tell a story or paint a picture. They say that some people see the world in colours, smells or sounds. I see it in numbers and I am here to use those numbers to see that the government of Western Australia is run efficiently and effectively to ensure that all people are looked after, that our natural environment is cared for in perpetuity and to see that our economy becomes robust and is resilient to the outside influences of climate change, globalisation and the influences of individuals or corporations that try to undermine the legitimate processes of government.

My role here as a member of the Greens is to demonstrate that our policies, aims and objectives have a sound economic base. I understand how budgets work. I understand how money can be spent only once. An individual, corporation or state can expend only what it sources through revenue and is supplemented by debt. But debt, which is paid back in the future, should only be drawn for investments that will return a benefit in the future. Using debt because we want pretty things now or because we have mismanaged our recurrent revenue and committed to excessive and unnecessary recurrent spending is as wrong for a state as it is for an individual. Sound financial management entails being able to cover our current costs, then our necessary improvements, and following that we can look at the pretty things, the luxuries, the bell towers and the stadiums. As it stands, our current costs have ballooned. We have sizeable interest payments to make, contracted construction costs in place and distorted wage values, particularly in senior management. The only area that had been trimmed was government services. Over the past few years, most government departments have been losing staff to pay for excesses in spending on other projects. I welcome the recently announced inquiry into past spending, if only to ensure the same mistakes are not repeated.

Speaking from the South West Region, we have lost significant employment in TAFE, the Department of Education, the Department of Agriculture and Food and the Department of Parks and Wildlife, and in our health services, ports, schools and policing. The list goes on. The loss of people in these positions and the resultant loss of their families to the region places additional strain on our communities, which are already stressed by our slowing economy from the end of the mining construction boom and from the increasing agricultural variability brought on by climate change. Our youth and other jobseekers are left to fend for themselves in an economy that is doing everything possible to eliminate low-skilled meaningful employment. People do not just need a job; they need meaningful employment.

But I digress. My intent is to let everyone in this house know that I will focus on the numbers side of all our legislation. I will consider the economic impacts and consequences of our proposed legislation to see who are the winners and who are the losers, and who will bear the cost; which principles are supported and which are rejected; and whether the advantage will be in the short term or the long term. Each issue must have its economic consequences researched and detailed, not just for the immediate term but for the future.

When considering projects beyond our essential services of government, my mantra will be as follows: invest in projects that will reduce our ongoing costs and in projects that will bring in future revenue. One of those projects is the renewable energy industry. Not only can we create affordable renewable energy systems now, but this technology will reduce our future operating costs and result in substantially lower clean-up costs at the end of a lifecycle when compared with fossil fuel energy production.

As an added bonus, Australia, with our rich mineral resources and outstanding educational institutions, should be able to create a manufacturing industry based on renewable technology. Talk about creating meaningful employment! Imagine being the person to develop and manufacture a better battery or more efficient solar collector. Australians have the ingenuity to do this. We simply must stop subsidising polluting industries. We must listen to communities such as Collie that are faced with bearing the brunt of our previous lethargy by a government that failed to prepare for the phasing out of coal.

Other sound financial investments are in our people. Better education and improved health are key to a strong and resilient population. If we want to help people off drugs and out of unemployment, we need to give them the education to understand and manage how to live in our increasingly complex world. We need to provide a healthcare system that prevents minor issues from growing larger and that addresses mental health issues with appropriate support. We need to increase the opportunities for people to find something better in their lives, such as work, sports, music, friendships and community. People who are healthy both mentally and physically, when given the skills of a good education and access to high-quality further training, will be more likely to find or create meaningful employment.

In my previous position as state manager for the community run organisation Green Skills, we ran a series of Green Army programs to give disadvantaged youth an opportunity to learn new skills as part of an environmental team. This program worked well on the south coast in achieving environmental aims while also providing employment and skills to assist young people to find further work. We were very disappointed when the program was cut, as the consequences were dire for our youth and the environment.

Another sound investment for government funding is public transport. Build a road and traffic will fill it. Then we need to build another road. Build a train line, and when the train is full, run the train again. Simple. We need to invest in electric vehicles and in charging stations that run off renewable technologies. The more renewable technology we invest in, the cheaper it becomes. Technology. Think about it—research through our universities, development by our small businesses, and production in a new manufacturing industry. This ticks all the boxes.

This is not the last time members will hear me harp on about sound financial management. To me, sound financial management goes hand in hand with good physical and mental health and a quality education for an individual, as it also goes hand in hand with social justice and environmental conservatism for the state. Through our sound management, we can ensure that there is social equity across the state.

I turn now to the triple bottom line—the idea of accounting for social, environmental and economic aspects. How long it is since we have used that term? It came and went, along with many other progressive ideas. It then disappeared completely when the idea of running government like a business became the fashion. As an accountant, I appreciate the desire to run an operation on a sound financial basis to achieve good value-for-money results. But a government has many more responsibilities to its constituents than just the business model of simply making a profit without regard to consequences.

In addition to managing the finances well, government has an obligation to look after the people and the environment. We have the responsibility to see that no-one is left behind, and that people in our society less fortunate than ourselves are looked after and not disregarded through our own lack of empathy. That includes people who live with a disability, an addiction or an inadequate level of education, and victims of crime and family violence. A fair and just society cares for the disadvantaged.

We also have a responsibility to ensure that our natural resources of air, water, land and biodiversity are not further diminished by our greed and general consumptive behaviour. In order to fulfil our responsibilities as a Parliament, we must value the entirety of environmental, economic and social outcomes.

I will now venture into my electorate, the South West Region, to demonstrate the interconnection of these values. I guess that many members here today have travelled to the south west and have seen the incredible beauty of the southern forests, the magnificent coastline and the productive farmland. Members may have also noticed the diverse economic base of tourism, agriculture, mining and small cottage industries, and, of course, the extensive service industries supporting our communities. During my campaign, what I found most striking, however, was the incredible range of social situations in our communities—farmers, foresters, miners, teachers, nurses, tour guides, vigneron, builders, bankers and bus drivers, and also, of course, volunteers, parents, students and so on. Members may have noticed that in that list not once did I have a need to refer to gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or age. This is because we are all people first. We must be inclusive of all. Our role as members of Parliament is to look after people and the planet, and not necessarily profit. To put it simply, in government we work out what revenue we have available and what services and projects we need to address, and then work out how best to achieve this.

So, as a voice for the South West Region, I will be focused on creating opportunities for meaningful employment; supporting a transition to renewable energy industry careers; creating opportunities to replace logging in our native forests; supporting diversity and progressive development in our agricultural and horticultural industries; providing opportunities to engage young people in activities that encourage connection and hope for their future; and inspiring visitors to experience the diversity, prosperity and community of our absolutely incredible region.

I know of nowhere else that demonstrates the interconnectedness of social, environmental and economic issues as does the south west. Most of our social life and economy stems from our natural environment. Our industries of farming, mining and forestry follow directly from our landscape. Our tourism industry is best represented by the natural beauty of our forests, coastlines and biodiversity. People in the south west are influenced daily by their natural environment, if not through their employment then through their leisure time in fishing, camping, surfing or trailbike riding. We cannot focus on the economy without addressing the underlying support of our environment, nor try to fix the economy without addressing the inequity in our society.

I will be focusing on the principles that guide the Greens—that is, the pillars that support our entire structure of policies, and the tenets of our party. These are peace and nonviolence, ecological sustainability, participatory democracy, and social justice. These four concepts will guide my actions in this chamber. I will stand by these principles in each debate and decision we make, and I will use this guide to improve the wellbeing of the regional communities of the south west region.

My first idea in the recent election campaign was to promote and repeat the three word slogan, “Greens Support Farmers”. I did this because we do. Each time I said it, under my breath I would finish the line with, “because nobody else is.” During the past eight years, the Department of Agriculture and Food has become a shell of its former self, existing without the necessary research staff and resources to progress new ideas. Farmers and farming communities are vital to our state. They were here long before mining and will continue to be here long after. We cannot live without food. The Greens support healthy soil, access to clean water, small business, truth in labelling, the right to deny access for gas exploration, innovation in farming practices and the development of new products and new markets. Family farmers are being squeezed by banks, global corporations, trade agreements, the supermarket duopoly and onerous legislation that makes small operations nearly impossible. As a Parliament we need to support farmers and farming communities. Eighty per cent of our population lives in our metropolitan area, and they need to eat healthy, fresh, local food that improves their health and does not deplete our landscapes.

Good productive farmland has been chewed up and spat out by salinity, acidity, plantations and residential encroachment. There are many issues facing farming communities; we just need to listen. It is not difficult. It is not expensive. Write legislation that supports regional areas and people will choose to live there. We will continue to produce food and earn export income. Our farmers must have rights to refuse access for gas exploration or extraction. They must have the right to be compensated when genetically modified organisms escape from neighbouring properties and contaminate their crops. They must be able to receive a reasonable price for their produce.

Agriculture is one of my portfolios; another is forestry. Twenty years ago when the old-growth forest debate was gaining traction, environmental groups were vocal to claim that jobs were being lost in forestry due to mechanisation, not through conservation. But the protesters were tarred with the blame for lost jobs and here we are again, trying to stop commercial logging in native forests. This time, financial reports clearly demonstrate that the state is losing millions of dollars propping up native forest logging through our Forest Products Commission. This time, environmental actions such as the WA Forest Alliance’s campaign Forests for Life is not simply saying to close the forests; rather, it is saying to manage the forests. The forests can be used to create economic prosperity in the regions; develop industries, such as beekeeping and truffle production; build on ecotourism or agritourism to bring in visitors; increase sawlog plantations on land other than prime agricultural land; and increase value-adding to timber industries by supporting the craft wood markets and small mills that can obtain greater yields from the thinning of trees undertaken to improve the ecological health of the forest. We can think of better ways than the old ways. Research must be carried out to determine good management of our native forests that protects human populations, provides economic opportunities and ensures healthy forests.

Through my term I will be addressing small business concerns. Small business is vital to the continued health and growth of the WA economy. As a side point, I was a small business owner in Sydney before coming here, so I do recognise some of the issues small businesses go through. Not only is small business the largest employer, it is where new ideas are generated, and where resilience is found in the face of a changing climate. As a Parliament, we must ensure that regulation brought in to curtail poor practices brought on by the greed of global corporations does not curtail the innovation and enthusiasm of new enterprises. We must look at levelling the playing field so that new enterprises have access to the same supports and subsidies that are offered to larger players. Small business, particularly for the South West Region, is where our economic prosperity lies.

Another portfolio of mine, which does not quite fit with the finance and regional ones previously mentioned, is sport and recreation. Members may have noticed that the Greens do not often raise issues related to sport and rec. Many of us in the party take part in one sporting activity or another, but I have to say I rarely hear conversations about who won the footy—unless we are talking about our kids. The focus of sport seems more about getting out and getting active, not about winning or placing a bet. I am not an active person; my fitness seems to have stuck with me from 35 years ago when I practised martial arts to the level of black belt. It is likely I would be a bit rusty now. These days, my sporting activity is pretty much limited to watching my son play cricket or my daughter play soccer. My interest in the sport and rec portfolio will be aimed predominantly at supporting community activities to get people of all ages out there and active. There is plenty of research to demonstrate that sports and other recreational activities support people to have healthy and meaningful lives. Another thing is that I grew up with baseball, but I have found my true love in sport with cricket. With my new membership at the Western Australian Cricket Association, I hope to have many opportunities to sit back and enjoy the game and maybe even see some members there.

On 25 March—back to the election—when I realised I had won this seat, my first thoughts were concerned with the difference I would like to make. Working with a Labor government and drawing on my financial conservatism, I believed we would make a dramatic change to the wellbeing of Western Australians. I considered that my drive would be to assist the Labor government to enact good legislation that would carry us forward into a new era. All I aimed for was to make a positive difference. Then, the penny dropped. Through numerous conversations I came across the challenging realisation that by making Labor look good and not

seeking any personal or Greens recognition, my efforts would eventually undermine the Greens and thereby reduce our opportunities for continued electoral success and legislative change. I will lay my cards on the table. The Greens and Labor are not the same. Many of our ideas may overlap, but on many fronts the Greens take the issue just a few steps further. I ask members to think of protecting the forests, protesting at Beeliar wetlands, supporting Indigenous recognition and protection of cultural heritage, tireless lobbying for the National Disability Insurance Scheme and marriage equality.

I love it when I see Greens policy become legislation, but I now understand how important it is that we get some credit for this. There will always be a need for a progressive party to lead, or maybe drag, the other parties forward. Without the Greens, the old parties could remain with the old ways, the things they have always done, the people they have always catered to. The two-party adversarial system of democracy that we follow ensures that one side is determined to make the government look bad. No wonder the general population is cynical about politics. Let us leave these practices to the other house. In this house, let us work together to achieve outcomes that benefit Western Australians. Leave the gaming and bickering to the Legislative Assembly. We can be better than that. So there we have it: I intend to make a positive difference and my effort will make Labor look good. If all of us here in the Legislative Council work together, we may even improve the public perception of Parliament and politicians. I am expecting us to work for the good of all Western Australians to protect what natural environment we have left, and to manage our natural and economic resources sustainably so that our future and that of our children and grandchildren is pleasant, safe and equitable.

I ask you, my fellow Legislative Councillors, to please join me in this dream for the future of Western Australia. Each of you needs to consider the consequences of his or her actions. We have all come to this place with a hope of making a positive difference and a chance of being remembered for our contribution. We know that there is little money in the bank, so we must work with what we have to achieve the best outcome. As the mine construction boom petered off, we have had to refocus on our export industries of food, mineral resources and tourism, in addition to our internal markets and services industries. Think of mine construction as the icing on the cake; it may not be there any longer, but we still have the cake. Let us make the most of it and share it out equitably. During my campaign I met Sister Mary, a nun at St Brigid's convent in Bridgetown. Sister Mary, who volunteers in Perth working with homeless youths, told me how she says to the kids that "We can either argue over who has the biggest piece of the cake or we can sit down and enjoy our tea and cake and work out how we can make things better." That is what I propose we do. Rather than waste our time scoring points over one another, let us get stuck in and make things better and work toward consensus for positive outcomes. Let us invest in the projects that reduce our ongoing costs or that will bring in future revenue.

I will speak about one last thought to finish up. On the opening day of Parliament, in her response to the Governor's address, Hon Sally Talbot, MLC, spoke about women and the challenges they face. I recognise and understand her comments. A demonstration of this inequity can be seen right here in this chamber. On this side of the chamber, made up of the Greens and Labor, there are nine women and nine men, or 50 per cent women. On the other side there are only two women out of 18, or just over 10 per cent women. Throughout my life I, personally, have not felt serious gender-based discrimination and I do not intend to accept it in this house. I take each person on their merits and afford them the respect that I would offer to any individual, and I expect to be offered the same in return.

Thank you, Madam President, and thank you, everyone.

[Applause.]

**The PRESIDENT:** Members, we are going to continue with the Address-in-Reply. Before I give the call to Hon Colin Tincknell, I again remind members that this is an inaugural speech and we listen to that speech in silence out of respect to a new member of this chamber.

**HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West)** [5.31 pm]: Madam President, to begin, may I congratulate you on your election as President and also Hon Simon O'Brien on his election as Deputy President.

I would also like to honour the Whadjuk people from the Noongar nation and offer my respects to elders both past and present.

I also congratulate my fellow Pauline Hanson One Nation Legislative Council members, Hon Charles Smith to my left and Hon Robin Scott to my right, together with all other members who have been elected and re-elected to this Legislative Council, including my crossbench colleagues. Having been chosen by the people of the South West Region to be their voice in the Western Australian Parliament, I rise before you with a mixture of pride and honour. This is truly a humbling experience.

I also want to acknowledge and thank close to 180 000 people throughout Western Australia who voted for Pauline Hanson's One Nation in this recent state election and inform them that all One Nation Legislative Council members are here to work for Western Australia and not the current establishment. We will not buckle to political correctness or waver from our responsibilities to the majority of Western Australians, and we will not recoil from the tasks at hand, regardless of the criticism hurled at us from lobby groups for the

powerful left minority. Urgent change is needed and we will stand up and represent those forgotten Western Australians. We will research and inform ourselves of all relevant and important issues and then debate each piece of legislation before us before making a decision. I say to the people who elected us strongly and bravely to this new Parliament, that is our promise.

As a proud and slightly parochial Western Australian, I want to tell members a little bit about my background so they know who I am, the values I hold and what I stand for.

I was an 18-month-old baby when my parents, sisters and brother arrived in Fremantle in June 1955. Dad was a very determined carpenter and handyman. He went doorknocking to find work, so as a child, growing up, I did not see my dad all that much because he was always working. However, he instilled in me a very strong work ethic and family values, and I still hold that to this day. Mum found work as a nurse and within two years my mother and father had bought their first home in Claremont. That was a fair task for a young couple with four children to feed and clothe, with less than £300 in their hands when they had arrived in Western Australia two years earlier and with no real job prospects.

Those early days of growing up were free and easy. As a child I learnt the respect and dignity of work, after witnessing my parents deal with life's ups and downs and misfortunes and successes. It taught me to strive hard and to persist, and to never give up. When people have a job they tend to be not only happier, but also healthier and, from what I have seen, they are better prepared to handle life's challenges. They realise that this great life comprises a series of calculated risks, in which you may succeed in most but rarely in all. That has been the amazing story of my life.

My vague earliest memories of living in Perth were growing up in two tough migrant camps in Redcliffe and Graylands. Apparently, I was a bit of a rebel in those days. After moving to Claremont, I attended Claremont primary school where I was an average student. Fortunately, however, I excelled in sports and was good at most things. I made many great friends, including an Aboriginal boy called Jimmy Yarran from Bruce Rock and Narembeen, in country WA. He told me about the great Aboriginal footballers who came from that region, and that is where my love of Aussie Rules came from. All I wanted to do was play league football for Claremont, and nothing else—other than to learn more about my Aboriginal brothers and sisters who were mainly unseen in the suburbs of Perth when I was growing up in the early 1960s.

I attended Swanbourne High School, where things started to really click for me. I remember fondly to this day volunteering to do extra studies with my maths and English teachers, thankfully. My great love of history and geography was my driving force at school, and to this day it has not waned.

During my time at high school, my parents moved the family home to Woodlands. Claremont Football Club quickly signed me up and played me in an under-19s game—I was only 15 at the time—so that I would not be picked up by Subiaco Football Club because of our new address.

It was at about this time that my mum and I returned to England for an extended holiday via a ship cruise. As a young boy of 15 who loved history and geography, I travelled through many capital cities in Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti, Mexico, Panama, South America and the West Indies, and returned nine months later through Holland, Portugal, Senegal and South Africa. It was an incredible eye-opener to see the rest of the world. That was when I learnt about different cultures, languages and customs. It taught me great tolerance and patience. Considering the political problems that existed around the world at that time, I started to really appreciate how lucky we were living in Western Australia and holding the values that we cherish as a society. I still hold that fiercely today.

On my return to Perth I gained a position as a copyboy, working closely with the journalism fraternity and the advertising department at *The West Australian*. From here I gained an apprenticeship in photo engraving while attending Perth Technical College and achieving a Diploma in Graphic Arts, before becoming a printer by trade. It was during this time that I made my debut as a league player for Claremont in May 1974—a long-held dream—at the age of 19.

However, after eight years of being a printer, being the people person and communicator that I am, I realised that this kind of work was not for me, so I travelled to Europe and the United Kingdom, as people did in the 1970s, working my way around many, many countries before returning to WA and going back to *The West Australian* as an advertising executive. This opened up a whole new world to me. During those years, I was also lucky to play with some great sporting clubs, luckily winning many premierships in both football and cricket. I was fortunate enough to witness and play with and against many Western Australian and Australian greats. Once again, I learnt that if you really want to achieve long-term dreams, never let anyone put you down or discourage you, and if you work hard, you can achieve your aims and dreams with the support of great mentors and family.

Eventually I decided it was time for me to get out of my comfort zone, to lead and not just follow anymore, so I took on a new challenge as a coach in the WA Amateur Football Club, such was my burning ambition to win

a premiership as a coach. I achieved this in 1980, and later I captained the WA state side and led it to our first-ever national championship win against the Big V.

After the highs and lows of my football career, I went through a difficult phase in my life following the death of my mother. It was a very tough time for me, as mum had always been an inspiration to me. Family and close friends helped me recover and get my life back on track. I have never forgotten those great family values that mum taught me.

I am married to the most amazing woman I have ever met, and I have four adult children and four grandchildren, and some of them are here today. It has not always been easy to keep everyone on track—including myself—but my children have a wonderful balance in life between family and work, and a self-belief that if you want to achieve your aims and dreams in life, you can do it—it is up to you. My children and their families have become integral components of Australian society and it all started from the lessons they learnt and the examples they adopted from their grandparents all those years ago. A core belief of mine, which some Western Australians and Australians have forgotten, is the essential value of personal responsibility. Unfortunately, some people have not been assisted in this regard due to some recent government policies in this area, both federally and in this state of WA.

My 18-year career in the media as either a sales executive or manager was very exciting at times. You can get carried away. I remember it being very daunting one day when, with about an hour's notice, I was asked to host Paul McCartney and Bob Geldof to lunch, but that is the media for you! It is exciting and scary at times. That is where I also learnt that if you show real interest in people's current and long-term issues and have patience and respect, those people will one day return the favour to you. I may have been just working for a certain newspaper or certain radio station at the time, but that did not really matter much to my clients. What mattered most to them was me, as they had come to trust me with all their advertising needs, and even their TV or other promotional events. I was virtually acting as an advertising agent, even though I was representing *The West Australian*. It was evidence of another of life's great lessons: always be kind, genuine and honest, and demonstrate genuine integrity, regardless of whoever you are in contact with.

My two stints working for radio stations in Bunbury and Mandurah at senior levels were also great learning curves for me, because previous to that I had always lived in the city. Local media in the south west of this state is so vital to farmers, small businesses and people living in the bigger regional towns. I eventually opened up my own promotional and marketing company and, to my surprise, that decision drew me towards a different direction, one I had not anticipated. Firstly, it took me to the Central Desert regions of Australia, where I worked and lived with the remote Ngaanyatjarra people in 11 small communities, in my role of coordinating and delivering sports and recreational activities and health programs. Secondly, following this and other work I had done for the football industry in WA, I was asked by the AFL to become its first-ever chief executive officer of New Zealand AFL, based in Auckland. This was an amazing experience for my family and me, living and working in the birthplace of my wife and being involved in watching the AFL grow internationally. It was a bit of a passion of mine at the time. Unfortunately, my eldest son—who is here today and is now very healthy—was not healthy in those days, so I feel for the member who spoke earlier. He became very ill and we decided to return to Australia in haste. This was a particularly hard time for our family, but thankfully my wife, Sandra, got everyone through this tough period.

Not really knowing what to do with myself, I rang a friend who had previously organised for me to do some work in the desert, and he asked me to come up and work with him as a community relations person, training and employing Martu people from the Western Desert to work in a remote gold mine in the Pilbara. Many of those Martu people remembered me for the work I had done previously in the Central Desert, because those people are related, in so many ways. This was very rewarding work; the work was amazing. Seeing these Aboriginal training and employment programs develop from scratch with very little support at the time, and to now see these and other programs just like them emerge all over the Pilbara, employing thousands of Indigenous people, is an enormous credit to everyone involved in those days. The wonderful assistance and mentoring I received from the Martu elders of these remote communities has completely transformed me and my life, and my family's life, always for the better. Until entering this Parliament, this was the career I had pursued since that early opportunity presented itself. More recently, I have been working with communities and negotiating agreements with remote Indigenous people in the East Pilbara and northern goldfields.

I have learnt that the world's greatest commodity is its people. That is something we really need to concentrate on. So many of our governments' failed policies recognise the importance of the economy, the environment and other factors, but they fall way, way short when considering the short-term and long-term effects on their own people, our number one commodity.

Australia has, unfortunately, shipped off most of our manufacturing and industry jobs to other countries, while allowing our agricultural, forestry and tourism industries to also suffer. That has had a detrimental effect upon many millions of Australians. Pauline Hanson's One Nation WA calls for major structural change in the way our governments negotiate with big business and big unions, by putting the needs of the majority of Western Australians first and foremost, not the out-of-touch fringe minorities, as is so often the case.

The south west of this great state is where my main focus will be and I have been given the responsibility as its representative. To that end, I point out that there is so much to be done. The south west currently has a major crime and drug problem. The problem is not helped by the dearth of diligent health professionals and police officers in the region. Many people have lost their jobs and homes, including fly in, fly out workers in the Bunbury and Busselton regions, and there are family breakdowns and the emergence of major social problems, especially in big regional centres.

Many small businesses and farmers are struggling with their new long-term plans, and they are not getting the support they need from state and local government departments, with endless green and red tape slowing them down and, in some cases, stopping any economic progress whatsoever. Tourism has slowed and towns like Denmark and Walpole are not moving ahead as before, and business conditions are difficult. A major coal mine in Collie is under receivership and plans for the future are far from clear.

There should also be a WA regional fire brigade based in the south west. This is vital to the region's security and peace of mind. There are major infrastructure problems, with many roads in the agricultural and forest regions that are unsafe for locals and tourists alike. The South Coast Highway between Albany and Esperance carries big trucks and freight that should be on rail, causing major road damage and, in some cases, death by tragic accidents that could have been avoided with better planning.

With the support of the people of the south west I am proud to say, as their elected representative and Pauline Hanson's One Nation state leader, that we have the plans to help alleviate and fix these problems for a well thought-out and long-term sustainable future for the south west. However, in most cases, we will be seeking either government or bipartisan support to achieve these goals.

The south west is a major economic powerhouse in this state's economy and the local home-run businesses have been the cornerstone of our society in the bush. These need to be protected. In the early 2000s, mining, together with forestry, agriculture and tourism, was booming, as were Bunbury and Albany ports. On most fronts, activity has now slowed and young people aged between 16 and 24 are leaving for the city in large numbers. That needs to change if the south west is to grow and prosper in the future. As a state, we can turn this around, but we need absolute cooperation and determination to negotiate in good faith and win back the support of the people of the great south west of WA. The challenge is there for all of us.

Finally, I want to especially thank Pauline Hanson and James Ashby, both of whom came to see my colleagues and me sworn in to Parliament on Monday, as well as our federal colleagues Senator Brian Burston and WA's very own Senator Peter Georgiou. Pauline and the party showed confidence in me to lead the party here in WA and have given me the opportunity to represent the people of the South West Region. I will always be grateful for that wonderful opportunity. I personally have learnt a great deal from Pauline and James in a very short time and have received great encouragement from them to represent WA first and foremost—always. I also thank all the WA candidates and supporters who have helped Pauline Hanson's One Nation become a force to be reckoned with here in WA and thank them for their dedication, hard work and loyalty during the past six months.

I mentioned earlier that I am married to the most amazing woman I have ever met. It is now time to thank her and my incredible children, who are also here today. I want to thank them for the love and support they have given me during not only my wonderful and amazing life, but also especially the past six months of 18 to 20 hour days, sleepless nights, stress, anxiety et cetera—you name it. I do not enjoy elections that much. It is not just by chance that my life has turned for the better since I met the love of my life, my wife, Sandra. Her love, courage, strength, honesty, tolerance and, most of all, selflessness have guided my family and me to great heights, and I honour them all.

Our state of Western Australia is ready for positive change, where freedom of speech and courage in the face of adversity are admired because of the benefits that can bring to society. We are facing great challenges of a kind this state has faced before and overcome, and I will do whatever needs to be done in this place to help overcome the challenges that await us.

Madam President and Council members, I thank you.

[Applause.]

**The PRESIDENT:** Before I give the call to Hon Kyle McGinn, I note that this is an inaugural speech and ask that we again listen in silence to what he has to say to us.

**HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral)** [5.53 pm]: I would like to recognise and acknowledge the elders past, present and emerging on the land upon which we meet today and also the elders past, present and emerging on the land in the region I represent. I sincerely congratulate you, Madam President, on being elected President of the fortieth Legislative Council. Your achievement is more significant in the context of gender imbalance, which sadly still exists in the community generally and in this institution more particularly. It is testament to the contributions you have made to the people of Western Australia in your capacity as shadow minister in the previous Parliament and member for South Metropolitan Region since 2001 and the respect in which you are

held within these chambers and the broader community. Let me note that during your wonderful representation of the people of Western Australia, you never shied from supporting the battlers, the disadvantaged and the working class and the organisations that represent all these people.

I stand here today proud to be making my first contribution to this place and would like to express my gratitude again to Madam President, the clerks and the parliamentary staff, who have made me feel very welcome and have been helping me out whenever needed. To the people of the Mining and Pastoral Region, I say a huge thank you for your support of the WA Labor Party in the March 2017 election. The support from the community across the electorate was uplifting and provided me with the ongoing motivation to stay true to my beliefs and political principles whilst on the campaign trail. It further demonstrates that the people of regional Western Australia understand that the policies of WA Labor are not city-centric, but benefit all people across this great state. During the election, I had the pleasure of meeting many wonderful people across the region. I have lived in the Pilbara region for the last three years and have lived in remote and regional Western Australia for three-quarters of my life. In my time living and working in this electorate as a union organiser representing working men and women, I have witnessed time and again the impact that the economic downturn in Western Australia has had on local residents, who made a conscious decision to reside in the regional mining communities rather than opting for the fly in, fly out lifestyle forced upon many workers by multinational resource companies. It is vital that both the state and federal governments put their shoulder to the wheel and ensure that resource companies put back into the community what they take out by supporting the community infrastructure that is vital for ensuring the sustainability of remote mining towns. This means permanent jobs, preference for local employment, and training and education of our youth. It also means affordable housing, support for local contractors and the end to the reliance on a transient FIFO workforce. Let us go back to a time when multinational resource companies had a corporate responsibility for ensuring local sustainable communities and when governments backed this position to the hilt. Although royalties for regions provided a sugar hit, it did nothing to promote long-term sustainable jobs and employment opportunities for regional Western Australia. Local jobs for local workers is the key factor in getting our regional communities back.

The mining and pastoral electorate is the largest and most diverse electorate in Australia. It is the economic powerhouse that drives this nation and has many of Australia's largest mines and gas hubs. It is the leading region in the export of our mineral wealth. Despite the federal government's reliance on the mining and pastoral electorate to fill the federal government coffers, the people of my region perceive the federal Liberal government as a government that takes all but gives very little back. The Turnbull government feeds off the wealth generated by the Mining and Pastoral Region, whilst areas in my region have some of the most disadvantaged groups within Australia. This includes Third World conditions for some Indigenous communities, high youth unemployment and a casualised workforce, whereby many workers are employed by labour hire firms. It is time for the Turnbull government to give Western Australia back its share of the GST and allow the incoming Mark McGowan government the opportunity to fix the mess that Barnett, Nahan and Buswell have left in their wake.

Parliament should not be about the politicians, but about the debate of ideas and the policies the state government needs to implement in order to improve the life of everyday Western Australians. It is also important for newly elected politicians to articulate the underlying beliefs and principles that form the foundations of the ideas and policies they will promote in support of the people in their electorate or region.

I would like to take this opportunity to let the people of Western Australia know who I am, what I stand for and what my goals are as a member of the fortieth Legislative Council. I was born on 23 May 1988 at Royal Darwin Hospital in the Northern Territory. My parents, Sally Williams and David McGinn, bought a five-acre block of land on the outskirts of Darwin in a town called Humpty Doo. It was a three-bedroom, one-bathroom metal-clad shed without air conditioning, and there was not much in the way of luxuries. Material possessions came a distant last to the family values, which were instilled in my siblings and me from a very young age. I am the eldest of three children. I have two amazing sisters, Caddie McGinn, and my younger sister, Millie McGinn. Growing up, I could not have asked for a better family or a better place to grow up. My father always worked hard to ensure he could provide an income for the family whilst my mother raised us three kids. They had good working class principles. Life was tough, but there was always food on the table. My dad took his cooking trade offshore and became an Australian seafarer, working away for four weeks at a time. It was difficult to grow up with dad missing a lot of important milestones, and for much of the time my mother did the job of two parents. She never complained and she never missed taking me to training and games for my local rugby league team, the Litchfield Bears. When I was 14, we relocated to Mt Gambier in South Australia to be close to my mother's family. Whilst attending Grant High School in South Australia I soon realised that school was not really for me. I was obsessed with becoming a chef and joining the workforce to earn a living. My parents had instilled at an early age the value of hard work. I was lucky that the student counsellor, Mr Bell, identified this and managed to get me a traineeship through a local restaurant called Charlie's. At first I thought I had made a massive mistake. I was stuck in a corner of the kitchen scrubbing mounds of plates, cutlery and filthy burnt pots, and all the while getting yelled at for every little mistake and breath I took. After I had done my time in the scullery I was finally,

bit by bit, given jobs on the tools. I believe that spending time in my grandma Marj's kitchen as a child and seeing my father cook resulted in the passion to follow in their footsteps.

I turned 18 and decided I wanted to see more of Australia, seek out better restaurants and continue learning the cooking trade. Leaving home was made a little easier for me when I had my first taste of what a bad employer was while I was working at Charlie's. I was forced to work overtime without pay and the employer had the audacity of calling it "love time". It shows that the employment model of wage theft commenced long before it became popular with the likes of 7-Eleven, Caltex and labour hire firms such as Request Group and Construct Labour Solutions used by Gerry Hanssen and the building developer Finbar. If I complained, I would be penalised financially by getting fewer shifts on the roster. Being young and naive I thought that this surely could not be the norm for an employee in the workforce. Surely, this employer was simply the odd one out. How wrong I was.

Not long after my eighteenth birthday I decided to pack my suitcase and move to the Gold Coast. I ended up living with my best friend Sammy Jo Gordon and I must take this chance to thank him now for pestering me to move to the Gold Coast, because if I had not made that decision, I fear I would not be standing here with you all today and would not have the life that I have had thus far. I found work in a Mediterranean franchise restaurant called Toscanis in Helensvale on the Gold Coast. The next 18 months were tough. I experienced many downs and many disappointments. I lived over one hour and 45 minutes away from my job. It took me two buses and a train to get to work each day. If I finished my shift just five minutes later than expected, which happened quite often, it meant an additional one-hour wait for my train and getting home at 1.00 am. As any worker who is serving or has served an apprenticeship would know, apprentices are constantly under pressure. My wages were low and regardless of the hours I worked, I barely made enough money to survive from week to week. I often found myself begging my parents for money just to cover the rent. For that, I felt deep shame. Despite this I was always positive and believed there was a light at the end of the tunnel. A big step forward for me was the pay rise I was expecting in the third year of my apprenticeship, or so I thought. It was around this time that the Howard government introduced WorkChoices and workplace agreements. I had not taken much interest in politics at that time, as I had never understood the link between bad working conditions and bad workplace laws. Boy, was I going to get an education. My boss sat me down without representation and instead of that pay rise I was expecting to about \$15.50 an hour with penalty rates, he handed me a contract that stipulated that I would receive \$12 flat an hour and said that if I did not like it, the door was over there. I also have to mention that a fellow apprentice who was under 18—she was 17 at the time—was dealt with in the same way. Her parents were not even invited to the meeting. Being young, broke and away from my family, I felt bullied by my employer, but most of all let down by a Liberal government that I had mistakenly thought was there to represent ordinary Australians. I was an Australian apprentice and had been hung out to dry. To make matters worse, not long after this betrayal by my employer, I was hit with another blow. I arrived at work one day to discover that the restaurant I worked at was all locked up and the boss had run away. When I rang the boss to find out what was going on, he told me that the business had no money and because the business had been mismanaged my annual leave and sick leave that I had accrued during my employment was gone and I would never see it. I also found out that they had misappropriated my superannuation payments. Feeling like my world had just imploded overnight, I was left running the kitchen for the franchise whilst the business was in limbo. It is at this time of my life things took a turn for the better.

At this point in time there was an upturn in work in the oil and gas sector and an increase in job opportunities. In the great tradition of Australian seafaring, I found myself working as a cook with my father in the offshore oil and gas industry. At that time of my life it was a massive honour and privilege to be given the opportunity to work side by side with my father and become a second-generation Australian seafarer, something I am very, very proud of. I entered the industry with no idea of what it was like, and I knew even less about what it was like to work under a union-negotiated enterprise agreement. I quickly learnt the value of backing my mates in and knew I did not have to look over my shoulder to see if they had my back covered, because they always did. I joined the Maritime Union of Australia when I joined my first ship. The ship was called the *MV Markab*. I still remember the day I received my seaman's book from the union. Over time I learned the true value of having a seaman's book and that exploitative work practices were just as relevant in the offshore sector as in the onshore hospitality industry. The key difference was that now I had a union to support me and my mates in addressing the wrongs and ensuring that employees had a voice.

Nobody enters the workplace intending to be a union delegate. It is the outcome of workers wanting to right the wrongs, to stand up for their mates and to ensure that the collective voice of workers can match the money and resources of the labour hire firms, vessel operators and multinational oil and gas companies for whom we work. The oil and gas industry, just like every industry in this country, has its share of exploitative work practices, bad safety and job insecurity. If it were not for the MUA, working as an offshore cook in the oil and gas industry would be no different from working for Toscanis. If it were not for the MUA, there would be no jobs for Australian seafarers, as the likes of Malcolm Turnbull and Michaelia Cash would have exported our jobs to foreign nationals who are paid as little as \$2 an hour. The federal Liberal government has consistently attacked

the rights of Australian seafarers to work on the Australian coast to appease their multinational masters such as Chevron and Alcoa. Meanwhile, a succession of state governments has allowed our state shipping to fall into disrepair. This is something I will lobby to change. My narrative about the problems facing workers in the maritime industry is one that can be applied to nearly every industry in Western Australia. As a state Labor politician, I will not be hiding from issues on the basis that some of them are influenced by federal legislation. I believe it is incumbent on me to lobby for change to workplace laws that affect every working man and woman in Western Australia. I believe it is my responsibility to argue for improvements in workplace health and safety, for industrial laws that protect the wages of Western Australian workers, for laws that regulate labour hire firms, for laws that stop foreign nationals from taking Australian jobs whilst Western Australians are dumped on the unemployment scrapheap. It is my responsibility to argue for the promotion of training opportunities for young workers and for policies that will fill the workshops on the Kwinana strip and Henderson. It is my responsibility to ensure that companies exploiting our resources use WA content in their construction and ongoing operations and to ensure that builders and subcontractors who break workplace laws are prevented from securing future government contracts.

Australia is an island nation that needs to have a thriving maritime industry to ensure border security, job opportunities for Australian seafarers and business opportunities for Australian shipping companies. The federal government has simply neglected the Australian maritime industry. It has deliberately sabotaged Australian content because of its misguided and narrow-minded ideology and philosophy. The major towns and cities of Western Australia are bordered by desert to the east and water to the west. Our maritime sector is an integral part of our economy. It should not be abandoned and left to be run by foreign business; it should be brought back into the hands of Australian companies and Australian workers. It is ironic that the Liberal Party, which looks to the United States for guidance and leadership on how it should manage its economy, chooses to ignore a fundamental piece of legislation at the heart of the United States maritime economy. The Jones Act ensures that US-built and US-flagged vessels are the only vessels allowed to operate on the US coast. We need similar legislation in Australia to rebuild an industry that is vital to Australia's long-term economic, social and industrial interests. We need to ensure that we have Australian content in Australian workplaces, but it is equally important that we deal with the issues that adversely affect workers throughout Australia. I want to bring members back to my workplace experiences.

In 2012 I was employed by Programmed Marine and worked on a rig called the *Stena Clyde* in Bass Strait. Following a period of leave, I arrived at the start of my swing in Melbourne and immediately sensed that something terribly wrong had occurred on board the rig. We had our flight delayed and were told that there had been an accident on the *Stena Clyde*. That afternoon, we were flown out to the rig, still unaware of the seriousness of the situation we were heading into. The communication from management, as normal, was very poor. Upon arrival, I quickly went to the galley to see my comrades who had swung onto the rig a couple of days earlier. When I saw them, I could see the horror in their eyes. An incident had occurred on the drill floor involving two workers: Peter Meddens, 32 years old, and Barry Denholm, 60 years old. Both workers died on the drill floor earlier that day—rest in peace Peter and Barry. They were killed at work doing what every worker is doing—trying to provide for their family. Peter had a young family. His kids will grow up without a father and his wife will grow old without her husband. Barry left behind his wife, who will also grow old without her husband.

What happened next changed me forever. The *Stena Clyde* was a chaotic place to be. When Peter and Barry were killed at their workplace, one was decapitated and one was crushed to death. The rig operator called upon the cooks and stewards to provide medical assistance to the on-board medic in a valiant but ultimately failed attempt to save the lives of both workers. After dealing with the horror of seeing their mates killed in a violent and totally avoidable incident, in my opinion, the vessel operator ordered the cooks back to the galley to serve lunch. There was no regard for providing workers with a safe place of work prior to them being killed. There was an equal lack of regard for looking after the welfare of workers who had to witness the gore of two violent deaths whilst trying to save the lives of those two men. The same employer denied co-workers of the deceased union representation in the ongoing investigation of the workplace fatalities. The employer hindered and obstructed union safety officers from coming on board to undertake an independent investigation. No amount of counselling can take away the numbing impact that those fatalities have had on me. It further reinforced in me the obligation that I felt I had to step up to represent my fellow workers and to do everything in my power to stop another family losing their loved one at work on my watch. Similarly, it provided further motivation for me to step up as an organiser for the Maritime Union of Australia, and now as a member of Parliament.

The fatalities on board the *Stena Clyde* convinced me of the need to have laws that act as an effective deterrent to employers who put profits before workplace safety. The recent spate of fatalities in the WA building and construction industry is even more reason why we need to have effective and industry best practice occupational health and safety regulations in WA and effective regulators who are prepared to do their job and introduce manslaughter laws that properly punish business owners and managers who kill workers on a site or at a workplace they manage.

Since October 2015, we have witnessed a fatality in the WA building and construction industry, on average, every nine weeks. It is no wonder that we have such a spate of killings on our building sites when we have an OHS regulator that is little more than a toothless tiger. Worksafe has no office in the Pilbara despite it being the economic hub of Australia. Workers are left to call a hotline and report anything that is wrong or unsafe in their workplace. They are then subject to no feedback from Worksafe and have to apply for freedom of information to get any feedback. It is an absolute shame. Shame on the Barnett government for stripping Worksafe of its capacity and will to regulate safety throughout WA, particularly in the Mining and Pastoral Region. The Barnett government dismantled Worksafe's Karratha office despite a spate of workers being killed on mine and construction sites in the Pilbara, including a fatality on Hanssen's Pelago Apartments project. When a German backpacker was killed in yet another workplace fatality on a Hanssen-Finbar construction site in Adelaide Terrace, Worksafe turned up to the site more than an hour after the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union's safety officials, and 30 minutes after the police. Hanssen and the owner of Hanssen, which builds 34 per cent of all apartments in Perth, refused to stop the concrete pour despite having a worker fall 13 floors to her death. Hanssen's management team had allowed the young backpacker to stand on a plastic bucket whilst balancing precariously over a service shaft. There was no harness and no safe place for the worker to anchor a harness to, even if she wore one. Hanssen's projects have been a deathtrap for 15 years and remain a deathtrap to this day. The owner of Hanssen has no fear of Worksafe inspectors shutting him down and he relies upon a transient and exploitable workforce made up of backpackers and labour hire employees to build his projects. To show the contempt that employers have for workers on their projects, I will read out an email that Gerry Hanssen sent to the family of the young German backpacker who fell to her death —

Dear family of Marianka.

Our sincere condolences for the sad loss of Marianka.

Be assured we will accommodate her sister and husband with all there needs while here in Perth .

Marianka was a lovely ,

well respected,dedicated worker and a valuable member in our company.

Very sadly in a moments lack of concentration and dedicated to do the right job she omitted to harness up and secure herself.

She did this job for 15 floors impeccably and a 30 second lack of concentration caused this fall.

Only God would know the answer.

All 300 people on site ,their thoughts and prayers are with her.

Well had a Buddhist monk bless her spirit on the place of the accident next day.

He said to all of us,if her spirit could talk what would she say to all of us, his answer was, Marianka would say I AM SORRY FOR LETTING YOU DOWN to my mum,dad,family,friends and workmates.

We all wish you lots of strength and sympathy at this time of this sad loss.

If there was ever a fatality that highlights the need to bring in industrial manslaughter laws, it is this latest Hanssen fatality. Hanssen had the audacity to blame a worker, who had less than 10 weeks of construction experience, for her death. But what does Hanssen have to fear from Worksafe? Absolutely nothing. This is the same organisation that still has not finalised its investigation and report into the workplace deaths of two young Irish nationals who were crushed to death by a tilt-up panel on a Jaxon construction site less than one kilometre from where Marianka was killed on the Hanssen site. We need industrial manslaughter laws but we also need a regulator that will do its job of protecting workers. Worksafe needs more inspectors to pro-actively monitor safety in WA workplaces and on building sites in particular. We need to ensure that Worksafe inspectors have industry experience. We need to ensure that Worksafe prosecutes employers who fail to comply with OHS laws and not wait until somebody gets killed at work. We need to clean out the Worksafe hierarchy who have failed in their obligation to properly manage safety in this state.

There are people in my life who, without their support and encouragement, I would not be standing here today. I will try to name you all and I apologise if I have missed anyone, but I do send you my thanks. To my grandparents Marj, Alan, Ducka and Clair, my nanna, Lorna, and late poppa, Jim, whom I miss with all my heart. Without my grandparents, I would struggle to be here today. They have been a great support base to me. To my mum and dad, your love has been overwhelming. To my sisters, Caddie and Millie, I could not have asked for two more beautiful sisters. I want to note that my youngest sister, Millie, battled cancer when she was 15 years old. She had Hodgkin's disease. My sister had the fight of her life. Millie, you are the strongest person I know. Millie is in remission still today. Caddie has just had her first child and my first niece, Olivia. She is a beautiful and healthy baby, and I know you will be a great mother, Caddie. I thank my family—uncles, aunts and cousins—for all your support over the years.

To the Maritime Union of Australia and its members, I thank you all for your support over the many years I have been working in the offshore industry, and all the support I received when I was an organiser in the north west. To Chris Cain, I thank you for your respect and the fact that you gave me responsibility and trusted me immensely. You have always believed in me, and that kept me inspired. Thank you, Christy. To my former work colleagues at the MUA WA branch, Gak, Jack, Spud, Danny, Adrian, Jeff, Elyane, Luke, Sarah, Sandra, Georgia, Kylee and Paul, I thank you all. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you.

To the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union and its members, I thank you for your hard efforts throughout the election campaign and your ongoing commitment to workplace safety and better working conditions. To Mick Buchan, I thank you for all your friendship and support.

To Sarah Maguire, thank you. To Sue and Kim Stubbs, my adoptive parents of the Pilbara, you are both amazing. To Tamara Stubbs, your friendship has been of huge value to me and your passion and drive will continue to inspire me. To Clayton Brown, you are a through and through union man with a heart of gold. You truly are a comrade for life.

To all the candidates in the Mining and Pastoral Region, Darren Forster in Kalgoorlie, Shane Hill in North West Central, Kevin Michel in the Pilbara and Josie Farrer in the Kimberley, and, in the upper house, Hon Steve Dawson, Peter Foster and Chris Mousley, I thank you all for the campaign that we ran in the Mining and Pastoral Region.

To Adam Wall, Dave Abbot, Jason Leach, Josh Marmion, Kristen and Yianni and their beautiful family, John Peters, and all the members of the ALP branch in Hedland and Karratha, my thanks to you all. To Tracey Heimberger, your vigour in the campaign across the Pilbara region was second to none. I thank you for that. To David Fox, Paul Ferreira from the CFMEU, who showed up day in, day out to letterbox-drop throughout the campaign, Amy and Ant Man, Scooter, Stephen Thor and Deb, and Deana and Ben Lawler, and to Tim Downs and Des Harding for their support throughout my career, thank you.

There is someone here today who I want to say a special thankyou to. She is sitting up in the gallery. Beccy, we met one year ago. From the moment we met, I knew you were special. Over the 12 months we have been together, my love for you has continued to grow. You have supported me in all the decisions I have made, even if you do not agree with them. You are my better half. You make me better as a person. You are my soulmate. For all your support, I say thank you.

I hope the speech I have given today helps people to understand who I am, where I come from and what I stand for. I am honoured to have this opportunity to represent the Mining and Pastoral Region and excited to get out into the Kalgoorlie electorate. I do not expect Kalgoorlie to be easy, but as members might have guessed by now, I am not about taking the easy road and am up for the challenge. Before I take my seat I would also like to thank WA Labor, especially all the rank and file party members who turned out during the election campaign, because together they make this party what it is today. Every day, we are making a difference. Thank you.

[Applause.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Ken Baston**.

## LOAN BILL 2017

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Stephen Dawson (Minister for Environment)**, read a first time.

### *Second Reading*

**HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Environment)** [6.24 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

Borrowing for general public purposes, as distinct from borrowing by statutory authorities with borrowing powers in their enabling acts, must be authorised by Loan Acts. This bill seeks a new Loan Act authorisation of \$11 billion to meet the estimated borrowing requirements of the consolidated account until 30 June 2021.

The large authorisation reflects the financial estimates for consolidated account borrowing under the policy settings of the previous government, consistent with the financial forecasts detailed in the *2016–17 Pre-Election Financial Projections Statement* released on 9 February 2017, with an allowance added for likely borrowings in 2020–21. This will be the largest Loan Act authorisation on record and reflects the state of the books inherited from the previous government.

It is a matter of public record that the previous government brought forward no less than four loan bills during two terms of office, obtaining approval for a total of \$23 billion in consolidated account borrowing during that time. This bill seeks the authority for the consolidated account to borrow a further \$11 billion to meet the financing needs of the previous government's policy settings.

In opposition, we were highly critical of the huge increase in borrowings incurred by the previous government. We continue to be concerned with the direction and magnitude of the state's public sector borrowings. It is the government's intention that as it goes through the process of formulating its first budget—to be presented to the house on 7 September 2017—it will reduce the need to draw on the full authorisation sought in this bill. In the meantime, until the government can start to implement much-needed fiscal repair as part of the coming budget, it is essential that the Parliament approve this increase in the central borrowing limit to ensure adequate access to the funds required to continue to provide public services and infrastructure investment.

Members of this house who were here during the last Parliament will recall that the previous government's last Loan Bill, now the Loan Act 2016, sought a \$1.7 billion increase in the cumulative loan limit applying to the consolidated account. That authorisation was expected to provide sufficient financing of the deterioration in revenue detailed in the 2016–17 midyear review and be sufficient to cover borrowing requirements to 30 June 2017. It included a \$1.2 billion buffer for any further deterioration in central revenue that may emerge during 2016–17. As expected, the \$1.2 billion buffer is all that will remain available by the end of this financial year. It is expected that this residual borrowing will be utilised during July, exhausting the remaining loan authorisation.

Accordingly, it is essential that the Loan Bill 2017 be passed without delay and by no later than the end of this financial year to provide sufficient lead time to meet borrowing requirements in August and beyond. In this regard, the bill cannot be left to pass beyond 30 June 2017 as both houses will be in recess for the month of July.

For that reason, Madam President, members in the other place suspended so much of that chamber's standing orders as was necessary to facilitate the expeditious debate and passage of the bill and give the Legislative Council time to deal with the bill by 29 June 2017.

The urgent nature of this bill should not be a surprise to the house and is consistent with the observation made by the then shadow Treasurer on 15 September last year when he noted that as that bill was expected to carry the consolidated account through to 30 June 2017, and I quote —

It is clear that whoever forms government after the 2017 election ... one of the very first things that government will do is to bring in yet another loan bill, subject to the movements in our revenue that happen from time to time. Bear in mind that this loan bill will get us through to 30 June 2017, and a new government, regardless of its political colour, will turn its mind to this in 2017.

As with all previous Loan Act authorisations, any unused borrowing authority not drawn during the period for which it is expected to apply will remain available for borrowing requirements into the future. I remind the house that loan bills are administrative in nature. The borrowings authorised by the current bill were reflected in the *2016–17 Pre-election Financial Projections Statement* and there are no additional costs in excess of the approved forward estimates associated with the passage of this authority.

In accordance with clause 4 of the bill, the proceeds of all loans raised under this authority must be paid into the consolidated account. The moneys will then be advanced to agencies as required by appropriations in the budget. Details of consolidated account appropriations are laid out in the budget papers, which will be tabled in this house in September and be examined in detail by members through the estimates hearings process as part of the passage of the budget bills. In accordance with clause 5 of the bill, in addition to seeking the authority for loan raisings, the bill also permanently appropriates money from the consolidated account to meet principal repayments, interest and other expenses of borrowings under this authority.

Pursuant to standing order 126(1), I advise that this bill is not a uniform legislation bill. It does not ratify or give effect to an intergovernmental or multilateral agreement to which the government of the state is a party, nor does this bill by reason of its subject matter introduce a uniform scheme or uniform laws throughout the commonwealth.

I commend the bill to the house and table an explanatory memorandum.

[See paper 231.]

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

*House adjourned at 6.31 pm*

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