



# **Parliamentary Debates**

**(HANSARD)**

THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT  
FIRST SESSION  
2013

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

Thursday, 23 May 2013

# Legislative Council

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THE PRESIDENT (Hon Barry House) took the chair at 10.00 am, and read prayers.

## BUSSELTON WATER SUPPLY — CHLORINATION

### *Petition*

HON ADELE FARINA (South West) [10.02 am]: I present a petition containing 973 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 request that the Legislative Council *take immediate action* on this *Petition*. Petition 79, *our former petition* containing *5532 signatures* was tabled on 26 June 2010, *prior to the chlorination* of our water supply. *Since the chlorination* of our water supply there is *significant distress, illness and injury to the community*. Our community has enjoyed *106 years of chemical free water without ill effect* and *vehemently oppose* Busselton Water (Board and Executive) *imposing chlorine* and other toxic chemicals on it *under the guise of public health*.

Busselton Water's (BW) public comments that *"This decision is too important for the community to decide"* and its failure to involve the community in decisions related to the treatment of their water supply *ignores the recommendations of the 2004 and subsequent 2011 Australian Drinking Water Guidelines*. This stance: denies natural justice; withholds human rights; and contradicts the many international treaties enacted to protect individual's rights on matters impacting their health and wellbeing, treaties to which Australia is a signatory.

Your petitioners respectfully request the Legislative Council *call on the Minister for Water to direct BW to immediately cease chlorination, reinstate the UV disinfection systems and recommence the previous disinfection schedule*. We ask that this be done *pending a Parliamentary Inquiry* because *since the chlorination* of our water supply *hundreds of people have medical conditions from ingestion of or exposure to the chlorinated water*. We ask that the Parliamentary Inquiry investigation include:

- the validity of a case study that detected *Naegleria fowleri* in cooling ponds and downstream from a nuclear power plant in France as an appropriate comparison to Busselton's ground water and closed reticulation system as the underpinning justification that there is a high risk of the pathogen entering the water supply;
- the soundness of the risk assessment analysis, findings and reports of Consultants Hunter Water Australia;
- the merit of replacing the UV systems with chlorination plants when many pathogens are chlorine resistant;
- the merit in using a disinfection remedy to rectify possible engineering hazards in the reticulations system;
- the health risks of adding chlorine and other toxins to our specific water supply with its unique water chemistry;

As with Petition 79 we ask that if an expansion of the UV system alone is *proven* to be inadequate that it be *augmented by a health supportive alternative*. And your petitioners as in duty bound, will every pray.

[See paper 279.]

## SCHOOLS — YEAR 7 STUDENTS

### *Petition*

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural) [10.05 am]: I present a petition containing 4 023 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 compulsory moving of Year 7 students to high school from 2015 onwards.

This decision has been made without consultation with country people. The government has only considered education in making this decision, they have not considered the social, emotional, sporting, mental and economic effects, all of which will have devastating consequences on country towns and people.

Your petitioners therefore respectfully request the Legislative Council to recommend country schooling remains as is, with adequate teaching staff to teach the year seven national curriculum in our Primary Schools.

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

[See paper 280.]

## MINISTER FOR EDUCATION — SOCIAL MEDIA SITE

### *Motion*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [10.07 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house expresses its concern at the inappropriate use of social media by the Minister for Education and condemns the government for applying one disciplinary standard to the staff of the Department of Education and no disciplinary standard to the minister.

This is a motion in two parts. The first part is the house expressing its concern at the inappropriate use of social media by the Minister for Education. As a leader in education and as the minister responsible for standards and integrity in the teaching profession and in our schools, the minister does not have the luxury of being “silly”, which is the explanation that he gave to the public of Western Australia last Thursday for his use of social media. Last Thursday a story was made public about how a young man, who we are advised was around 16 years of age at the time, had posted a photo of himself and another person on his Facebook site. I am conscious of who might still be in the public gallery. In that photo, the young man exposed his genitals.

People not familiar with Facebook might not know but when someone makes a post—that is when they put something on their Facebook site—everybody who is a friend or who has access to that site can if they choose “like” the photo. This 16-year-old posted this photo on his Facebook site. A number of people indicated that they liked it and included in that list of people who indicated that they liked the photo, and therefore whose name appeared in the list of people who liked the photo, was Hon Peter Collier, the Minister for Education. The way the story unfolded last Thursday is that the minister was asked about it by a journalist from Channel Seven and he admitted that he had done that. He said that he had made a “silly mistake” and that he did not realise what was in the photo, with words to the effect that he had viewed the photo using his mobile phone and that in so doing he did not see the full extent of the photo. He said he had made a “silly mistake” and it was an important lesson to us all about the appropriate use of social media.

My point is this: as the Minister for Education—at the time that he liked this post he was the Minister for Training, not the Minister for Education—the minister had responsibility for standards and integrity among those teachers and other staff working in the training sector, in TAFE facilities, for example, who deal directly with many young people. As the person responsible in the Parliament and the government for the standards and integrity of those teachers, the minister does not have the luxury of being silly about the use of social media. As the minister responsible for standards and integrity in that profession, he does not have the luxury of being cavalier, reckless or not paying due attention to the detail of the things that he likes on social media. I use social media. I use Facebook and Twitter. I am a busy person. The minister is much busier than me and I know what it is like to flick through quickly and look at things and not see the total picture. I understand that; it can happen. But my argument is this: a minister of the Crown who is responsible for the standards and integrity in education, whether it is in the training sector or in our schools, does not have the luxury of not paying due attention to the detail of what he is liking. If people are busy and cannot pay due attention to what they are liking, do not use it. That is the best solution. Do not use it. If people cannot trust themselves that in a moment of just not thinking, which happens to us all and can happen a lot to busy people, that they will not make sure that what they are liking is appropriate, do not use social media. The person for whom the buck stops for standards and integrity does not have the luxury of making that kind of silly mistake.

Social media, and Facebook in particular, has got a lot of attention for how young people can inappropriately leave themselves open to either cyberbullying or other sorts of things that are not good for young people. On Saturday in *The Weekend West*, the principal of Gilmore College in Kwinana, Carolyn Cook said —

Facebook is the biggest enemy facing WA schools, says a principal whose ban on mobile phones and iPods contributed to a big reduction in student suspensions in a southern suburbs high school.

Ms Cook was dealing with cyberbullying. That is not what this event is about, but I am making the point that the inappropriate use of Facebook is front and centre in the policy and practice of schools, the training sector and educational professionals. With that in mind, the Department of Education has a set of guidelines about social media in schools. That document is titled “Social Media in Schools: Guidelines for school staff using social media and other technologies”. It is published by the Department of Education and is on its website. The document states, in part —

As a school staff member, you are subject to a level of public scrutiny over and above most other public sector employees ...

As the Minister for Education or the Minister for Training, the minister is subject to a level of public scrutiny over and above most other users of social media. The guidelines document goes on to say —

Of particular concern is the ease with which professional boundaries and appropriate staff–student conduct relationships can be breached.

...

You should not engage in social interaction with students through social networking sites unless there is an educationally valid context. In the event of a complaint or allegation being received by the Department, the responsibility will be on you to demonstrate that the use was appropriate.

... you must not place yourself or your students at risk. The context, purpose and potential impact of using these applications —

Social media —

should always be considered. You must maintain a professional tone in all communications with students.

This was the Minister for Training and Workforce Development. He was not the teacher of this young man and there was not a teacher–student relationship but he was the minister with responsibility for the integrity and standards of dealing with young people. The person who posted the inappropriate photo was a young person; he was around 16 at the time. The guidelines go on to say —

You must always conform to the professional boundaries of staff–student relationships.

...

The intent of these procedures is to clarify the professional boundaries to protect you and your students from potential misinterpretation ...

It requires a greater vigilance by the minister in charge of education. It requires a higher standard and a much greater concentration by the Minister for Education. If he cannot do that, do not use it. The minister does not have the luxury of not looking at the detail of a photo posted by a 16-year-old boy, because what the minister liked was inappropriate and he is supposed to be where the buck stops for professional standards.

Yesterday, I asked a question of the minister about the issue. The phrase I used in the question was about his “inappropriate use of social media”. The minister was at pains to say two things. The first was that he understands that I do not believe his explanation that he did it accidentally. The second thing he was at pains to say was that it was not inappropriate. Yes, it was. If it was not, why did he apologise? If it was not, why was there a story at all? There was a story and the minister apologised because it was inappropriate. The minister says that he did not realise it was inappropriate and that he made a silly mistake and there is a lesson for us all. If that photo was not inappropriate, there would have been absolutely no need for the minister to apologise at all because there was nothing wrong with it.

The second part of the motion condemns the government for applying one disciplinary standard to the staff of the Department of Education or the Department of Training and Workforce Development but no disciplinary standards to the minister. If a member of school staff, a teacher or a staff member in a training facility had been confronted with the allegation that they had liked, in a Facebook sense, a photo in which a 16-year-old boy was exposing his genitals, or indeed a 16-year-old girl, it would not be left to the staff member to say, “Oops, I’m sorry. I made a silly mistake. I’ve learnt my lesson.” A disciplinary investigation would have been undertaken, possibly in the first instance—it might have ended there—by the line manager in the school or the TAFE or by the principal. It could have been, even at the first instance, referred to the Department of Education’s Standards and Integrity Directorate. The decision about whether it would be referred would be a discretionary decision made by the line manager or the principal. In exercising that discretion, the line manager or principal would have to take into account a range of things listed in the Department of Education’s publication titled “An Employee Guide to the Department’s Disciplinary Process: Respondents’ Rights and Responsibilities”. They are set out there. The context needs to be taken into account, such as whether the person demonstrated remorse and whether the person admitted it. There is a whole list of things that go to exercising discretion when making a decision

about whether to refer it or what further action to take. That is as it should be because there are always different circumstances at play. What happened here? What happened is the journalist fronted the minister early in the morning, certainly before 10.00 am, with the photo and asked him, and he provided his explanation. In the other place, a question was asked of the Premier about when the Premier knew about this and whether the Premier accepted the minister's explanation. What the Premier told the other place was that the first he heard about the story was about half an hour before the news bulletin on Channel Seven went to air at 6.00 pm and that he had not seen the photo. The line manager of an education staff member in a school or training facility is either a senior member of managerial staff in that facility or the principal. Who is the line manager or principal here? It is the Premier. Who is it that ministers need to hold themselves to account to in respect to the standards and behaviour that they exhibit? It is the Premier. What happened here? In this case the Premier tells us that he did not even look at the photo. He did not satisfy himself that the minister's explanation could possibly be true or not true because he did not look at the photo! I have been shown a copy of the photo. This is why I find it hard to accept the minister's explanation, although I note that he is entitled to his explanation. What is inappropriate about the photo, if I can use this expression, is "front and centre". There does not seem to be any question in my mind about not being able to see it. Nevertheless, for the sense of the debate, let us accept the minister's explanation that he was looking at it on his mobile phone and he did not see the entire photo. Is that not a matter that a school principal or a line manager would need to ascertain for themselves was plausible or not? But in this case the Premier has not even looked at the photo; not even the pixelated version that covers the things that are inappropriate. He has not even looked at it! When did the Premier find out about it? About 5.30 in the afternoon; but the minister had already given the public explanation before 10 o'clock in the morning. How is it that there has been any investigation by the line manager or the principal in this case? There has not. The line manager or the principal in a school setting may well have heard the explanation provided and said, "That's fine; I accept it. In all of the circumstances I accept that that was an accident. Please don't do it again, but I accept that it was an accident." Except, of course, that we are talking about a 16-year-old boy and we are talking about the exposure of genitals. I think those two things would have meant any principal or line manager worth their salt would have had to flick it up to the Standards and Integrity Directorate just to cover themselves, if nothing else, because that is serious and could be open to misinterpretation.

So, there is one standard for teachers, there is one standard for the staff in our TAFE facilities and our schools, and an entirely different standard, or in fact no standard, applied to the minister because the person to whom this minister is accountable did not even look at the photo! The Premier says he did not even know about this story until 5.30 in the afternoon, after the minister went out, before 10 o'clock in the morning, to provide the explanation. If we are to accept the tone of the explanation, he had moved on. The tone of the response I got in response to the questions I asked in here was that he had moved on: "Nothing to see here; moved on." How are we to accept that the Premier has satisfied himself that he has reason to believe the minister's explanation if he has not even looked at the photo? How is it that we are to accept the Premier has vigorously applied his own standards of what is acceptable behaviour if he does not even know about it until 5.30 pm, when the minister has gone public and admitted it before 10 o'clock in the morning? What else is that but a double standard? That says that the minister does not have to explain himself to the equivalent of his principal or line manager. That says that he went out and announced that he was innocent, and we are all expected to believe that, without anyone conducting an investigation.

Any investigation, as I said, may well have found that in all of the circumstances the minister was entirely to be believed. That may well have been what any school principal or line manager might find about similar circumstances applying to one of their staff. There may well have been, therefore, no disciplinary action taken. But I am not talking about disciplinary action; I am talking about a disciplinary investigation. There was nothing from the Premier. He did not even see the photo and he did not know about the story until half an hour before it went to air at six o'clock. That is a double standard. It is nothing more and nothing less than a double standard.

It is inconsistent with the "Social Media Guidelines" provided by the Public Sector Commission, which state —

It is important that staff know the impact their actions can have on their agency, even if they are acting in their personal capacity ...

- Staff should be aware of their obligations under the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics ...

There is a ministerial code that applies to ministers. It does not cover social media, but it certainly should. I look forward to hearing that, as a result of this event, the ministerial code has been amended so that there are in fact guidelines applying to ministers about how they can and cannot use social media.

Another thing that the Public Sector Commission standards states is that staff using social media need to "reflect a corporate persona". I am pretty sure that it is an inappropriate corporate persona for the Minister for Training and Workforce Development or the Minister for Education to "like" a photo of a 16-year-old boy exposing his genitals. That is not the appropriate corporate persona. If that is not an appropriate corporate persona, any person

working in the public service in Western Australia would be held to account by the Public Sector Commission's standards. But that does not apply if one is a minister in the Barnett government—one does not even get investigated! The Premier does not even look at the photo. The Premier did not even ask the minister to explain himself before he went out to provide his answer—and therefore the answer on behalf of the government—to the media in the morning. That is an extraordinary state of affairs.

Let us absolutely accept that the minister is telling the absolute truth, that he was in a hurry, he knew the young man concerned, he assumed the photo would be perfectly fine for him to “like” and he just pressed the button. Let us assume that is absolutely true.

**Hon Peter Collier:** That is true.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Let us accept that is absolutely true. But if that was a teacher or any staff member in a school or a training institution, it would have been investigated. The principal or the line manager would have determined whether that was plausible, and moved on. That did not happen in this case. Why did it not happen? Because the minister responsible for standards and integrity in our schools, and training facilities at the time, is held to a different standard—a much lesser standard. That is not acceptable from a government that promised us higher standards. That is what Premier Barnett promised us—higher standards. He is not even checking whether those standards are being met. He has not even checked. So, how can he say he is applying a higher standard when he has not even checked for himself the nature, circumstances and context of what occurred here?

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Minister for Education)** [10.27 am]: I will just make a few comments on this issue because I have already made comments in question time on two occasions and I do not intend to go over the same ground. I appreciate the comments of the Leader of the Opposition, particularly in regard to the fact that I think she countenanced the notion that what I said last Thursday was accurate. I appreciate that because it absolutely was.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** I did not say I believe you; I said that is what you say.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** That is fine. I am not going to go over it. I will keep my comments very, very brief. I have been through this on a number of occasions. I will clarify once, for the very last time: the only time I saw the full extent of that photo was last Thursday. I will also clarify that the Premier's office was made aware before I met with media, I have to say. I am aware that the Premier is a very busy man and he may not have been informed, but the Premier's office certainly was aware.

Regarding the second issue about the department, of course we have to have standards in education. That is why we have a directorate that deals specifically with that. I, as Minister for Education and formerly as Minister for Training and Workforce Development, adhere to that doctrine. There is nothing within the Department of Education's policies and guidelines that a teacher who did what I did would be disciplined in any way. I think that has been acknowledged.

According to the Department of Education's “Social Media in Schools: Guidelines for school staff using social media and other technologies”, there is nothing to suggest that teachers are not allowed to use their own Facebook page or to “like” photos. The guidelines set out what teachers are not allowed to do, such as not entering chat rooms with students et cetera. The guidelines are basically just good commonsense. In addition to these guidelines, my office has sought advice from the Department of Education's professional standards and conduct unit. In a similar situation, a teacher would not be removed from the school, banned from teaching or anything else. In my case I have publicly explained what happened to the media. I have also explained the situation on two separate occasions to this chamber, and again today.

**HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan)** [10.30 am]: I want to speak in favour of the motion. Hon Sue Ellery has brought to our attention something of concern to the chamber. I understand the minister's response to this and I think the point about the double standard is valid. There has been no investigation into this matter, and I think that is what Hon Sue Ellery has brought to our attention. Is it fair enough that the minister just stands up and gives an explanation or is it important that an investigation is done to the same professional standards the minister upholds in his department? The Greens (WA) certainly support the motion moved by Hon Sue Ellery.

Having said that, I completely get why social media is a struggle for us in our busy lives. I am in trouble for not liking something today, so I really get that when we are using social media, it is very difficult to balance the other very serious professional documents we go through and the standard of consideration for the issues we must weigh up in this house. We are in a very serious business. When we have to communicate with our electors we must be also across the skills and dexterity of social media. We are constantly swapping our brain between one part of our job, which is to legislate and use our full wisdom in making decisions in this house, and the other part of communicating them in a way that is accessible to the constituents. In order to do that we have this amazing new tool, social media, and as politicians we are encouraged to become adept at using it, because it makes what we do in here real to the public. It is important we are able to use that tool promptly. If we do not comment on social media quickly, the message is gone; nobody is looking at that page anymore. We have to be

quick, succinct, relevant and friendly. These are things we are doing and I am sure the minister is doing them while he is considering other serious things, such as the legislation we should be dealing with, which the important time of this house should be spent on.

I guess that to some degree, I can share some empathy with the minister for just quickly liking something as he is scanning down the newsfeed. However, this has been a really good lesson for us all to pay a bit more care because we have a certain responsibility to our constituents to reflect a good standard of behaviour and good leadership qualities to get the respect we deserve to make the serious decisions we make in the house. It is important that at some point an investigation is held into this event that will close the matter and get us back on track to the important things we need to do. I can understand why the minister has tried to deal with it by just making an explanation, which was timely. He admitted it was a mistake. Something former member Hon Norman Moore brought to our attention in his valedictory speech was that we need to acknowledge when we have made mistakes. It is a good thing that we are mature enough to do that. However, in this case, I think Hon Sue Ellery has made some very good points about the standards in the Department of Education for social media use and, as the minister is the Minister for Education, at least his behaviour should be held to those standards. In this case, I support the motion that we express our concern. After all, I think we are concerned about this kind of behaviour generally in relation to social media. We also want to ensure that children in our education system are protected from predatory behaviours like this. We are not saying here that it was predatory behaviour, but it is one of those situations, through the use of the social media tool, that is so close to the line that it is important we look at it carefully. I am sure, because we have heard his explanation, the minister will come out looking squeaky clean. We have had the privilege of hearing that due to the roles we play, but teachers and other people who may make mistakes have to go through that process, so we should honour the processes that are set up. We therefore support the motion.

**HON SALLY TALBOT (South West)** [10.35 pm]: I am speaking in support of the motion that this Council expresses its concern at the inappropriate use of social media by the Minister for Education and condemns the government for applying one disciplinary standard to staff of the Department of Education and no disciplinary standard to the minister.

I think what we have heard this morning in the minister's very brief response to this motion is his rewriting, on his feet in this chamber, the guidelines for the use of social media by teachers. Members opposite should go back over *Hansard* and read very carefully what their minister just said. He said he has trawled through those guidelines and he cannot find any reference to a problem arising from liking a picture on Facebook. I am sorry, but that is not what this minister did. This minister is in denial. The real question in front of this house; the real question the minister has to answer is: does he think he can bluff his way through this because he is becoming known as the minister for bluffing his way through things? There is a very serious problem here that Hon Lynn MacLaren just expressed very succinctly. The minister probably has not done anything that crossed the line, but he came so close to it that he has gone past the point of being able to just use his position of power and privilege as a minister of the Crown to say, "Trust me, there's no problem." This has to be tested and that is what this motion is about this morning. It must be tested. If the answer to my, albeit hypothetical, question of whether the minister can bluff his way through this is yes, that is a disgrace. The answer should be "No; because I'm going to submit myself to the same kinds of standards that would be applied to any one of the people who are in the employment of the departments I administer if they had come this close to that kind of uncrossable line."

We know that social media is a dangerous world. We wish that we could instil that sense of danger into many young people. I say to young people constantly, "Just be careful and remember that one day you'll want to play in the grown-up world and it is not as forgiving as the teenage or childish world you're playing in now." The principal of Gilmore College, Carolyn Cook, who was referred to earlier in this debate, has taken this particular bull by the horns. When I read that article in Saturday's *The Weekend West* I wondered how we could incorporate these insights into the kind of laws and regulations we deal with in this place. I think Ms Cook has done a very good job. When I talked yesterday about another matter concerning key performance indicators—KPIs, the jargon of the moment—with the KPIs that this principal is applying to her school, she is clearly ticking every box because she is reducing the amount of bullying and the number of suspensions at Gilmore College. I suggest that the minister needs to introduce Ms Cook to the Premier because I think she might have a few lessons to teach him about how he could improve the behaviour of the members of his cabinet. If I have time, I will refer to that in a bit more detail in a moment.

There are two ways in which social media can be a dangerous thing—one is the innocent use of the medium and the other is malicious use. I do not think that anybody is accusing the minister of anything other than an innocent misuse, but it is a misuse of the medium. He has entered into a dangerous world and he has fallen foul of that world. I fell foul of it in a benign way last week. I was sitting in the chamber and, believe it or not—I know that honourable members on the other side will be astonished to hear this—sometimes when members make hour-long speeches, the mind wanders a bit, because it gets cold in this place and it is late at night. So I brought up my Facebook page, because I thought I would check that all the information was correct. I got into the back of

Facebook and I discovered that my status was single. I thought, “I am not single because I am married”, so I put “married” as my status. All of a sudden I got about 500 congratulatory messages. I have married my husband twice, but he was a little surprised when he discovered last week that I had done it a third time, because he did not know about that! But he liked my posting, so that was okay. There are lots of traps in the background, and if people do not pay full attention, they can fall foul of them.

Clearly, the Premier is not Facebook literate, so I do not take anything that the Premier has said as in any way endorsing the minister’s explanation of why he should not be subject to further inquiry. The Premier said —

I think quite innocently ... he accessed the site; an image came up. It was meant to be a joke; meant to be funny ... and the minister just routinely pressed the “like” button to a whole lot of other groups of people.

I do not think, with the greatest respect, that the Premier knows what he is talking about, but I think the minister knows exactly how those mechanisms work.

We have seen recently that young people who are caught by this—let us say that it is innocent, because I believe that by far the majority of cases are done with innocent intentions—are now in danger of being placed on the sex offenders register for exactly this kind of thing; that is, for doing things thoughtlessly. Yet the minister got up in this place yesterday—he knows it was a mistake; he knows that he has done something wrong—and twice said in that answer that he certainly did not do anything inappropriate. That means that when the minister walks into every school staffroom and every TAFE facility over the next four years, if he lasts that long, he will have to look every single person in the eye—students, teachers and governors—and say that he did not do anything inappropriate. It beggars belief that members of this house had to sit here yesterday and listen to the minister say that twice. The minister said that he did not do anything inappropriate. Would the minister do it again? That is my question: would he do it again, because if he did not do anything inappropriate, presumably he will do it again? That is what he will see in the eyes of all his stakeholders over the next four years. Would he do it again because he does not think it was inappropriate?

The minister said that he did not know what he had done, but other people knew. As I have just described, I am a bit of an amateur at this, but even I know that every time someone’s name is mentioned on Facebook, they get notifications; they even get notifications on their phone that their name has been used. There were nearly 40 people on that link who saw what the minister had done. I ask the minister: who is watching his back? If I were the minister, I would be very, very nervous. He should not just be nervous about walking into all those staffrooms and training facilities, looking people in the eye and saying that he did not do anything inappropriate when he “Liked” the photo of a teenager behaving in the way that he was. He will also have to walk back into his office and say, “Hey, guys; what were you thinking?” There was even one posting on that thread that warned the young man about the damage he would cause himself, and the young man said that it was okay, as a senior cabinet minister was joining in the fun. It cannot be the case that nobody who is supposed to be watching the minister’s back did not warn the minister about this.

I want to finish by making a brief reference to the question in this matter. Is this really a problem? Is everybody on this side of the house so prudish and so hung up that we cannot go with the flow and “like” this and “Favourite” that? It is all okay; it is 2013; let us not get hung up about it. I put it to you, Mr President, that there are certain things about children’s sexual expressivity that are subject to law. Why are they subject to law? They are subject to law because children under the age of consent cannot actively play a part in those activities. They cannot do it because they are not psychologically, sociologically or, a lot of the time, sexually ready to cope with that world of adult sexuality. That is why we have those bans and prohibitions. But the minister has quite happily ducked under the accountability and responsibility that he would quite rightly expect of everybody working in any of the departments, facilities and institutes that he is in charge of.

**HON SIMON O’BRIEN (South Metropolitan)** [10.45 am]: I have listened closely to and with some concern about this matter over the last few days. I think it is the case that there are pitfalls in using social media. I know that because a number of members have told me so. I do not use social media myself. I do not get it; I do not want to get it. I hear about tweeting. I see that some of it even occurs from the chamber by people on the other side who have as many as 26 followers on Twitter, some of whom are their Labor Party colleagues and some of whom are members of the press; and, yes, the others are people at Liberal Party headquarters keeping an eye on them! That behoves them to follow the dictum—I will not use the expletive I normally use in deferral to the decorum of the house; I will substitute it for another more pathetic word—that the best advice I can give anyone in public life is to learn how to shut the heck up. When a person opens their mouth or expresses intemperate views, that is when they get themselves into trouble. Twitter or Facebook—we are talking about social media—causes people to express things that then go out into the ether, get out of control and get a very broad audience, as we know. David Warner from the Australian cricket team is another person who can tell people that a closed mouth gathers no foot! In the case of using social media, the old dictum that I know is to shut the heck up and people will stay out of trouble.

I do not trivialise this matter; I am just trying to get down to the nitty-gritty of what this is really about. The motion asks the Council to express its concern about something, and Hon Lynn MacLaren and Hon Sally Talbot said in support of that motion that they think it is okay for us to express our concern; indeed, we can and do express our concern about matters all the time. That is fine as far as it goes. But this motion invites us to express our concern at the inappropriate use of social media by the Minister for Education. I do not think it has been established. I do not think any independent or sensible commentator outside of the political sphere has established or even suggested that there was inappropriate use of social media by the Minister for Education. That is what needs to be established in support of what is, after all, a very serious motion. The mover, who is an experienced member, as Leader of the Opposition, has seen fit to bring her concern to the attention of the house for the reasons she has outlined in the manner that she has. It is not a motion of no confidence. It is not a referral to some tribunal. It is not a letter to the Premier asking him to investigate. No; it is a motion couched in these terms that comes to this house for debate. In support of that, I do not know that she has established inappropriate use of social media by the Minister for Education.

I asked for a quick look at this Facebook and what it looks like. I do not have it, and I do not want it; I am not interested. The whole thing leaves me cold; I just do not get it. I have better things to do with my time, but if people want to use Facebook, they can do that. Obviously they like doing it, and good luck to them. There are a plethora of messages—I will call them “messages”; there is probably some other word for it—that come through, that may or may not have a photo. The options, as they were shown to me, are that there is a touch screen at the bottom with a thumbs-up symbol and the word “like”, another symbol with “Comment” and another one with “Share”, showing an arrow going off. I presume—if I presume correctly—that these are the options that Facebook message recipients have when they get a message. They can then forward it on to someone else—millions of other people around the world, if they want to. That can cause problems if it is an unintended message that goes beyond an individual to others, and that is a risk if one is in public life and another good reason why one should shut the heck up! Or they can “Comment”, and if they press that bit they can then add some words like, “Yeah, looked like a great party! See you next weekend”, or whatever it is they put on this message. The most benign way of acknowledgement, as I see it, if someone has sent them a message or a picture from a party, is just to click “like”. There does not seem to be an option for “Don’t like”, so “like” seems to be just a brief acknowledgement when one cannot be bothered writing a comment and is not going to worry about forwarding the message to someone else.

That is how I understand it, but Hon Sue Ellery made it clear, in a couple of ways, that one has to be very careful about what one expresses a “like” for, because things can go very wrong from there. She is right about that, and I think it would be self-evident. Whenever we see someone—a cricketer personality or whoever—adding some further unfortunate comments to a chain of Facebook communications, it certainly can lead to all sorts of problems. In this case, something that would have gone completely unnoticed has been raised as a political issue. I say to my friend Hon Lynn MacLaren that this is not about an expression of general concern; this is, apparently, a deliberate political attack. This is not about whether we are concerned about people doing inappropriate things or anything of the sort; I am just trying to work out what it is that the present Minister for Education is supposed to have done. From the information that has been presented publicly, what appears to have happened is that he was sent a picture by a friend of a couple of people facing the camera and apparently having a good time as part of a whole stream of communications that came through, and one goes through and dismisses them—“like”, “like”, do nothing—whatever it is. It was only when Geof Parry from Channel Seven, I am told, blew up the photo and showed it to our colleague that he became aware that there was a detail of the photo in which someone in the photo was exposing a part of their anatomy. I honestly do not see how we can conclude from all of this that the minister has made inappropriate use of social media, together with all of the virtually unspoken implications that have been brought politically into this debate. If we do that, we are in effect saying, “This minister is not a fit person.” That is a far more serious thing than any evidence that has been produced so far, and I am sure my colleagues and most people in the house would accept that.

Finally, Hon Sally Talbot gave us an example of how one can have benign unexpected consequences. In fact, it has now been determined by some out there in the ether that she is married not once, but twice, to Hon Jon Ford! To paraphrase an expression, for that to happen once could be unfortunate, but for it to happen twice smacks of carelessness! Hon Sally Talbot knows that I respect the relationship she has with her husband, my good friend Hon Jon Ford, so I am not saying that maliciously, but it could be taken out of context. As she says, one has to be careful, because that could happen to any one of us next time.

**HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [10.55 am]: I also rise to support the motion moved by Hon Sue Ellery. This is, indeed, a serious subject. Hon Simon O’Brien said two things that I will agree with. He has given everyone good, sound advice on how people in Parliament or public life should manage social media; his advice, I think, was to shut up, and that is probably a lesson we could all listen to. People do get caught out, and Hon Sally Talbot talked about the issues of social media, because they are constantly changing. People are using it as part of their daily lives and often they are never too sure about where the line is between their personal and professional lives. People can get caught out, and I am not too sure

what has happened on this occasion. However, we are talking about standards—standards that are applied to one individual as applied to others. The reason this issue is still alive is that the minister has spoken on a couple of occasions to try to explain that he simply made a mistake. In fact, he used language that I had to ask my 15-year-old son the meaning of because I had not heard one of the terms before. Hon Simon O'Brien asked how we know when behaviour is inappropriate behaviour. I know that if the minister were still in the classroom as a teacher and had clicked the "like" button on this image on Facebook of a young man to whom he is not related and who, as we now know, was conducting himself in what I would regard to be an inappropriate way—but that is a whole other issue—then I would imagine that, if found out, he would have been moved aside from his position. As I understand it, there have been a number of examples over time of teachers having been stood aside in this type of situation and have had cause to explain themselves.

I do not know what was in the mind of the minister when he clicked that particular button, and we have not actually heard any explanation for that, but what is disappointing is that this government has not sought to make those inquiries. When the question was put to the Premier in the other place, he explained that, for whatever reason, he had not seen the image and was not fully aware of the issue. I do not know why the leader of the Liberal government and Liberal Party would not have carried out a full investigation and sat the minister down and asked, "What were you thinking? Why have you done this? Explain yourself, so I can explain this to the Western Australian community." It is simple to say, "Look, I just made an easy mistake." There will be issues with parents in the community thinking, "Who is this person in the education system in Western Australia, who is the most senior role model for teachers and educators in this state, who is out there as a senior role model for children in our schools? Why has he done this? Why has he clicked this button?" It may be that once this line of inquiry has been conducted it will be shown to have been a simple and innocent error; I do not know. All I am saying is that the public perception would be quite different, and I think the minister still has to explain himself as to why he did that. I think that is a serious issue. Part of it may be that the Premier is simply exhausted. He may simply be tired of having to explain to the public why, during the last term and leading into this fresh term, he has had to explain how a series of ministers have lost sight of the standards to which they must adhere, why they have showed poor judgement on a number of occasions, why they have shown a lack of ethics and discipline in some cases and how they have tended on some occasions to cross the line.

The Minister for Education has had an interesting history. He has a tendency to brush things off loosely and lightly. He thinks that if he says he made a mistake, that it is not true and that he did not do it, that a situation will go away. Let us face it—when the story about the minister and his use of social media came out last week, it was not as the result of a political beat-up by the opposition; rather, it came from a former staffer of the minister. I am pretty sure that that person was an active member of the Liberal Party, although he may have particular views about the minister. The story was not generated by members on this side. This is a serious story that sets up some challenges for the government in the way it addresses how social media is managed by its ministers and what standards are common standards. I do not see any reason that on this occasion the minister should be treated any different from a teacher who makes a simple mistake in a similar situation. The same type of investigation should be applied because it is a serious issue.

Coming back to the comment by Hon Simon O'Brien about members "twittering" and using Facebook while in this chamber, perhaps that issue should be canvassed in Parliament. Perhaps we must address how we manage the use of social media in Parliament. That might help to discipline the way members interact with social media. The reality is that social media is here to stay. It is something that people use all of the time as part of their daily lives. We must learn about the traps of social media and how to better deal with them. The matters we are talking about today are of significance. The minister cannot just brush things aside. He must explain why he does these things.

Social media is a great way of engaging with family and the broader community. Indeed, I have a Facebook page. I restrict access to my Facebook page to family and close friends. It is a great way to keep in touch with my nieces and nephews in the eastern states. Quite often I will click "like" when I see photos of my great-nieces and nephews. Looking at those photos is the only way I have to keep up with their growth and development. I will make comments to old friends and my children on Facebook. But I am very cautious about clicking on some images that come up. I am always very cautious about how I manage those things. The same applies to tweeting. Some people are prolific tweeters and want to share every thought from what they eat to how they wash their socks! I do not believe in doing that. I think comments should be made only when it is appropriate or relevant. Everyone manages it in different ways and there should not be restrictions on how those things happen. However, given Hon Peter Collier's position as the most senior person on his side of the chamber, he has to change the way he conducts himself. Perhaps just as Obama has had to hand over his credit cards whilst he is the President, Hon Peter Collier should cease using social media so that he does not fall into the same trap down the line. It is imperative that the government allows a full and proper investigation into why this incident has occurred. It needs to apply to the minister the standards that would be applied to teachers and others in the Department of Education if they were in a similar situation. I do not understand how the minister can say he has simply made a mistake in "Liking" the picture. He has set a precedent and changed the standards for others. Who

is to say that a much more heinous situation may occur in the future and that a teacher might simply say that if it is good enough for the minister to say that he made a mistake, it would also be good enough for that teacher to say he made a mistake. What is missing here is a full and open investigation as to why the minister was able to get away with flipping this off when that principle would not apply to other people. This is a serious issue. It is a real shame the Premier has not applied the test to the minister and that the minister has not given us a full and frank telling of what led him to make that decision.

**HON MICHAEL MISCHIN (North Metropolitan — Attorney General)** [11.05 am]: I have listened to this debate with some interest. Originally I did not intend to speak on this motion because, in a sense, just about anything constructive or useful that could be said about this unfortunate incident has already been said on numerous occasions. I did have some sympathy for the concerns expressed that a minister of the Crown is subject to greater expectations than many other members of the community. If the motion and the arguments that have been put forward had been limited to comment on that, it would be very hard to argue against it. But what has become apparent over the course of the debate is the political opportunism that has entered this serious issue. Hon Simon O'Brien summarised the matter very well, and there is not much more I want to add to what he said. However, what has been repeated on numerous occasions in the course of the arguments put by the opposition is that there has been no explanation from the minister and that the minister needs to explain. Of course, he has explained on numerous occasions. He has explained to the media when the matter was first raised in the public arena. I am not familiar with the story any more than I suspect members of the public are. I have not looked into it. All that I know of the issue is what has been expressed in the media. I have seen the minister in front of television cameras explaining his perspective of what happened. He has explained his perspective on at least two occasions in this place in answer to questions posed by the opposition. It is simply false to say there has been no explanation by the minister.

**Hon Ken Travers:** No investigation—it's different.

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** "Explanation" is the word that has been used, Hon Ken Travers, on numerous occasions, including by Hon Kate Doust. On several occasions the minister has explained how it came about and what was going through his mind on that occasion. I accept that for either genuine reasons or simply out of political opportunism the opposition may choose not to accept those explanations. But it is simply false to come into this place, stand on one's hind legs and repeatedly say that the minister needs to give an explanation about this. He has given one on at least two occasions in this place and at least once that I saw in the media. The opposition can take it or leave it, but that is his explanation. Comment has been made that there has been no investigation into the matter. That is not what the motion is concerned with; rather, it is concerned about a disciplinary standard. We could argue until the cows come home as to whether or not a particular standard is applied to the conduct of members in this place. I recall under the Gallop government, I think, a minister for transport who retained her portfolios notwithstanding losing her licence for drink-driving. I did not see any of the members on the other side of this chamber at that time making any protest about double standards and not being held to account for their actions. Those were offences.

We get down to the case of what is allegedly an inappropriate use of social media. No evidence has been put before me that what was done was an offence, not even if it was done deliberately. Hon Peter Collier has indicated that it was through inadvertence. Even if he had done it deliberately, what was the offence that he had committed?

**Hon Ken Travers:** You are kidding me, aren't you? You can't see what was wrong with that?

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** Once again, we get back to the fuzzy thinking and the political opportunism. It is not a case of whether I see anything wrong with it.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Do you or don't you?

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! This debate has been conducted in a very civilised, serious manner, as it should be, given the subject of the motion. Let us keep it that way.

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** If it had been done deliberately as a choice, knowing what this photograph was allegedly showing, yes, I would have thought it was inappropriate. I accept that. I am asking—Hon Ken Travers seems to know the answer to this—what offence against the criminal law has been committed?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** That's not the issue. That's not what the motion is about. It's about appropriateness or not.

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** I agree entirely. But it is the issue when Hon Sally Talbot gets up and says that children have been put on a sex offender register for doing this sort of thing. I ask her: what is the offence under the criminal law that has been committed?

**Hon Sally Talbot:** I didn't say that. You should listen.

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** I did listen, and that is what has prompted me to respond to that silly comment of Hon Sally Talbot. Again, that demonstrates that rather than considering an appropriate level of conduct, we are

moving to something that has been governed by hyperbole and political opportunism on the part of the other side rather than rational debate.

*Withdrawal of Remark*

**Hon SALLY TALBOT:** I take strong exception to the reference to my remarks about children being placed on the sex offender register because of what is popularly known as sexting as being “silly”. I think that is wholly unreasonable and I ask the honourable member to withdraw that comment.

**The PRESIDENT:** I can understand a member taking offence at any comment that has been made. I do not think I have heard anything mentioned that has been unparliamentary in that sense. The Attorney General has been invited to withdraw. I will not insist that he does because it is not unparliamentary in my judgement but if he wishes to, he may.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** Once again, the debate is starting to get away from the motion. The point I make is simply this: to continue to argue this motion on the basis that one standard of conduct is applied to one group in the community and another to another is simply misconceived. In fact, in a sense, a higher disciplinary standard has been applied to Hon Peter Collier. He has been brought up before, as it were, the court of public opinion. He has to make his answer publicly. It will be for people to judge whether they accept his response. I have known him for a long time and I consider him a man of integrity. He has demonstrated integrity. There is nothing in the fact that he happened to have pressed a “like” or a “dislike” option on a Facebook page to suggest there is anything adverse to his integrity. At the very worst, it reflects on his judgement in that case, but I do not accept that what he did was deliberate, and certainly not calculated.

The opposition is entitled to its view. The point that I make is that the way the argument has been run has demonstrated a level of political opportunism that is wholly unjustified and has elevated this into something that is beyond a question of people publicly being accountable for their actions and an attempt to pervert the argument into something that will achieve some small political advantage. The points that I have been making about some of the comments that have been made by members of the opposition in this argument are illustrative of how that has been attempted in this case.

With respect, there is nothing more that I think can or should be said about this issue. Whereas I had some sympathy for the spirit rather than the wording of the motion, I can see that there is nothing to be gained from supporting it and I will be voting against the motion.

**HON NICK GOIRAN (South Metropolitan) [11.15 am]:** I regret that I need to engage in this debate. I am not as charitable as my learned friend the Attorney General, who indicated that at some point he had some sympathy for the spirit of the motion. I have none. It is a great irony that I should have to contribute to this particular debate because it has been only a month since I gave a presentation at a legal conference on free speech and the role Parliament can have in protecting this fundamental right of free speech. The presentation I gave, which is now in the form of a paper that will be published in the next edition of *The Western Australian Jurist*, undertakes a study of four different scenarios. I looked at the issue of free speech firstly in terms of how Parliament can help protect journalists and the shield laws. I looked at the issue, interestingly enough, of the sexualisation of children, which I have spoken of in this house before and how, ostensibly, it is a different side of the spectrum in the sense that Parliament wants to protect the right of journalists to be able to do what they do, but when we look at the issue of sexualisation of children, particularly in the various forms of media, at a surface level, that is free speech but is it the responsible use of free speech? That was the question that I was asking in this article.

I then looked at what are called hate speech laws and the dangerous path that has been taken by some jurisdictions in that respect and the very idea that someone can subjectively be offended by something, and somehow that then becoming a criminal offence. Lastly, I capped off the paper by looking at the issue of parliamentary privilege and how we as parliamentarians largely, not completely, have an unfettered right to freedom of speech. This is a great privilege and we should use that responsibly. In fact, if we have the power to restrict the freedom of speech of the very constituents who vote us into this place, we have an extra responsibility to ensure that our privilege is used appropriately. I think that a higher standard applies to us, particularly with respect to the speech that we use in this place.

Being a passionate advocate for freedom of speech, I want to take the opportunity to bring to the attention of the house the definition of the word “hypocrisy”. In an online dictionary reference, hypocrisy is said to mean the following —

1. a pretense of having a virtuous character, moral or religious beliefs or principles, etc., that one does not really possess.
2. a pretense of having some desirable or publicly approved attitude.
3. an act or instance of hypocrisy.

The context of those comments is that yesterday I was being attacked by members opposite because of a so-called lack of priority on my part in bringing a motion into this place. It was suggested by learned members opposite that we should have greater things to do at this particular point in the electoral cycle, yet members opposite have once again decided to raise this issue. I find it extraordinary that only 24 hours ago the priorities of this side of the chamber were called into question, yet today this is the number one motion the opposition puts before us. When we start proceedings each day we commence with a prayer, and in that prayer we talk about honour, wisdom and integrity. It is somewhat ironic that those three words, “honour, wisdom and integrity,” are being sought to be expunged from that prayer in a motion that we will no doubt be dealing with at some later stage this year. I look forward with great fascination to hear from members opposite why we would want to expunge the words “honour, wisdom and integrity”. No doubt, they all considered that before endorsing the motion that will come before us in due course. We say that prayer at the beginning of the Parliament—those of us who choose to participate in it. I wonder what this motion says about what the honourable members opposite think about my colleague Hon Peter Collier. I have had the opportunity to get to know this honourable gentleman over the last four years, and I know for a fact that he takes his role as a minister of the Crown most seriously. What is particularly remarkable about this whole set of circumstances is that the honourable members opposite would have us believe that a minister of the Crown of Western Australia would do this on purpose. Give me a break! No reasonable person in politics, no member of Parliament, would do this on purpose! Plainly, it is an accident. Plainly, it is an error.

I have sat in this place and, quite rightly, the Leader of the Opposition has asked some questions about this during question time. I say to the Leader of the Opposition that I have absolutely no difficulty with her having done that, because if I were ever in that seat I would do exactly the same thing. What offends me most of all about this motion is that the honourable gentleman sitting on the front bench of my side of the house has stood up, responded to that question and said it was a mistake. But that is unsatisfactory for the honourable members opposite. The minister says it is a mistake, and they say we need to investigate this further. The height of my offence at this motion was when I came back into the chamber and Hon Sally Talbot decided to make a big deal and asked the honourable member whether he would do it again. Plainly, Hon Sally Talbot has not been listening to any of the debate in this matter, because if the Leader of the House says that it was a mistake, obviously he is not intending to do it again. But the honourable member wanted to make a big deal of it and say, “I am a bit confused. You say it’s a mistake.” She asked whether it is appropriate or inappropriate. We have said that it is not appropriate. We have said it is a mistake. But, no, the other side wants to listen only to certain parts of the debate. All this comes down to spin. All I am asking from honourable members opposite is that they show a modicum of respect for the Leader of the House.

Yesterday, 22 May, as happens every four years, we took the oath as we came into this place. I can only assume that all members do the same as I do and take that with great seriousness and gravity. As I say, we all adhere to the general principles of honour, wisdom and integrity. If a member on this side of the chamber, or for that matter on the other side of the chamber, stands up and responds and says, “Look I made a mistake”, I think we should take that person at face value. If I had more time last week I would have spent a little more time talking about Hon Ed Dermer, but I ran out of time. Do members know what that excellent honourable gentleman did in my first four years? He coined a phrase that has stuck with me ever since. That was to take a charitable interpretation of things. That very honourable man used to hear things in this chamber and would quite rightly get to his feet, but would start by saying that he would try to take a “charitable interpretation” of what had been said. Those of us who know that man know he would have meant that from his heart. That is what I am asking members opposite to do: if the Leader of the House stands up and says it was a mistake, then it was a mistake and that is the end of the story. What we do not do is carry on like a bunch of pork chops and ask, “Would you do it again?” With the greatest of respect to members opposite and the person who asked that question, that is facile at best.

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [11.25 am] — in reply: What an extraordinary contribution we have just had that we should accept any member of Parliament who has been accused of anything, who says, “It wasn’t me. I didn’t do it”. What an absolutely extraordinary proposition! I cannot believe that came from Hon Nick Goiran, who is usually a lot more thoughtful about his contributions.

The minister tells us that this matter is done: “I have done one media interview. I’ve answered two questions in Parliament. That’s enough! It’s done. I don’t need to say very much more!” It is not enough. It is not enough until and unless the government can demonstrate that it does not just have a document that talks about standards of conduct, a theory about what is appropriate behaviour and a policy about a higher standard of accountability, but that it actually puts into practice that this was an inappropriate act that should not still be a matter of debate. I seek leave to table a copy of the photograph. It has been modified and pixelated so that nothing offensive is visible and that no people’s names are available for identification purposes.

Leave denied.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** That is duly noted, Mr President.

This is not about an offence or freedom of information; it is about accountability, and there has been none.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

**The PRESIDENT:** I will explain for the benefit of new members particularly, because it might seem a bit confusing that we have had a debate but we have not had a vote. I refer members to standing order 110 on non-government business, which explains the process.

### CHILDREN'S VACCINATIONS — GOVERNMENT STRATEGIES

#### *Motion*

**HON LIZ BEHJAT (North Metropolitan)** [11.27 am] — without notice: From the outset, I take this opportunity to congratulate you on your re-election as President of this chamber. I very much look forward to working with you again in this coming term. I move —

That this house commends the Minister for Health, Hon Kim Hames, MLA, for initiating the government's strategy concerning immunisation; and encourages all parents to ensure that their children's vaccinations are administered and kept up to date in an endeavour to increase vaccination rates across all sections of our community.

I rise today to contribute to private members' business on this most important issue. One of the reasons I do that is that we are at the beginning of a new Parliament. I chose a topic that is not only very important in Australia and around the world today, but also demonstrates how private members' business in this place can be used so that all 36 members in this place can come together to support initiatives and ideas that are put forward that will benefit Western Australia. I hope the debate continues today in that spirit. What I did not think about when I brought this motion on is that a number of people in the chamber have yet to make their first speeches to this place and so probably will not be able to contribute to private members' business, but I am sure their thoughts will be with me in support of what I am saying.

I notice, Madam Deputy President (Hon Adele Farina), that you have now taken the chair. May I also take this opportunity to congratulate you on your election to that position and to say how delighted we are on this side of the house to have you in the chair and look forward to working closely with you over the next four years also.

This week the most wonderful Minister for Health, Hon Kim Hames, released the "Western Australian Immunisation Strategy 2013–15", which is a continuation of the strategy that was first released in 2008. The 2008 strategy was not as detailed as the 2013 strategy. To coin a phrase, I think this puts the meat on the bones of the strategy that we initiated in 2008. I know there is quite a lot of interest from members, especially on this side of the house, who want to contribute to this debate today and I am looking forward to listening to their comments because it is a very wide-ranging issue.

Why is it important for us to ensure that WA lifts its vaccination rate and maintains it as high as possible? That is a fair enough question for us to ask. We need to go back to the reasons for vaccinations and how it all began. A phrase that is often used is "herd immunity". As a community, we can vaccinate to protect the most vulnerable people in society such as young children. We need to ensure that the majority of the herd, or all of us, are vaccinated against preventable diseases to protect those in society who are vulnerable. A small number of people are unable to be vaccinated for one reason or another, but if the majority of us are vaccinated, we can protect those people. Vaccinations act like a firewall against disease. We build a firewall around us and the disease cannot get in because we are vaccinated and those who are less fortunate or more vulnerable than us will be protected from the disease until they can be vaccinated.

The World Health Organization tells us that vaccination is second only to clean water as a public health intervention measure that has had the greatest global impact. We can see some results in relation to that. Polio, for instance, is a disease that we all know about but luckily in this day and age we do not see many people suffering from polio. Back in the 1960s when I first arrived in Australia, my mother was a nurse at the Shenton Park rehabilitation centre and I got to know quite well a couple of the residents who were polio victims. One in particular, Paul Berry, later became a very prolific artist and was a lovely man but unfortunately he lived most of his life in an iron lung. If I spoke to my 15-year-old son today about an iron lung, he would think I was talking about some sort of superhero, not a machine that kept people alive. That is because through vaccination we have been able to keep that disease under control. In 1988, polio was endemic in 125 countries and by 2010 that figure has dropped to four countries. That is amazing. The four countries are Afghanistan, India, Nigeria and Pakistan.

It is important to keep people vaccinated. As well as the health benefit of people being vaccinated, there is also an economic benefit. A recent analysis into the routine of child vaccinations reveals that \$5 of direct medical costs were saved for every \$1 spent on immunisation. Another \$11 is saved in indirect costs such as time off work and loss of productivity. We can see that there is not only a great health benefit, but also an economic benefit in times when we are all concerned about the economy.

Death and disability from diseases that were once referred to as common childhood diseases are now rare because they are vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccinations can save lives. Between 1989 and 1998, 581 deaths were recorded in Australia from diseases that could have been prevented by vaccines that are currently on the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register. Those diseases are measles; tetanus; pertussis, or whooping cough as we may know it; mumps; and haemophilus influenza, or the HIB virus; diphtheria; and hepatitis B. Given the ages of members, as I look around the chamber, I suspect that some members may have had childhood diseases such as measles or chickenpox. My son, who is 15, has never had any of those sorts of diseases. In fact, I remember telling our general practitioner that he never had chickenpox and the GP told me to leave it until he was 12 and if he had not —

**Hon Kate Doust:** You obviously never sent him to child care.

**Hon LIZ BEHJAT:** He was in child care from the age of six months, when I returned to work, until the age of 11. Yes, he did go to child care and he built up a great immunity to ear infections and other things that children get in child care but he never picked up chickenpox. At the age of 12, I promptly took him back to the GP and said that he had not had chickenpox. We were living in Karratha at the time when there was an outbreak of chickenpox and I became concerned because I know that when people get a childhood disease when they are older, it can be more problematic than if they got it when they were much younger. My son has now been vaccinated for chickenpox. When he was born, I chose to vaccinate him against hepatitis B. I know that Hon Donna Faragher will contribute to this debate, being the newest mum in the chamber. When my son was born, it was not usual to be vaccinated against hepatitis B but because my son is of Middle Eastern extraction and hepatitis B is well known in that part of the world, we chose to have him vaccinated against it from a very early age.

Some states are moving to make vaccinations compulsory for children to attend school. In this state, given that we are true liberals, we do not believe in compulsion for anything and we are not moving towards introducing legislation that would make it compulsory for children entering school to be vaccinated. Schools do ask that question and try to encourage children to be vaccinated but there is no rule that says someone will be excluded from the education system if they are not. Vaccination will be voluntary, which is why we need to embark on the fabulous education program that the minister intends to release about vaccination. Education is everything. An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of cure in these circumstances.

Western Australia also sits just a little below the national average on the rate of vaccinations. We need to ensure that we lift our vaccination rate. The acceptable rate is 90 per cent and we sit at about 87 per cent. In that respect we can lift our game, and we are looking to do that through this strategy. The remoteness of Western Australia presents its own problems and is one of the reasons why the vaccination rate is below average. I note that this strategy addresses the challenges of remoteness, especially among our Aboriginal population, and has some ideas about what we can do to ensure that the rate of vaccination among the Aboriginal population increases. We want to close the gap. We know the statistics for Aboriginal health versus non-Aboriginal groups in Western Australia. We need to look at resolving legal barriers to vaccinations by competent health workers, including Aboriginal health workers, and training more Aboriginal health workers to administer vaccinations. That is sometimes an issue but it is also important to make sure that we get the education program out there and deliver it to as many people as we can. At the same time, we must make sure that it is done in a culturally appropriate way through community based programs in the areas where the vaccination rate needs improving.

Another key objective of this strategy that I am very pleased to talk about today is the increased vaccination coverage of high school students. That is quite important. Sometimes in the earlier stages of childhood, new mothers, or whoever, may not remember to get their child's vaccinations done when they need to be topped up. Perhaps they might have had the first vaccination but may not have had the second and third, so in high school there is again that opportunity, through our excellent education system, to provide vaccination.

We now know the benefits that the human papilloma virus vaccination has certainly given to the girls in our high school system. I am most delighted to say that that has now been extended to boys in our high school system. It has been shown that the HPV vaccination can help build immunity to disease. My son, in year 10, has just had his second injection. He tells me his arm hurts. Suck it up—seriously! It is a very little price to pay for the long-term benefit of being vaccinated.

We know there are some people in our community who object to vaccinations. It is actually a very small number who have some objection to vaccination; I think the number is as low as two per cent. That is generally because throughout the years there have been some hysterical media reports about adverse events on vaccines, but I think the benefits of vaccines far outweigh any of those. Generally, it is more that people, in their busy lives, sometimes do not remember to get vaccines topped up when they need to be.

Another group in our society that also benefits if the rest of us have herd immunity from vaccination is refugee and humanitarian entrants into Australia. I mentioned that there are only four countries in the world in which polio is endemic. Those four countries are Afghanistan, India, Pakistan and Nigeria. We know that we receive a

lot of refugee and humanitarian entrants from two of those countries, Pakistan and Afghanistan. They may not be immunised at all against those diseases. We know that people migrating to Australia under the numerous programs go through numerous health checks before their visas are issued.

I am going to run out of time, but I want to say, in wrapping up, that this is a most excellent strategy released by our Minister for Health. I encourage all members in the house to read the strategy, become familiar with it and support it. I look forward to the contribution of my other colleagues in this debate today.

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [11.42 am]: The opposition is happy to support the motion. We certainly welcome the immunisation strategy. As Professor Stokes, the acting director general of the Department of Health, says —

... \$5 of direct medical costs were saved for every \$1 expended on immunisations.

But he goes on to say—this is really a more important sentence, I think, than how much money it will save us—vaccinating kids is also one of the best ways to achieve health equality by giving kids the best chance for a healthy life.

I cannot comment on a report prepared by Professor Bryant Stokes without putting on record that Professor Stokes has been a part of my family's life for 19 years. He was the neurosurgeon on call at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital the day my mother had a car accident that resulted in an acquired brain injury. We have been seeing Professor Stokes ever since. I have no doubt, my mum has no doubt, my father has no doubt and my brothers have no doubt that "BAR Stokes" saved her life that day and we are forever in his debt—so, the man can do no wrong! Nevertheless, this is certainly a challenge for him as acting director general because traditionally WA has had levels of immunisation lower than the rest of the nation except for a period in 2004 when immunisation rates in WA were above the national average.

This report needs to be put in context. It is not just about addressing the long-term patterns of immunisation. An adverse event in 2010 really challenged how people viewed immunisations. This report is also about trying to rectify and rebuild people's confidence in a very important public health policy after a number of adverse events in 2010 resulted in dreadful outcomes for children. One young girl, in particular, and her mum became the media focus, if you like, of what happened then. We should not kid ourselves that this is just about making sure we do something about immunisation; it is also about a significant loss of public confidence in the state government's vaccination program and its response, particularly to the first couple of adverse events back in 2010. The government has a massive job ahead of it to rebuild public confidence because parents, particularly first-time parents, were genuinely terrified by what happened, irrespective of all the research that shows that those adverse events, dreadful though the outcomes were for those babies and young children, are the minority and not the majority. The positive reasons for having children immunised for the whole of the population far outweigh the risks posed if we do not immunise.

Professor Stokes' report in respect to adverse reactions to the 2010 influenza vaccination identified clear deficiencies in the Western Australian Department of Health's response to the emerging crisis with the governance of that particular program. His report stated —

Sadly, public perception of vaccination programs has been damaged by these events and it will take time to reverse this view.

There was a sharp drop in immunisation rates at the end of July 2010 once those events were highlighted. My colleague Roger Cook, the shadow Minister for Health, advises me that it is no coincidence that the author of the report back in 2010 is now the acting director general, and that the immunisation strategy has been released. Professor Stokes knew exactly what needed to be done: he wrote the report, he made the recommendations and he is in a position to implement it. That is what he is doing. We cannot ignore the fact that the report seeks to address the immunisation system crisis that was brought about by that lack of public confidence at the time. That report had 12 objectives. In the immunisation strategy, Professor Stokes seeks to rectify the problems he identified back in 2010.

It is alarming that it has taken until 2013 for an adequate response in the form of a strategy to be put in place. How many children have been born and how many children have moved to Western Australia since 2010? How many parents have had to be convinced, and how many still remain unconvinced, that in fact vaccination is in the best interests of not only their children but also the broader community? One of the issues in Professor Stokes' report was the identification of government policy as one of the barriers to improving immunisation rates. He particularly drew attention to the lack of clarity around the role of child and adolescent community health, in addition to the yet-to-be-clarified role of Medicare Locals. It begs the question: why is the strategy being launched now? It really provides further weight to the theory, I suspect from Professor Stokes' point of view—not that I am putting words in his mouth—that this is about unfinished business. He wants to see an adequate response to the report he prepared back in 2010.

The other issue I think is useful to raise is the 1998 general practice immunisation incentive scheme set by the Howard government, which was to increase immunisation rates through GPs, because patients see a GP four or five times a year. But the shortage of GPs meant that strategy was not successful and diminished the scheme's potential effectiveness.

If we are to change this practically, we need to use a bigger section of the workforce and the workforce we want to encourage to have regular contact with new mums and babies—that is, our child health nurses in particular. The real solution is further reform to the health sector so that nurse practitioners and nurses specialising in vaccinations are more integrated in the delivery of vaccinations and more child health nurses—not just promises but actually more of them—tracking immunisation rates and following up where that needs to happen.

We are happy to support the resolution. This is a really important public health issue. It is a shame that from a report done by Professor Stokes in 2010, it has taken us until 2013; nevertheless, we are there now and we are happy to support the resolution.

**HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [11.50 am]: Thank you, Madam Deputy President. Before I start I add my congratulations to you in your new role as Deputy President of this house. I also rise to support the motion moved by Hon Liz Behjat. As a mum of now two young children, one who is two and a half years old and the other who is 11 weeks old, it is fair to say that I have had my fair share of visits to the family doctor over the past couple of years for their immunisation shots. Although I admit that there is nothing worse than seeing a little baby having a needle, I know that the benefits of immunisation far outweigh the very small risk of doing so. Hon Sue Ellery has talked about this, and I recognise that there are some risks. We have all read about, and may even know, some children who have experienced tragic situations as a result of an adverse reaction to a vaccine. I, like most parents, remain a very strong advocate for protecting our children against serious and potentially life-threatening diseases. In saying that, I am somewhat disappointed that our rates of immunisation in WA are less than they are in other jurisdictions. I think Hon Liz Behjat said that it was around 90 per cent. There are a number of reasons for this. Some parents have a conscientious objection to immunising their children. It is sometimes medically not appropriate for a child to have a particular vaccine. Other parents simply forget the critical times when their children should be vaccinated. Irrespective of that, I am concerned that not immunising a child not only increases their risk of contracting a disease, but also puts others at risk, particularly those children who might be too young to be protected. Whooping cough is a prime example of this. Whooping cough, or pertussis, is a highly contagious disease caused by bacteria that is spread through sneezing or coughing.

The number of notifications of whooping cough has increased significantly over the past few years from 134 in 2007 to 3 384 in 2012. Over recent years, around 50 per cent of all cases of whooping cough in children aged under one year have required hospitalisation. Tragically, four deaths have been attributed to whooping cough over the past five years; one each in 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011. All four cases were infants aged two months or less—that is, too young to be protected by the whooping cough vaccination, which is not given to a baby until it is eight weeks old. That is four young lives lost far too early. Then there are measles, mumps and rubella—all serious viral diseases. A combined vaccine for all three is given to children when they are 12 months old, with a second dose at four years of age. I was reading the immunisation book that was given to me when my little boy was born. It contains quite a sobering set of statistics, which I will read to the house —

If every child in a school of 500 children had not been immunised and an outbreak of measles occurred, most students would come down with measles. Pneumonia would occur in 30 children. There is a 25% chance that one child in the school would develop inflammation of the brain ... as a result of the measles. If every child in the school was immunised correctly with MMR vaccine, on average there would be one case of encephalitis every 2000 years caused by the immunisation.

As has been mentioned by other speakers, I understand that one of the key objectives of the new strategy is to increase the vaccination rate. One objective in particular is to increase the vaccination coverage of four-year-olds here in WA. Given that the vaccination rate for these children is among the lowest in Australia and that only around two or three per cent of parents object to vaccination, the majority of unvaccinated or under-vaccinated children come from households that are most likely to be supportive of immunisation but, for whatever reason, just do not do it. This strategy has therefore identified that improving reminder recall systems, particularly in low immunisation coverage areas, would significantly increase immunisation rates.

I have to say, from personal experience, that as a mum, I think we receive plenty of information about immunisation. We are very fortunate to live in a country that has an incredibly comprehensive and publicly funded immunisation program, far better than those in many other countries where many children are left unprotected. I understand that worldwide, around one-third of all deaths in children aged between one month and five months are caused by illnesses, such as measles or tetanus, that could have been prevented by a vaccine. Here in WA we get information at the hospital, from our child health nurse, which every mother—I know some do not—should be visiting. We get information through various packs that are given to us when our baby is born.

I have brought them in today because I think it is important to know that parents are armed with information. When a child is born they are given a little book titled *All about me*. This is my son's book. My daughter has one exactly the same. No matter where in Australia a child is born, they are given one of these, and it has all the information needed. It has the key dates for seeing the child health nurse, the key dates for immunisation and a whole lot of other things for their development. We also get books on immunisation like this one and things we stick on our fridge to remind us of those key dates on the immunisation schedule. I am quite fortunate—this is perhaps one of the areas we need to improve—that I get reminder letters that are actually addressed to my daughter, which is kind of cute, asking her to contact the surgery to make an appointment for her next immunisation. She is a little young to make the appointment herself, but I think it is quite gorgeous that it is sent to her. There are a lot of reminders.

To be honest, I think it is up to parents first and foremost to know the key times when their children need to be immunised. As parents, we obviously cannot protect our children from everything. But to my mind, forgetting when the next lot of immunisations are due is not an excuse. There is not an excuse when we know that we can help prevent our children from contracting any one of the 16 diseases that we have vaccinations for. At the end of the day, there is nothing more precious than a child and looking after their health is incredibly important. But it is clear that some do need reminders. I do recognise that access does need to improve in some areas. That is for the benefit of not only the child who needs to be vaccinated, but the rest of the community. I strongly support the measures that are being considered as part of the strategy to ensure that those parents who are not prioritising vaccination receive reminders; that they are reminded about its importance and have easy access to vaccination resources. Consistency is incredibly important. Clearly, that is what this strategy is seeking to achieve. As I have said, vaccination not only protects the person being vaccinated, it protects others in the community. No-one should die from a preventable disease, but unfortunately some still do. I refer to the purple *All about me* book, which states --

Thanks to immunisation, some serious diseases are rarely seen in Australia today, so people may get a false sense of security. Is it important to realise that the bacteria and viruses which cause these diseases will come back if immunisation rates drop.

It is for that reason that we must continue to do everything that we can to increase the rates of immunisation. I strongly support the motion moved by the Hon Liz Behjat and thank her for bringing it to the house.

**HON KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.01 pm]: I am really pleased to be able to support the motion moved by the Hon Liz Behjat. Immunisation is a significant issue in our community. I know there has been quite a deal of debate in the media about immunisation rates and whether children should be able to attend school if they have not been immunised. Somebody said to me that when 90 per cent of the community are immunised and 10 per cent are not, the 90 per cent who are immunised effectively afford that protection to the 10 per cent who are not, but if the figure were to drop below that 90 per cent, that is when problems begin.

Like the Hon Donna Faragher, I too am a parent who has dragged all three of my children off to immunisation and still do. I was a very keen user of Rheola Street immunisation centre, which does a fabulous job. I recommend it to any parent with a child who is a bit gnarly about needles. On the odd occasion I have even had to restrain my son, with the help of a nurse in a doctor's surgery, to be immunised. It is a very important issue. My children have experienced some of those problems, such as chicken pox and rotavirus and other things. It is dreadful to watch a child go through those situations.

I do not know whether Hon Donna Faragher raised it or I had seen it in the media, but there was a story that by immunising our children, we are actually protecting other children. There are other children who may not, because of their own health situation, be able to be immunised. They may have cancer or leukaemia and because of their own vulnerability are not able to have that protection themselves, but making sure that everyone else around them is protected looks after them too. I know that there are different schools of thought on immunisation and I thank Hon Donna Faragher for having articulated some of those matters. It can be a very contentious issue and, from time to time, we do hear about situations in which a child has had a seizure or has had long-term ongoing health ramifications from immunisation. I recall one of my own siblings having a seizure post-immunisation when I was a child; it was quite a terrifying thing to see. But overall I think that we have seen, over generations, the real benefits of immunisation in a reduction in the number of fatalities related to these childhood-type diseases.

I note that it can be quite a divisive issue within families. One of my own sisters-in-law is a strong advocate against immunisation. It has caused quite a deal of debate within the family, particularly when there are a lot of new babies coming into the family. Should we allow these children to be around children before they are able to be immunised? That is a real concern; it is a danger time for them. Nobody wants to see a young child come into contact with diseases like whooping cough. It can be very contentious.

Personally, I think that if there is no other legitimate reason not to immunise a child, it is quite neglectful on the part of that parent and neglectful on the part of other children with whom that child will come into contact.

Parents are really exposing them to potential harm if that child has one of those communicable child health diseases. There are two areas that I am interested in with this strategy. It talks about the record keeping; I think that is really important. I know that Medicare established a record-keeping system in about 1996. I know that from my own experience if a parent is trying to track immunisations—aside from keeping the records in the child's baby book, which most of the time is okay, but sometimes it is not always recorded accurately—that are not recorded or the book is lost, I can say from experience that it is very difficult to put everything together. Pre-1996 it is very hard to find those records. I have had to go Rheola Street and schools, which do not always keep the records of immunisation. Sometimes people changing doctors do not always have access to that information. There needs to be one database, so that all the records can be pulled together. That is something that the state can advocate for because it can be a nightmare to try to piece all that information together. From time to time, parents—or those individuals when they become adults—need to demonstrate that they have had the full gamut of immunisation, be it for transfer to a new school, sometimes for employment reasons or travel reasons. I have had to go through this with my own children and it is a real nightmare to try to pull together dates and the types of immunisation that have happened if not all of the information is there.

Some people are very good at keeping records and other people are not. If we are going to have a database, let us make sure it is inclusive and fully accessible so that people can get the information. It will be a real challenge for the government to try to do that, but I would hope that this message goes back to the Minister for Health because I think it would not only strike a chord with the community, but also be well received.

Another issue that needs to be canvassed is ongoing immunisation. It is all very well for us to talk about childhood health problems, but sometimes while people may have been immunised as children, they still have the potential to contract measles, mumps or whooping cough, which is probably the most common one that I recall. I know there was a bit of a scare last year. A couple of our members thought they might have had whooping cough. I am looking at the Deputy President and note that she is nodding on that one. We need to look at how we deal with adult immunisation—for example, booster shots. How do we remind people about their value and also the importance of maintaining their immunisations? I wonder how many people here have been back to have a booster tetanus shot. It is always the one thing we forget about until we have stood on that rusty nail. I think we have to maintain our immunisation throughout our lives to make sure that we are able to prevent those other problems.

I also am firmly of the view we need to reinstate immunisation for some diseases we hear more about now but which we have not had to deal with for a long time. One of those is tuberculosis. I know that was a significant issue, probably 30 or 40 years ago. Quite a number of people in the house would have been immunised against it at school, but that was phased out, maybe in the early 1980s. But as we see an influx of people coming from different parts of world, we are seeing an increase in the number of cases being reported of TB. I know there have been different cases in which somebody has been overseas and been exposed to large groups of people, and upon their return have had to be isolated. I really think that perhaps some thought needs to be given to how we deal with these types of issues. Do we need to bring back immunisation opportunities for those types of problems? I used to deal with these types of issues when I was a union official representing members out at the international airport who had come into contact with people coming in from different parts of the world. They would contract all sorts of health problems. Immunisation is an issue that they would canvass with us as a matter that they had to deal with because of the health implications that followed.

It is a significant issue, but it is not just related to children; we need to address the issue of how we sustain it into adulthood. The record-keeping issue is also significant, as is the issue of access. I agree wholeheartedly with Hon Sue Ellery about the idea of enabling more child health nurses in our community to have the capacity to immunise children on the spot. I imagine that if nurse practitioners in remote and rural areas in particular had that capacity, it would also enable better access for people. I know that most mothers and some fathers constantly have to take their children to child health nurses in the first three to four years. That is the person they see more frequently than their general practitioner, and they would be a good port of call to provide that service to those children.

I am glad that Hon Liz Behjat raised this issue today; it is very topical. It is an issue that we will continue to have debate around. We should have positive debate. The strategy, in principle, is sound. Some things could be tweaked to improve it. The record-keeping issue is a very good example of how we could do better still. I hope that the member will convey that view to her minister.

**HON PHIL EDMAN (South Metropolitan)** [12.10 pm]: Congratulations, Madam Deputy President (Hon Adele Farina), on your new role. I thank Hon Liz Behjat for moving this motion. I would like to put a father's perspective on this motion. I will not take too long because I would like to allow my other colleagues to say a few words. I am a father. I have two young boys, Matthew and Nathan. One is four years of age and one is 18 months. I congratulate Hon Peter Katsambanis on his maiden speech. When his son got very upset in the public gallery last night, my heart was beating just as much as his. I took the liberty—I apologise to the house

now—of immediately rushing out of the house, grabbing some chocolate bars from my office, and rushing upstairs to immunise him straightaway! I think the medicine worked and allowed our new member to speak.

As a father, I am still learning about fatherhood and what it is all about. I definitely do not want to take any credit from my wife, who does most of the work in our family. I became a father while I was a member of Parliament. For those members in the house who have young children, including Hon Donna Faragher, it is hard when our kids desperately seek our love and attention but we are in here at late hours trying to make a contribution to Western Australia and make it a better place to live; hence, I can understand Peter's son being upset. But this place seems to have that effect on people sometimes!

When I get the time to go to playgroup and to pick up Matthew from school, I meet other mums and dads. I also take my four-year-old son to golf lessons at Secret Harbour; he is going to be the next pro! I am learning heaps from talking to the mums and dads about whether people should vaccinate their kids. Fair enough; there was a mishap when some kids got sick, and I believe some people are a bit reluctant to vaccinate their kids as a result of that. I do not know whether this is a generational thing, but some of the parents I have spoken to say, "I don't want to take my kids to get vaccinated. I cannot handle watching them get the needle put into their arm and getting upset and hysterical. I hate needles myself; I pass out if I get a needle." That is the excuse for a certain minority of parents not to get their children vaccinated. That is very dangerous. As a community, we need to take some responsibility quite soon. I agree with everything that everybody has said so far. We need to educate parents that it is very important to vaccinate their kids. As Hon Liz Behjat said, her son, who is in year 10, got an injection and she said, "Suck it up." That is fine for a 15-year-old, but when a six-month-old baby bawls their eyes out, it eats the parents alive.

**Hon Liz Behjat:** When they're 15 and six foot one, it's a bit different!

**Hon PHIL EDMAN:** Suck it up; that is right! But there is an emotional aspect to it. Parents will just have to try to get over that. It is not easy. Nobody ever said to me that it is easy being a parent, and, gee, was I in for a rude shock; that definitely has not been the case!

I have learnt that a child born in Western Australia today can be protected against 16 serious illnesses with the vaccines funded under the national immunisation program. What is interesting to me is that many diseases can be prevented, but they have no cure or treatment. Unfortunately, as I have just said, some people become very complacent. From what I have learnt, there is no single reason for that; there are various issues. I am not saying that I know it all; I am still learning. We cannot just say that parents will not vaccinate their children because of what happened in the past. I do not believe that to be the case. I do not want our government to say that we need to educate parents just on that one aspect. There is more to it, and that is why I wanted to share what I am learning from the community. Some people have little understanding of the seriousness of diphtheria and whooping cough, which may contribute to difficulties in achieving maximum levels of vaccination. What we need to be mindful of, and what I want everybody to listen to, are three things that I reckon could be used in education and advertising to make sure that parents get their children vaccinated. To see a baby or a young child fight to take each breath would be heart wrenching. To have a baby born who is profoundly deaf because its mother contracted rubella during pregnancy is saddening. To have an unvaccinated child die after contracting a preventable disease is, I believe, unforgivable.

**HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [12.17 pm]: Like other members, Madam Deputy President (Hon Adele Farina), I congratulate you on your new position. I look forward to looking up at your smiling face for the next four years.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Hon Liz Behjat for raising this motion in the house today, and Minister Kim Hames also thanks her. It was with a lot of pride and enthusiasm that the minister launched the immunisation strategy on Tuesday. The main purpose of the strategy, which has been outlined by most members, is to note that Western Australia is only a few percentage points behind the national state average of a 90 per cent immunisation rate. WA is sitting at around the 86 or 87 per cent mark; it depends how we read the graph. But that three per cent is worrying. It is a percentage that the minister wants to improve and he wants to get the rest of the state up to at least a 90 per cent vaccination rate.

More importantly, the strategy is aimed at remote and regional towns in the Agricultural and Mining and Pastoral Regions, so I urge all members in this house who represent those areas to encourage vaccinations in those areas. The strategy is also aimed at closing the gap between the numbers of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children who receive the vaccinations. Quite a bit of homework has been done for the strategy into the areas that have been missed. It is quite surprising. There is a map in the strategy that shows the areas where there has been a high and a low uptake of vaccinations. I note that the minister advised the Premier that his area had a low vaccination rate and that we needed to start looking at that area. I am not sure whether that is because the area is not having a baby boom. This is happening across the whole state; it is not just happening in areas that we automatically think about. This strategy will work towards fixing that.

I would like to remind members of what life was like before modern medicine, and take them back to the polo epidemic of the 1950s—sorry, polio! That was up in Broome; that was my Tourism portfolio! It went off very well last weekend!

It took nearly 60 years to almost completely eradicate polio through vaccination. When the Queen visited Perth in 2011 for the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, it was a far different place from what it was the first time she visited in 1954. Back then, people were told to not shake the Queen's hand for fear of passing on the polio disease. Since that first visit people have walked on the moon, jet passenger planes fly people around from country to country and we have even seen the introduction of colour television! More importantly, we have actually eradicated polio from Australia. However, people seem to forget how little time ago that actually was; it was eradicated by vaccination. If people in this day and age think that vaccination is not crucial, I ask them to please go back to the days when we did not have the modern medicine and vaccinations required to cure diseases such as polio.

My cousin recently had a very bad experience; she recently started a family and her beautiful baby boy, Daniel, three days out from his first birthday, fell ill and went into hospital for three days. Nobody knew what was wrong, but because it was three days out from his first birthday, as any new mother would know, he had not yet had his first vaccination for measles. So, of course, the whole family was quite upset and the parents were distraught at the thought that there might be a possibility their beautiful baby boy had measles. I am delighted to say that that was not the case; they have no idea what the problem actually was, but hopefully it will not come back. However, the fear of the parents and the extended family that this beautiful baby boy could have had measles should be enough for anyone to realise that vaccination is not an option. For responsible parents, vaccination is something that they will be doing to make sure they are protecting their child now and into the future.

During the 10-year period between 1989 and 1998, 581 deaths by preventable infections were recorded. Again, that is another 581 reasons why we should be vaccinating and why we, as a government, need to encourage this to protect the children of our state and our future generations. Those were 581 deaths that, in my opinion, should never have happened.

As mentioned by Hon Liz Behjat, other states are looking at compulsory vaccination; the Minister for Health is not a big fan, and I am glad to hear it. I think that is a step too far for government; we are here to make lives enjoyable and to give people choices, not to dictate and tell them what to do and how to run their lives, but to give them the option to protect their families. I do not think compulsory vaccination is something we should be looking at; as I said, I think it is a step too far.

In conclusion, so that my honourable colleague can speak for a few moments, I would just like to say that I am pleased that this government and the Minister for Health have put this strategy forward, and that we are committed to protecting our children and increasing the vaccination rate across the whole state.

**HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary)** [12.23 pm]: Congratulations, honourable Deputy President (Hon Adele Farina), on your position; your diminutive frame fills that chair adequately. May I suggest that if you raise your voice a bit, people like me might be able to hear what you are saying. Just some advice.

**Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich:** We haven't heard his voice for about four years.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** That is okay.

I congratulate Hon Liz Behjat on this motion. This is a motion of great substance for today's community by the fact that there is obviously great concern that the threshold of vaccinations is falling below the levels required to ensure that our children and future children are free from disease. We have heard from various members about their personal experiences, the processes involved and the information available to young mothers today, and it is quite copious information, yet some of them choose to ignore it. My information comes from Immunisation Australia, and "immunisation" is the right word because vaccination is actually the injection that we all hate to see happen or receive, but immunisation is the injection and the immunity outcome for the intended disease.

I think we should all be concerned that the threshold levels are falling off and that people are opting out. In fact, one in 12 mothers are opting out; that is a huge amount. If that becomes a larger percentage of the population, I think we are in trouble. We discuss in this house issues of great relevance, we believe, like global warming, the cost of living, traffic congestion and how the government is performing in the eyes of the opposition; but I think, at times, the greatest threats to our society are so subtle that we tend to ignore them. This is an issue that quite frankly can be overcome through science and medical means such as a mere injection, but it is a threat that could encroach on our society due to complacency. We live in a time in which we are probably the most privileged community since mankind began. Western Australia, as far as I am concerned, is the greatest state in the greatest nation in the world. We live in a quite soft society. As Hon Liz Behjat pointed out in respect of polio, I do not know how many members or parents here today have witnessed, as I have, a polio victim struggling down the

street to work, in their contorted, twisted gait, as they go through their daily lives. Why would anybody who had actually seen that not vaccinate their children?

Last week I received a phone call in my office, before this motion was even put on the notice paper, from a quite elderly gentleman in my electorate, and he sounded sick; he would not stop coughing. During the conversation I said to him, “Are you well?” and he said, “No—expletive—I’ve got whooping cough. I’ve been suffering from whooping cough for six weeks and I caught it off my grandchild”. Some of these diseases that young children get, apparently as we get older, we physiologically revert to.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.

### ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

#### *Motion*

Resumed from 22 May on the following motion moved by Hon Liz Behjat —

That the following address be presented to His Excellency —

To His Excellency Malcolm McCusker, Companion of the Order of Australia, Commander of the Royal Victorian Order, Queen’s Counsel, 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 KATE DOUST (South Metropolitan — Deputy Leader of the Opposition)** [12.27 pm]: I am very pleased to see that you have taken the chair today, Madam Deputy President, and I congratulate you on your new role; I know from past experience that you will do an excellent job in the chair.

Towards the end of the evening last night I was talking about the Premier having taken on the science portfolio. I referred to an article that appeared in an online newsletter called *Science Network*, in which the Premier was reported as having made some comments about his new role. He stated, in part —

“The prime purpose is to develop the science culture,” he says.

“Most of the industry ... the economy of this state has a science base to it.”

He is right; the Premier is right on this occasion. It is just a shame that it has taken him so long to get to this point and that the government has wasted the last four years. There has been no bioprospecting bill and no solid work coming out of the Technology and Industry Advisory Council to the benefit of community and industry. There has been no significant funding. In fact, there have been significant funding cuts to the industry. Nor has there been any vision or plan for science in this state into the future. I hope, now that the Premier has grasped the reality and value of science for the state, that he addresses these funding issues. I hope he acknowledges that the Square Kilometre Array is not the only science project we should be focusing on in Western Australia and that there are many and varied opportunities for us to explore and to provide future employment for the people of this state. I hope that the Premier will announce in due course exactly what he is going to do with this portfolio and what the Liberal government’s plan for science and investment in science in this state will be. I give members a guarantee that, despite no longer having responsibility for the portfolio, my ongoing interest means that I will continue to raise these matters if the government does not provide us with those opportunities, outline a plan or look at examples that exist in other places that we could emulate. We must seize opportunities to become an effective science and technology hub in this part of the world.

I will talk about a number of other matters. Firstly, I congratulate the President on his re-election. We all regard Hon Barry House as a very good President because of his balanced approach to the management of this house. I was pleased to hear him articulate yesterday the four things that he would like to achieve in the management of the house during this term as President. In the time I have been here that is the first time I have heard a President articulate a set of objectives or a mission statement, if you like. He is to be commended for having thought through those four key issues. I certainly hope that we are able to assist him in achieving those objectives. I imagine that from time to time there may be some deviations from his objectives, but that is all part of the hurly-burly in the fun house that is the Legislative Council. I congratulate him on having thought through those matters and for having a goal. Hopefully at the end of this term he will be able to report back to us on his assessment of whether those goals have been achieved.

I want to have a bit of a whinge to the President about a couple things. Efficiency cuts are happening everywhere in the state because the government has obviously miscalculated how to manage the books. Everyone has been asked to tighten their belts. This type of belt tightening is impacting on us as members. My whinge, or grievance, to the President is about my concern about the cutback in services available to us as members. I am not worried about issues in the dining room or whether toilet doors are being painted or there are new name tags on doors—

those things are irrelevant to me. I am concerned about Parliamentary Library hours being shortened, which restricts our access to the library. Last Tuesday night just before 9.00 pm, I went to the Parliamentary Library because I needed to urgently get some information on a matter about which I needed to speak the next day. The librarians in this place are a fabulous group of people who are always very accommodating, happy to assist and able to find useful information. I was advised that because of cutbacks, the library was due to close at nine o'clock. The librarian happily accommodated me. I understand now that the Parliamentary Library has changed its closing time from 10.00 pm on Tuesday night to 9.00 pm. On Wednesday night it remains open until 9.00 pm. The reality is that members are here later on those days and from time to time we need to access the library. I know that a huge number of people do not go traipsing through the library, but it is so much better to know that one can access its services and information. I hate to see the curtailing of services available to members. It is a real shame because it puts up barriers in our efforts to effectively do our work as members. If the President is listening to my whinge, perhaps he can have a discussion with the Speaker to find a way to keep the library open for longer hours in the evenings when we are working and need to access information. It is rare for me to make that kind of complaint, but it is of concern to me.

An ongoing issue that I have raised a couple of times is the way information technology services at Parliament House are managed. My laptop decided to play up on Tuesday by requiring a strange encryption code. I phoned Parliamentary Services Information Technology—which, again, comprises a fantastic group of people—only to be advised that it could not help me even though I was in the building. I was told to phone the Department of the Premier and Cabinet to speak to its IT people. I was not terribly happy about that, I can tell you, because I was in a hurry to access information from my laptop. I phoned DPC and explained what I needed, thinking I would be able to get the code. However, I was told that I would be called back. I was in a hurry. Why is it that as a member of Parliament working at Parliament House, I cannot get parliamentary IT to help me; rather, I have to go outside the building? I was told that because it is a DPC laptop, parliamentary IT could not help me. The duplication in this arrangement is a nonsense and it is something that we have had to put up with for years. It is very frustrating. There should be one department—preferably the parliamentary IT department—looking after the IT needs of members of Parliament. It knows what we need and can be accessed faster. I am not saying that the DPC IT people do not do a good job—they do. But it defies logic that we cannot use the people who are closest to us when we are in the building.

Again, I hope that the President will take up this issue with the Parliamentary Services Department. I am sure that other members in this place have had similar experiences, and that new members will have those same experiences. IT is part and parcel of our working lives as members, whether we use laptops, desktops, iPads or mobiles. IT is how we communicate with our constituents and our offices, and it is how we access the information that we need when we get to our feet to speak. We need to be able to use those pieces of equipment efficiently without being slowed down. I think after our previous debate, I might need a jab for something!

**Hon Alyssa Hayden:** Flu vaccination!

**Hon KATE DOUST:** Quite possibly.

Those are my two key whinges. I make them on behalf of all members because they are both relevant. It is about how we do our work as members. I hate to see artificial barriers put in our way that prevent us from doing our job in a timely manner. I will move on.

There are a couple of issues hanging over from the last term. Members will recall in the last term I took an active role in my opposition to the development of Elizabeth Quay. I was very supportive of City Gatekeepers. The gatekeepers ran a number of candidates in the election. None of those was successful, unfortunately, but I congratulate and thank that group of people. They were successful in raising issues and in educating the community about some of the potential problems that have been identified through academic and scientific means that could arise from that development. They certainly have people thinking about the issue of congestion in and around the city. That issue has not gone away. In fact, post-election it is an issue that people are talking about more and more. We have not been given any real answers as to how the government will deal with the growth in activity on our roads and the changes to our access to and around the city. Once Riverside Drive is changed, how will people get from the eastern suburbs to the western suburbs? That is the problem of a growing city, and the government must come up with a clear plan about how to address it.

The government is having to cut back on election commitments it made in public transport and other areas. Unless it bites the bullet on this and comes up with real solutions, traffic logjams in the metropolitan area will become a standard part of our daily lives. Last night one of the radio newsfeeds reported that at about 8.30 pm, parts of the freeway were still blocked; indeed, it was referred to as a car park. There are serious problems that have not been dealt with. City Gatekeepers did a good job of raising those issues so that there could be genuine community debate. I particularly want to thank Dr Linley Lutton, Max Hipkins, Joe Poprzczny and Hon Hilda Turnbull for the work they did as part of this very active group. I know that they will not give up; they will continue to work to raise awareness of these issues, and I congratulate them for that.

Another issue that is still outstanding post the election relates to the subcontractors who were working on buildings for Building Management and Works under the Building the Education Revolution program. Those people have been left in limbo by this government. I understand that about 196 separate subcontractors are aligned with a group that has struck financial difficulties in a range of forms because they have not been paid by their head contractors when working on these BER projects. They put in submissions to the Small Business Commissioner. A report was to be given to the government at about the time of the election. We now know that it was given to ministers post the election. The government is sitting on the report. An announcement was made by Hon Simon O'Brien in October about four measures that would be put in place to change arrangements so that these types of problems would not occur again. We now know that the only initiative that was put in place was an education initiative. The other matters have not been dealt with, and they will not be dealt with until the government comes up with a response to the Eaton report, whenever that will be. There was a lot of smoke and mirrors. These announcements were made in the hope of getting these subcontractors to calm down and back away.

As we now know, these problems are still ongoing. We had the issue with the Kiara fire station last week. A subcontractor is \$90 000 out of pocket. We have problems with the prison in Derby, where half a dozen subcontractors are out of pocket, some of them to the tune of \$200 000. If the government had put in place the measures and other initiatives it promised last October that would defer payments to head contractors and enable checking of statutory declarations, perhaps these issues that we are dealing with now may not have occurred. The government has not applied the checks and balances that it committed to. These subcontractors now have to wait another month before they get any indication from the government as to what is happening for them. Unfortunately, it is too late for a lot of those subcontractors. I am aware of subcontractors who have been compelled to sell their houses, they have had to move, they have lost their businesses and they have had to terminate employees—they have lost everything they have worked for. I spoke to one fellow on the weekend who I think is in his sixties. He had to put his house on the market last weekend. He has already had to sell the properties he had set aside for his retirement. He is about to lose another couple of hundred thousand dollars because his contractor has not paid him whilst they are operating under a BMW project. This is serious business.

The government has to come up with some real solutions to accommodate the people who have already lost money, lost their businesses and lost their homes, and ensure that mechanisms are put in place so that subcontractors will get paid on time and in full when they are working for contractors who are engaged by BMW to deliver on a government contract. Having spoken to these subbies, we start to wonder why, if BMW is not going to pay due diligence when organising and managing this work, and if it is not going to guarantee that when subcontractors are employed, they will be paid, subcontractors would put their hand up for a job that was connected to government. Quite frankly, most of them have said that they have always liked working for government in the past because when they took on a government-related contract, they knew there was a guaranteed payment. That seems to have changed now. It all comes back to the way it has been managed by BMW. We have actually seen a lack of management. That is an issue that is still hanging over from the last election. I know we have new ministers. That can sometimes slow down the process, but they have to come up with real solutions. Unfortunately, it is too late for some of those subcontractors. I do not know how some of them will recover from the damage that has been done. They went out and built a lot of these schools and did their job but they have not received payment for it.

Turning to my shadow portfolio, some significant commitments were made in some of the areas that I now have coverage of. It is interesting that the government went out during the election period and made some quite big financial commitments on a range of projects or made commitments to small business. It was very keen to engage with small business during that time and try to gain their support. We have already seen backtracking since the election. Within a week of the election, the Premier was talking about GST cuts and how that was going to impact on the government's capacity to deliver. When I listened to those statements from the Premier in the media, I thought he was really waiting for the opportunity to be able to back down.

We have now seen the Treasurer's call for efficiency cuts. He has called for ministers to come up with program cuts and tighten their belts. It is quite evident that the figures that came out before the election were obviously incorrect. In the full knowledge of knowing what is happening in the state, how can the Premier make these substantial promises and then within weeks say, "We can't do that; we can't deliver that; we're going to have to wait; we're going to have to defer it; we're going to have to cut back"? It is not possible. Having listened to the Premier during the campaign, we know that every time he opens his mouth and makes a commitment, we have to ask ourselves whether that is a real promise or an FM radio promise. That is the question we will be asking ourselves every time he gets to his feet. We are hearing from the Treasurer and the Premier about the things they have to defer; maybe they were all FM radio promises targeted for a particular audience and they hope they are just forgotten. They were not real promises; it was all about politicking during the election campaign. That is what we have come to expect from this government and a Premier who is big on grand visions, short on detail and lousy on delivery. I know that might be seen as a bit of a cynical view to some of the new members who are

enamoured of their leader but over the next four years they will understand that he is a one-man show. The Premier might have made a great Stalinist in the —

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Be careful when you say the word “Stalinist”.

**Hon KATE DOUST:** I know that the Leader of the Opposition is a great supporter of Stalin in the academic sense. That is very much the Premier’s style. What he wants and what he says is the way things happen. We have seen evidence of that, particularly in the way the energy portfolio was managed over the past four years. We had a minister who purported to be doing the job and articulating a number of things and then the Premier came out and said something quite different. Now after four years of the minister saying that there would be no re-merger of Synergy and Verve—we have the minister on record as saying that a number of times, and we agree with him that there should be no re-merger—what is the first thing the Premier said? He said, “Guess what? We’re re-merging Synergy and Verve” because that is what he has always wanted. Now he is going to do it. He is going against all the sound economic advice of industry.

**Hon Helen Morton:** Don’t be silly.

**Hon KATE DOUST:** I am not silly. The minister will come to regret the decision of the Premier to go down that path. That was a silly decision on his part. There is no sound economic base on which to make that decision. It is a real shame that the lead organisations in this state, the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia—I know their views on this, which have been articulated clearly to me over the past four years—have backed down and are just saying, “You go ahead and do it.”

What it will do is drive away competition in our state. It will not deliver the outcomes the Premier believes it will; it is an archaic view. This is something we have come to expect from this Premier. If the Premier wants something, it does not matter what anyone else wants; he will go ahead and do it. We will see over the next four years example after example of this type of thing happening. It will not matter what his ministers think, because they are irrelevant. That is the Premier’s style of management: if he wants to do it, he will do it and it does not matter what his ministers say. Quite frankly, the Premier has made a fool of Minister Collier’s time as Minister for Energy. The lines that Minister Collier ran about not re-merging Verve Energy and Synergy, and the money he spent on consultants on that issue, has been a total waste of taxpayers’ money. If re-merging Verve and Synergy was the Premier’s intent all the way through, the minister should not have done these things; he has wasted government money.

I know my time is about to expire, but I wanted to cover some of those issues. There are other things I would like to canvass and when we get to the Supply Bill 2013 or other bills I will have ample opportunity to talk about issues like the benefits of science to the state or some other problems with the Premier.

**HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary) [12.50 pm]:** It is with a feeling of honour that I rise on the Address-in-Reply to His Excellency the Governor, Malcolm McCusker. I would like to thank him for his address in this place and for coming along and being part of the opening. It is always so special to have him here. More importantly, I would like to acknowledge and thank the Governor and his wife for their amazing commitment to our community. I am humbled by the calibre of people such as the McCusker family. We all think we give part of our lives to community, and many of us in this room would give a lot more than others. However, when we meet people like the McCusker family we realise that maybe we could all do that little bit more to contribute to our community. I would like to thank them for their support, dedication and devotion to those less fortunate than us. When I realise the work that people like them do, I just want to give a bit more.

The last time I stood to speak on the Address-in-Reply in this place, it was my first speech. At the time, I remember I was very nervous; it was daunting and the scariest thing I had ever done in my life. What got me through it was knowing that I had my family and friends in the gallery listening to every word I said. To the new members in this place—congratulations and welcome. I know some of the new members have not given their first speech as yet and will be feeling as nervous, daunted and scared as I did, but they will have their family and friends up in the gallery. They should enjoy it, because it is the only time that anyone will sit here and listen to them without passing judgement, and they will agree, nod and smile at everything they say; so embrace it and enjoy it!

**Hon Helen Morton:** And clap!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** And members will clap! It is the only time members are applauded in this place. Members are listening now, because I am talking about them; otherwise they would not be listening. New members should enjoy the next couple of weeks ahead of them. I recall my early days in this place when Hon Norman Moore, our Leader of the House at the time, told us all to sit back and to watch and listen for our first few weeks to see how the place operates and runs. There are a lot of traditions in this place that members will learn, and they will keep learning every day about what goes on. Go slowly and enjoy your time here,

because before too long you will be up here yelling and screaming with the rest of us. Unfortunate as it is, we all get a bit tainted. I thought Hon Kate Doust delivered a great speech, but sadly she ended it on a sour note, which is a bit sad. We all get tainted in this house. I hope new members enjoy their first couple of weeks and their first speech. As I said, I welcome you all to this place.

I am a newbie myself. I have completed my first term of four years. It is nice to know there are more newbies below us and we are not the new kids in the pond. On that note, it was quite comforting to come into the chamber with such a strong frontbench, but it was also quite confronting. It was comforting knowing that we were in safe hands, but confronting because they all made it look so easy. I wondered whether I would ever get to that stage in my life—hopefully, one day I will. To our former Leader of the House, Hon Norman Moore, and now to our current Leader of the House, Hon Peter Collier: I thank them for their guidance and support and for making this job look easy, because if they did not make it look so easy I do not think that we would all keep coming back. Like others in this place, I give tribute to Hon Norman Moore. As I said, he was very confident and comfortable in his role, but, more importantly, he carried the traditions of this place proudly on his shoulders. If any of us forgot them or did not know them, Hon Norman Moore reminded us quite often—loudly or quietly, subtly or not so subtly—whenever we were off track. One of the biggest fears when we lose someone like Hon Norman Moore to this place is that we may lose those traditions. He has beaten enough of them into all of us on this side so that every time I start to do something, I still hear Norman’s voice in the back of my mind: “Don’t do that! You’ve been here five minutes, sit down, listen and learn.” I do not think he will ever leave us. He will always be here.

**Hon Phil Edman:** He was here yesterday!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** That is right! Politics never leaves us! He may have left this Parliament, but he will never leave politics; he will never be too far away and he will not stray. I am sure when he gave his last address in this place that he felt the way I did at my first speech. I am sure he was a bit afraid, scared and daunted about what lies in front of him. I believe that life is all about challenges and pushing boundaries. Through our whole life we do that, and if we stop doing that we stop growing. We started when we were kids going to school. When we first go to primary school, we are the new kids on the block. We make our way through primary school, and in my day year 7 was the end and we were at the top of the school; we were the big fish in the little pond, all cocky and confident and sure of ourselves. We then went into high school and became the little fish in a really big pond, and we had to start all over again. We then left high school, whether to university, or to the workplace, like I did, and we became the junior again and we had to start again. Then every time we leave a workplace to go to another job, we do it again. Like all of us in this place, we did it when we came here. We might have been at the top of our careers or our field, confident and comfortable and knowing where we were going and had the experience under our belt; then we came in here and became little fish in a big pond once again. I love it because it makes us push the boundaries. It gives us a chance to reinvent ourselves. We may have picked up a few bad habits along the way, and we can decide to get rid of them; or we may like how someone else conducts themselves and we can pick that up. At one stage I worked at the Small Business Development Corporation, where there was a young lady who organised events. For those who know me well, events and functions are my passion and soul. I do not think a week goes by that I am not organising some event or function.

**Hon Jim Chown:** You’re exceptionally good at it, and a great tribute to the government.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Thank you very much, Hon Jim Chown. The “hostess with the mostest” is my nickname. I am quite happy to hold that title! This young lady was a fantastic events manager and she showed me how not to look stressed. The important thing, in doing any job of any kind, is not to look like you are failing—be the duck on the water, smooth and calm but with the legs paddling madly underneath.

Noting the time, I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later day’s sitting.

**Hon Helen Morton:** To a later stage of today’s sitting!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** To a later stage of this sitting—my Whip advised me incorrectly!

[Leave granted for the member’s speech to be continued at a later stage of the sitting.]

*Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! We are resuming debate on the Address-in-Reply. I call Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson and remind members that this is an inaugural speech and the usual courtesy applies.

**HON AMBER-JADE SANDERSON (East Metropolitan)** [2.00 pm]: Thank you, Mr President. Congratulations on your re-election as President of the Legislative Council and thank you for the warm welcome you have extended to all new members over the past few weeks.

I pay my respects to the traditional owners, past and present, of the land on which we meet today, the Noongar people.

First, let me thank the people of the East Metropolitan Region for my election as their representative. I am honoured and excited by the opportunity and am committed to working hard and doing my best for the region. I also pay tribute to the outgoing member for the East Metropolitan Region, Hon Ljiljanna Ravlich, who now has the honour of representing the North Metropolitan Region, and the retiring members for East Metropolitan Region, Hon Linda Savage and Hon Alison Xamon, both of whom have been effective, hard working members and strong advocates for mental health and domestic violence, two issues I feel strongly about. I hope to continue their advocacy of those issues in my time in this place.

I also note that six women were elected in the East Metropolitan Region at the last election. I believe this may be a first for any region in Western Australia. Whether that is the case, it is great to see. It is also good to see the Labor Party preselect three youngish women from diverse backgrounds into winnable positions. If there is a word that sums up the East Metropolitan Region, it is diversity—ranging from the Mt Lawley cafe strip to the idyllic semi-ruralism of Darlington and Kalamunda. The East Metropolitan Region is where sprawling suburbs meet agriculture and industry. For all of its beauty, industry and diversity there are challenges in the region. Some residents I have spoken to say that at times they feel like the poor cousins of those living in the metropolitan region.

The lack of transport infrastructure is felt acutely in the East Metropolitan Region. Those living in Ellenbrook, for example, often have to drive to Bassendean to get on an already packed train and their commute into the city is convoluted and long. Because of this many people continue to use their cars, creating further congestion on our roads. The Liberal government's broken promise on the Ellenbrook train line will have lasting implications for the entire region. As it grows, Ellenbrook could become an increasingly isolated community, with lots of families, including lots of fly in, fly out workers, lacking proper support networks. The likelihood of a range of social repercussions is high. Many of the young children living there now will soon be teenagers. Anyone with kids will tell you that boredom and adolescence is a recipe for disaster. We must work together to connect Ellenbrook with the metropolitan region so people can access educational opportunities and engage with broader communities. The people in the East Metropolitan Region to whom I spoke about Metronet were truly excited by the possibility of actually having a train station in their neighbourhood.

Housing affordability and a lack of public housing is another significant issue. As the recent Anglicare WA report highlighted, low-income families are hardest hit. Rent and house prices in the East Metropolitan Region are on par with the state average. The average rent is now \$609 a week, up eight per cent in 12 months. The Anglicare report sums up the situation and states that private rentals are inaccessible for low-income earners and those on benefits. Anglicare found that access to rentals for a couple on two minimum wages dropped from 6.7 per cent to 2.6 per cent in one year. Overall the situation is very grim. It is becoming harder for people on low incomes to access private rentals, and near record house prices are making home ownership almost impossible for many. Meanwhile, new Homeswest developments stand empty in Maddington for months on end and we find more families living out of their cars in very desperate times.

An issue members will hear me raise again in this chamber is the government's decision to privatise the new Midland Health Campus. During the 2008 election, the Liberals promised a new public hospital to replace Swan District Hospital Campus. As it turns out, the government will not provide a government-owned and run hospital at all. Catholic providers St John of God Health Care will run the new Midland hospital, and it has already stated that it will not provide a full range of services on religious grounds. No terminations, reproductive health advice or contraceptive advice, emergency or otherwise, will be provided. Even victims of sexual assault will not have access to these services at the new Midland hospital. There is strong evidence that women and teenagers at high risk of repeat pregnancies who receive immediate contraceptive advice after giving birth have a significantly reduced risk of falling pregnant again. A number of local doctors have raised concerns that they do not have the facilities to perform often complex procedures, and they need a local public hospital to refer patients to. This is supposed to be a public hospital. It is outrageous that in the twenty-first century an organisation like St John of God can dictate to a woman what is appropriate care in a public hospital.

It is my view that the hallmark of a good society and community is not the wealth it creates for some individuals, opportunities for those who can afford it, or even the success of the market on any given day; it is the opportunity afforded to everyone regardless of their race, economic status, postcode or gender. It is access to quality education and health care; it is secure employment in a safe workplace; and it is the compassion and support we provide to our aged, children, people with disabilities and mental illnesses, and people experiencing hardship and persecution. A line from one of my favourite films *Withnail and I* sums up the way we operate all too often as a society, and it is —

Free to those who can afford it, very expensive for those who can't.

For the past nine years I have gained great satisfaction working for United Voice, most recently as assistant secretary. United Voice is one of the state's largest unions, representing some of our lowest paid workers. United Voice members look after our aged and care for our children and people with disabilities. They are nurses and

patient care assistants and they clean our hospitals. While our children are at school, United Voice members are supporting their education and ensuring they have a clean and safe environment to learn and play in. I believe they are the unsung heroes of the health and education systems. Without United Voice support workers, hospitals and schools simply would not function. They exemplify many of the important qualities that are good and valuable in our community. They do not do these jobs to get rich; they do them because they are important. It is important that we look after our elderly, children and vulnerable. It is important that people are cared for in a clean hospital and that our kids get a good education in clean, safe schools.

What does it say about us as a society when we are prepared to pay people who do these incredibly important and often difficult jobs barely a living wage, and in many cases not a living wage at all? Most United Voice members are women on low pay, under \$40 000 a year, in highly casualised industries, with little to no job security, and often no minimum hours to rely on. To survive on these low wages they have to make difficult choices every day.

A cleaner at Mount Lawley Senior High School once told me that he often has to choose between his medication and putting petrol in the car so that he can get to work. For an aged-care worker, it is the choice between paying for her son's football coaching or putting food on the table one week. For a cleaner working for a contractor in the CBD, her wage of \$18.58 an hour means that at 62 years old she has to continue to work two jobs and does not get to spend time with her grandchildren. As individuals, these workers have little power to change things. However, they do not accept what is dished out to them. They could be regarded as having some of the least political power of any group. They exercise their collective power through their union and I have enjoyed immensely working with union members over the years to give them a political voice. They are willing to organise and work together and improve things for not only themselves, but everyone. They know that the value we put on an aged-care worker or an early childhood educator has a direct link to the quality of care they provide.

Market forces driving wage inequality is self-defeating to the economy in the long run. The broader social and economic effects of long-term, low-income households are far-reaching and costly. In 2011, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development released a report acknowledging that growing inequality was undermining economic growth. The report, "Divided We Stand", found a growing number of low-paid, part-time, less-regulated jobs in 17 of the 22 countries studied. The report warned that the rise in inequality, if unchecked, "will affect economic performance as a whole". Low-income households suffer housing stress, energy poverty and poorer health and education outcomes. Social inclusion and relationships are also impacted.

It is also no coincidence that these low-paid industries are highly feminised. No matter how far we have come with gender equality, the service industry and care work is simply seen as "women's work" and therefore entirely undervalued in monetary terms. The award rate for an early childhood educator who has completed a certificate III qualification is \$18.58 an hour. They look after our babies, our most precious things. The equivalent qualification under the metal trades awards—a predominantly male sector—attracts an average \$26 an hour. The question is not why metal trade workers get paid so much. They deserve to be paid well. The question is: why do our early childhood educators—a critical role in early years development and our economy—get paid so little?

Quality child care is essential to increasing the participation of women in the workforce. Ironically, under the current system, women are re-entering the workforce, mostly unwittingly, on the backs of low-paid women. What does this have to do with Parliament and government? To the federal government's credit, it has acknowledged that it is the responsibility of governments to ensure that organisations that receive government funding pay fair and reasonable wages to their workers. It will provide a much-needed boost to wages for workers in the childcare sector. This will go a long way to ensuring that good people who love working with children can afford to stay. Similarly, the federal government will inject \$1.2 billion into the aged-care sector, specifically for wages. For many people, this will be a life-changing amount of money. It means being able to buy a house and plan for their future. I congratulate the federal Labor government and United Voice members for their unwavering campaigns.

In 2008, United Voice reached an agreement with the previous state Labor government. The agreement would result in contract cleaners who clean government buildings, such as ministerial offices and train stations, being paid the same as in-house government cleaners. Their pay would go from \$14.71 an hour to \$19.50 an hour through their contractors. It would be a truly meaningful pay increase. For the CBD cleaner I mentioned earlier—her name is Lesley Flowers—it would have meant that she could give up her second job to spend time with her grandchildren, which she was looking forward to. Sadly, one of the first things the Barnett government did when it took office in 2008 was to cancel that pay increase. It was a heartless and punitive decision aimed at those who can least afford it. I genuinely believe that until we seriously address the low pay in these sorts of industries we will not come close to closing the gender pay gap. Western Australia currently has the biggest gender pay gap in the country, by a long shot. Not only that, but the gap is widening. I note that Hon Sue Ellery

spoke about this in her inaugural speech in 2001. I add my voice to Sue's in this place and hope to be part of a solution to this growing inequality. The market is not motivated to address this; it is up to government.

I spent the first part of my childhood growing up in Bayswater, where my parents bought their first house. Like many people, my parents separated when I was very young—around five years old. In 1986, we moved to London and lived in the UK almost consistently for the next 14 years. Landing in Thatcher's London in the mid-1980s was a culture shock to say the least, but I am grateful for the experiences it has provided me. I am lucky to have been able to live in both countries. I am a product of the public school system and was fortunate to be in the final year of a fully UK government-funded tertiary education—sadly, now a relic of the past. This allowed thousands of people access to degrees and higher earnings, regardless of their family income or social status.

For all my time in the UK I maintained strong links to Perth, feeling a pull to return home. In 2001, I bought a one-way ticket to Perth, packed up my job in London and said goodbye to my family and long-term friends. I have never looked back. Thankfully, my parents and siblings followed a couple of years later. Both my parents are ten-pound Poms, immigrating to Perth as teenagers in the 1970s. My grandparents were raising four children in a two-bedroom flat in Hackney. They both had jobs, but life was tough. Australia was an opportunity to improve their quality of life and open up opportunities for their children. What an audacious decision to pack up one's life and head to the other side of the world without ever having laid eyes on one's destination. It was a massive leap of faith, but one that paid off.

As a first-generation Australian, I am one of those examples of the opportunities in this country. I have always been passionate about labour politics, but if I had pursued this path in the UK, would I be a member of Parliament by now? I doubt it. The rigid social structures across all parts of British society would have made it almost impossible. I do not have any great connections to important people or patrons. However, in Western Australia I was able to turn up with lots of enthusiasm, hard work and commitment. I am immensely proud and honoured to be elected as a Labor representative to this Parliament. Labor is the party that articulates a fairer, more compassionate and inclusive vision of society. It is our oldest political party, started by working people with the aim of improving the lives of many, not a few. Labor is also the party with a commitment to promoting women.

I have been lucky to work with some inspirational women in the movement; Carmen Lawrence gave me my first job here. Helen Creed, Louise Tarrant, Sue Lines, Carolyn Smith and Kelly Shay are women not willing to accept the status quo, but who work hard within the system to make it more inclusive and accessible. To Carolyn, Kelly and Pat, the leadership of United Voice, thank you for your support. This responsibility I do not take lightly. Mark Reed and Dominic Rose, working with true believers and great young activists has made some hard campaigns a lot of fun. I have also learnt a huge amount working with Dave Kelly over the past 10 years. It is hard to think of another person in recent history who has done more to promote women into leadership positions in the labour movement in WA. I have learnt from Dave to think big, have all my arguments covered and never give up. I look forward to continuing our working relationship in Parliament.

Becoming a Labor member of Parliament is the second greatest thing to come from my involvement in the Labor Party. The first is meeting my husband, Steed. In Steed, I have a lot to be thankful for. He introduced me to so many of the people whom I have worked with and who have since supported me. But more importantly, he is my best friend and greatest supporter. Being the partner of a senior union official is not easy and it takes a special kind of person to put up with the ups and downs, the late nights and weekends of work. When I first floated the idea of running for a seat in the upper house at the last election, despite our busy family life and already hectic work schedules, he did not hesitate; he just said "Go for it. We're right behind you!" One of the many good things to come out of sharing my life with Steed has been sharing our lives with his children, Michael and Sophie. It is a pleasure watching you both grow into the young adults you are turning into. You both are the best brother and sister to our daughter, Chloe, that I could ever have asked for.

My daughter, Chloe: I thank you for bringing the sunshine into my life, for making us laugh, bringing us together and always reminding me of what is important. People are motivated by different things. My daughter is my greatest motivation, and I hope that what I achieve in this role will have a positive influence on her life.

One of the biggest challenges I have faced is pursuing a job and a career that I love while being a mum. Doing what I love makes me happy and a better parent. I do not subscribe to this idea that somehow women cannot do both; that they have to make the hard choices, whereas our male counterparts do not. I will never say that it is easy. It is not, and it is not for everyone. But with the right support, it can be done. And for that I have a few important people to thank. I thank my parents, Kate and Julian, for their unwavering support and practical help. I thank you, Julian, for always treating me as your own, for challenging me and helping me to believe in myself. It is not easy being a step-parent but you have given me the best example to follow. My mum, Kate, is always a source of comfort and good advice. From her I received my education in feminism and sense of social justice. Regardless of how her life has changed, this has never left her. I thank my in-laws, Corrine and Glynn, whose constant and steady support of us has been absolutely invaluable.

Finally, as a new member of Parliament, I take this responsibility seriously and look forward to working with all members to achieve the best outcomes for all Western Australians.

[Applause.]

**The PRESIDENT:** Congratulations. We will just get set up with the little podium and then move to the next speaker.

**HON MARK LEWIS (Mining and Pastoral)** [2.22 pm]: Obviously, it is with some trepidation that I rise here today, but it is also with some excitement in acknowledgement of the challenges ahead. Members, please forgive me; I might be a little bit more local and parochial than some in this speech. I would like to touch on a number of points today, and I beg your indulgence if I refer to these notes just a little bit, or maybe a lot.

Firstly, and as is customary, I would like to thank those who have supported me through the long journey to this place. It goes without saying that my family has had to put up with me being away for long periods over many years. I recognise them in the gallery: my wife, Michelle, my daughter, Bridget, and my sister, Glenda; my son is, unfortunately, unable to be here today. My wife deserves special thanks as she is not only a wife and a partner, but also my very own adviser, and a worthy one, as she has been in politics for over 16 years, I was informed today. She has been around both the state and federal systems, and currently works for the good Senator Eggleston, who I also note is here today. Thank you.

My son, Matthew, must also receive a mention. Being in his late teens through most of those years that I have been away, he would always provide very succinct answers when asked for his advice. It consisted of “Er”, always issued in that same inaudible tone. He is now, thankfully, fully comprehensible. My nearly 18-year-old daughter, Bridget, must also be thanked for her constant advice to me on dress sense. However, much to her chagrin, I have been more than a bit of a challenge in that area.

The rest of my family is represented by Glenda here today. I also must attribute some blame to them for being destined to be in politics and Parliament. Unfortunately, our mother has been unwell, so she is unable to travel. I say to her that she is the bedrock of our family and our moral compass, and I sincerely thank her for that. I am not too sure what our dear old dad would say, but he would always give me the advice of “Sit down, be quiet and listen”—very similar to the advice that Mr President gave us—and he would always say that it is better to be thought a fool than to say something and be confirmed a fool. So I will take his advice; however, be sure that I am listening and, hopefully, learning.

Mr President, as you reminded us during our induction, we are all a product of the political framework and the hard work of those grassroots members who represent our parties, and these people must also be recognised. In my case, these are the branches throughout the Mining and Pastoral Region, and particularly my home branch and its stalwarts Bruce and Caroline May at Carnarvon. From the Durack and O’Connor divisions, I acknowledge Gordon Thomson and Steve Martin as the ever-involved presidents. To all those members who travelled to preselection from places like Esperance, Carnarvon, Port Hedland, Broome, Derby and Kununurra and journeyed to Perth to preselect candidates, the Liberal Party, and the candidates especially, I owe you a debt of gratitude. Also, thank you to Ben Morton and his team at Menzies House. As we have heard a number of times, Ben Morton is an extremely talented young man, and if he should ever decide one day to join politics on this side, the country will be better for it. I thank you all for your support throughout the years.

To the lower house team in the Mining and Pastoral Region, a big thank you to Graham Jacobs from Eyre, Tami Maitre in North West Central, George Levissianos from the Pilbara and Jenny Bloom from the Kimberley. Finally, I would like to make special mention of my friend Melissa Price, who, as a new girl on the block, contested the seat of Kalgoorlie, which she won on primary votes, but was unsuccessful after preferences to Wendy Duncan, MLA, and I congratulate Wendy in this regard. But mark my words: keep an eye out for Melissa in the future. She is an outstanding candidate. Thank you all for running such a dedicated, disciplined and on-message campaign because, as we all know in this chamber, a good lower house candidate is one of the keys to our election to this place.

To my upper house colleagues Hon Ken Baston and Hon Norman Moore, I thank you both for your guidance and your wisdom over many years.

It is arguable—I am not sure he would want this on the record—that Hon Ken Baston is probably more culpable than most for my being in this place as he lured me into politics through promises of lots of merriment and fun. I thought I was just helping out, making up the numbers sort of thing at various branch and division functions et cetera, but eventually the bug bit and the rest is history, as they say. So, a tongue-in-cheek guarded and reserved thank you to you, Ken.

To Hon Norman Moore, I am not going to try to repeat or match the superlatives more eloquently put by others on your contribution here, other than to say that having been through two campaigns with you, I have learnt this from you: stay calm and relax. But I guess it is easier for him to say that after 36 years here and, I think, about eight campaigns than it is for me as a new boy on the block. I thank you also for offering me the opportunity to

take your counsel whenever I need it—except, I suspect, when you are on the sundeck of a cruise ship in the Aegean Sea, but at least you offered. I wish you and Lee well and expect a call from time to time.

Others worthy of an honourable mention are Hon Ian Laurance, AM, who is also partly guilty for me being here before you today. Ian is a former member of the Legislative Assembly, and I was fortunate enough to have worked for him when he was the chairman of a government committee. I admire Ian and his ability to get things done. I purposefully watched, listened and learned from every move he made, and if only five per cent of that has stuck, then I am a lucky man. He also left us a legacy, and it is something that I will always remember when things get tough. He would always say that humour is still allowed. I think that is important going forward. As I said, Ian is a true gentleman and a professional, and I thank him for taking an interest in my career over a long time.

Last but not least are the constituents of the Mining and Pastoral Region. I acknowledge the trust and responsibility afforded me and I pledge to work with them and for them to the best of my ability and endeavours. I can assure them that I will be keeping as close to the grassroots as I can, and I ask that they keep me informed of the local issues that affect them at all times. I thank them for all their assistance to me in my journey to this place.

I would now like to give a short biography of myself. Again, I understand this is customary, to provide others with an insight into my values and my thinking and how these have been formed. For those who remember the Australian country music icon Slim Dusty, I am one of his Cunnamulla fellas, having been born in that small western Queensland town in 1957.

As Hon Norman Moore said in his opening remarks in this chamber on Tuesday night, most people think that Liberal Party members are all born with a silver spoon in their mouth. Like him, I must confess that I was brought up in a most austere and workmanlike way. Whilst I was born in Cunnamulla, I was subsequently raised in central Queensland on a farming and cattle property. My father drew by ballot an undeveloped block and we basically went in there with an axe and some fencing gear donated to us by relatives. Mum, dad and we four kids lived in a shed for many years. My bedroom was a dorm-like arrangement at the back of the shed, with the rest of my siblings, brothers, on a dirt floor. I can still remember the day we poured the concrete underneath our beds. I also remember skiting at school about how flash we were now that we had a proper floor!

I attended boarding school in Rockhampton, not because of any blue-blood destiny, but because there was no secondary facility in our small rural community, so I basically had to. After completing grade 12, I returned home for a stint on the family properties from where I subsequently went as a mature-age student to what is now known as Gatton Campus at Queensland University to study in the field of animal production and health. Whilst maintaining an interest in farming and later in sheep and cattle properties in the south west of Queensland, I started work for the veterinary services branch of the Department of Primary Industries and served in the Channel Country of far western Queensland, even living in Birdsville where I think the population then was about 34.

I ended my work at QDPI as the department's district manager in Mackay in the Proserpine region in 1996. In that same year, some 17 years ago now, my family and I moved to Carnarvon with the Western Australian Department of Agriculture and Food fulfilling positions including program and regional manager, director and more recently as another manager of policy and industry development in the rangelands. Fortunately, the rangelands region I have operated in over the years covers most of the Mining and Pastoral Region, except for the bit around Yilgarn and Esperance. Obviously, this has allowed me to acquire and develop a keen understanding of the issues in the Mining and Pastoral Region. During my professional career, I undertook additional studies and completed a master's degree in applied science in agriculture and rural development, as well as completing a couple of post-graduate qualifications in management.

In my recent role I have been deeply involved in looking at ways to secure food for our future through the investigation and development of new agriculture markets in areas not just in the Ord but also outside the Ord, and more broadly within the Mining and Pastoral Region. I will return to this issue later; however, suffice to say that it is this backdrop and the reasons that my heart and soul are connected to rural and regional Australia. I trust my background and my life experience will provide me with a platform for my new role in this place.

I would now like to turn to my third point, which is to outline my views on why I am here and, importantly, why I am in the Legislative Council and not in the Legislative Assembly. I do not know why but I excelled at social studies with near-perfect scores during primary school—the only thing I actually excelled at. For those who cannot remember or who did not partake in social studies, it was a compulsory part of the curriculum back then and provided to primary-grade students a basic insight into the way our society works and is governed—you know, the whole Westminster thing. Sometimes I think this is now sorely missing from the curriculum. That aside, I guess I have been a student of government for some time and have always been aware of the role of government. Unusually for an ex-Queenslander—members might be aware that Queensland does not have an upper house—or perhaps because I grew up in the Joh era, I understand the roles of the various houses and the

importance to democracy of separation. It is one of the reasons I gravitated to this house, the house of review. I clearly see my role here as ensuring that any legislation that passes before us is not restrictive and/or does not negatively impact on the constituents of the Mining and Pastoral Region. Conversely, if there is a need for positive or proactive legislation that assists and advances the cause of my constituents, and the businesses and enterprises within it, I will act to assist such legislation to pass. In my view it is quite simple.

Fourthly and finally, I must also take this opportunity to admit to be wanting to be part of setting a vision for the future of our region, and more generally of WA. I am often accused by my friends and colleagues, some of whom are in the public gallery today, of being expansive—an arm-waver and a chaser of dreams. I admit I am, but I have learnt to see this as a skill for being able to spot the trends, to connect the fuzzy dots and to see the forest for the trees. I want to bring this skill to this place and to this government to help create a vision for the future for my region and, more importantly, for how we can lay a pathway to achieve such a vision.

If we reflect on our role in this place—only six upper house members and five lower house members represent electorates in the Mining and Pastoral Region—we can see that we have an incredibly important role to ensure that the economic powerhouse of not only this state but also this nation maximises its contribution to our current needs and that it continues to be the driver into the future. I was thinking about calling these 11 members *Ocean's Eleven* but “Oceans to Outback Eleven” is what I will call them. We “Oceans to Outback Eleven” members have a special duty and responsibility to ensure that the government does everything possible to provide a platform to foster and encourage enterprise and industry in this region. Obviously, this principally should be targeted at the oil and gas, mining, fishing, agriculture and tourism industries as a first pass, but there are other new and emerging opportunities that we must foster as well, and I want to be deeply involved in being a part of achieving this.

I believe we need to work towards the Premier's broad vision of engaging with those to the north and to the west, and to continue to work on targeted programs to ensure we achieve this vision. I submit, as I said before, that I am keen to get on with the job and that I will be pleased to be burdened with this responsibility.

When I look back on my four years as a member of this place, I will be satisfied only if I can see that there has been genuine advancement in our region, and I will be particularly keen to see that there has been concerted progress in the areas of —

- converting the significant amounts of water we are blessed with in the Mining and Pastoral Region towards our future food security;
- significantly streamlining approvals processes for projects within a risk management framework, particularly in those industries I mentioned before;
- establishing a flexible tenure system within the Mining and Pastoral Region's vast pastoral estate that is contemporary and fosters future growth in a range of industries and opportunities that will underpin our future;
- targeting infrastructure that sustains and grows long-term productivity;
- increasing trade and investment into our region;
- creating new and diversified industries
- value-adding to and within our supply chains; and
- equality in general in our government services to and within the Mining and Pastoral Region.

I list these areas because I believe I have some background in these areas and can contribute to these key areas of economic development. I know it is dangerous to list these sorts of aspirations within a maiden speech, as it is on the record and people will have a wont to use such self-disclosure to haunt oneself in the future. However, I believe in setting out a plan, if only for myself, and working to this plan as far as possible along the delivery spectrum. It was, however, a little disconcerting to hear, as the venerable Hon Norman Moore said in his valedictory speech, that some things take 36 years to achieve and that some of the key activities that he was pursuing never got across the line. However, we shall persist.

It would be remiss of me if I did not mention one more passion that I have and that I must declare. I, too, am a states' rights advocate. I will not go over ground covered by Hon Liz Behjat in her excellent Address-in-Reply response to the Governor's speech, by Hon Norman Moore in his valedictory speech, or by Hon Peter Katsambanis in his very eloquent speech yesterday, all of which in part touched on federalism. But suffice to say that I believe it is now imperative that we call for a Federation convention to try to restore the original intent of competitive federalism. I think I am right in saying that there have been only two Federation conventions. The first was obviously the one that was held to establish the original charter of the Federation. In my opinion, it is way past time that another convention was held, before we get to a point of no return. I believe there is enough concern around the country about our Federation that there will be support for such a convention; and, if we

make a genuine attempt at it, I think we can claw back some of the creep of centralism that has taken place over the years. I will leave it there. But be assured that I, too, am watching that insidious creep of centralism that is destroying what was originally intended to be achieved by the Federation.

In closing, I look forward to working with all members over the next four years, particularly in committees, and I congratulate all the new members on joining me in this chamber.

[Applause.]

**HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral)** [2.49 pm]: Mr President, may I congratulate you on your recent election as President. May I also congratulate Hon Adele Farina on her election as Deputy President.

I would like to start by acknowledging the staff here in the chamber and in Parliament House. Members may not be aware that I had the privilege of working as a staff member at Parliament House in 2009–10. The staff in this place are just fantastic, and it is one of the most supportive and friendly work environments I have encountered. I look forward to working again with many of the people who were here during that time, and I welcome the new staff to the house. I also want to acknowledge my family and friends in the gallery, and those unable to attend who are watching via the web. It is wonderful to have you here today.

My family background has great significance and meaning to me, as it has defined who I am today and is partly the reason I find myself in this place. My mother arrived at Fremantle port aboard the ship *Ellinis* on 6 June 1964 as an 18-year-old on a journey of adventure to a country she had never been to before and to a family that, although related, she had never met before. That would be a brave thing to do even by today's standards. Well, I can tell members that my mother is a brave woman and a great role model to me, my daughter and my nieces, and, indeed, to many of the other young women she has met throughout her life. In fact, she and my father have always been generous with their time to family and friends, to people less fortunate than themselves and people more fortunate than themselves, and to their community of Carnarvon and the greater Gascoyne region in general.

My mother was born at home on the family property in Northern Ireland on the outskirts of a small town called Roslea. She was one of seven children, although unfortunately for my mother and her family, three of those children did not survive, because they died during their early years. My family faced many adverse times during my mother's childhood due to a number of factors: discrimination according to religious background; a lack of freedom; a threat of violence; a lack of opportunity; and, of course, the economy in general in Northern Ireland at the time, which was not great, and I am sorry to say we see that occurring again at this time. However, no-one could hold down the spirit of the Creighans and the Beggans, and there were many joyous times to be had. Stories of my family's history have been retold many times and are a source of great fun, admiration and inspiration to us all. My mother is a brave and strong woman as a result of her close family ties and the integrity and dignity that her family had in the face of that adversity.

My father was born in Subiaco. His family was living in Carnarvon, but because babies could not be delivered at Carnarvon Regional Hospital at that time, my grandmother had to travel to Perth to deliver her child. The journey via car in 1941 had to be taken over approximately a week. At the age of two weeks, my father was flown home with his mother in a Tiger Moth aeroplane, with the journey taken over a period of two days. The distances travelled and the remoteness of the north west sometimes seem daunting in 2013, let alone what it must have been like in 1941. These people were truly pioneers, and the region has been built on the back of that pioneering spirit.

Interestingly, when I was due to have my first child, I, too, was living in Carnarvon, and I have to say the situation was the same. There was no obstetrician at Carnarvon Regional Hospital; therefore, the expectation was that I would have to leave my family and friends, and my home, to have my child in Perth. So, in 1994, I found myself in the same situation that my grandmother had found herself in some 53 years earlier.

My father hails from a hardworking family. My grandparents owned a banana plantation in Carnarvon, and my father grew up there, with his three brothers. Later in life, and certainly my first recollections of my grandparents, they owned and operated the first commercial laundry in Carnarvon. In later years, they returned to the plantation business and also ran a nursery. I spent many happy times with my grandmother in the greenhouses of that nursery. She always loved gardening, and, to this day, whenever I go into a greenhouse I feel relaxed and have a sense of peace and serenity as a result of the times I spent with her in the nursery.

My grandfather was also a very community-minded man. He was the founder of the Gascoyne Research Station; he was a shire councillor for the Shire of Carnarvon; and he was made a freeman of the town of Carnarvon in 1991. He loved football and was for many years the trainer of the East Carnarvon Football Club. That was the only Indigenous club in the Gascoyne region, and to this day I think he was the only white man ever allowed into their clubrooms for a long period of time. My father is the oldest of four boys, so the expectations on him to carry responsibility were there from an early age.

I have been extremely lucky in my life to have had close relationships with my extended family. Even though many of them lived overseas, my parents always ensured that my brother and I engaged in family goings-on. Through the guidance of my mum and dad, my brother and I are knowledgeable about our family history and have a much defined sense of who we are and where we come from. I think it is so important for children and families to understand where they fit in the world. To me, this is a starting point to base myself on. As we all know, without a defined starting point, it is hard to know what direction to take. This became very clear to me when my grandfather, Herbert Day, passed away at 1.00 am on 15 December 1995. The ties of family ran deep for me on that night. My grandfather had been there in the first throes of my father's life. It was a poignant moment for me when I, his granddaughter, was there in the final throes of his life to comfort him. The legacy that he left and the ties that bind us all were crystal clear to me in that moment. I have tried to teach my own children the value of the relationships they build within their families and with their friends and how important it is to know their history, so that at the end of the day they can go forward with a great deal of confidence in who they are.

After arriving in Perth and spending some months here, my mother commenced her trip around Australia and found herself in Carnarvon in 1965. My parents were married on 12 February 1966. I can recall my grandmother telling me that one day my dad came home and told her that he was getting married. She was quite astounded, because she had never met his apparent girlfriend at that time, so she asked him, "Well, who to, and what is her name?" to which he replied, "I don't know her name yet, but I am going to marry her." My dad denies this story, but I can tell members that it was the start of a great partnership. I was born at Carnarvon Regional Hospital on 22 February 1968, the youngest child of Tom and Margaret Day. I grew up with my older brother, Mark, in Carnarvon as part of a busy, young, industrious family. Throughout most of my childhood my parents owned and operated a transport company called Day's Transport. This business started with one truck and my dad as the only driver, servicing the plantations on the banks of the Gascoyne River. Day's Transport expanded in 1968 when my parents purchased a transport yard and built a house on the outskirts of town in Boor Street, Carnarvon. The business expanded at a rapid rate. Day's Transport also became the fuel distributor for BP Australia and commenced servicing the outer-lying pastoral stations of the Gascoyne region via a weekly mail run. The first fuel order received was for Yalardy station and was for 44 drums of fuel. My parents worked hard, and at the time of selling the business in 1984, Day's Transport was selling 30 million litres of fuel throughout the wider Gascoyne region. The mailman was a welcome sight on many pastoral stations, as sometimes he could be the only visitor in a week or two and was a lifeline to the outside world for many supplies.

As well as spending time building the family business, my parents were involved in the local community, with both serving on many boards and committees. Both my parents were also heavily involved in my brother's and my sporting pursuits and, in my case, my drama pursuits. During this time my father also served as a shire councillor at the Shire of Carnarvon for 10 years. He was also the shire president from 1989 to 1995, and, like his father, was awarded a freeman of the town in 1996. All of my parents' individual pursuits have also been family pursuits; it has always been a joint effort. The thing I recall most from my childhood is that my mum and dad took my brother and me everywhere. There was nothing we were not able to attend, including the Winning races, the Gascoyne Junction races, cricket matches on the RFDS strips on many different stations throughout the region, and camping at Main Roads camps when my dad worked there. To this day, the sound of a truck loading up at 4.00 am for a big trip brings me much comfort.

Out on Boor Street we were a long way from town. The only other people out there were the local Ingada people, who lived across the road in camps and makeshift houses. We had the only phone in the street. It was not a street, really; it was a dirt road, actually. I made a lot of friends on that dirt road, and one in particular, whom I will not name as I do not have her permission to do so. She and I were great friends; however, circumstances separated us when I moved to boarding school in my later years of schooling, and our lives took different turns. Mine was filled with opportunity; I am not sure that hers was. But fundamentally we were the same people when we were young kids at home. She is an Indigenous person and society definitely dealt her a different hand from the one it dealt me, even though it did not know me any better than it knew her. The endemic negative Indigenous issues we face in our communities are something I passionately want to change. I am extremely proud of the Indigenous heritage that emanates from the Gascoyne region. I highly regard Indigenous culture and spirituality, and I want to get to the day when all of society understands and values our Indigenous heritage. Boor Street was a long way from school, let alone from decision makers in Perth or local members of Parliament. I am not sure anyone in any authority really thought anything about what was occurring on Boor Street. That is my reflective childhood thought, anyway.

I attended St Mary Star of the Sea Catholic School in Carnarvon until I moved as a boarder to St Brigid's College in Lesmurdie to complete my schooling. I also attended the Western Australian Academy of Performing Arts to study media journalism. I travelled quite extensively throughout my early 20s, and upon returning from one trip in 1991 I moved home to Carnarvon as I had no job, no money and nowhere to live, so home to mum and dad I went. I later married and had my three children whilst living in Carnarvon, although, as I alluded to earlier, my first child, Jackson, was born in Geraldton after a very harrowing RFDS trip.

When I made the decision to return to work, I moved into a part-time role with Centrelink in Carnarvon. At that time it was the Department of Social Security. This was a complete eye-opener for me. I had never received income support payments and had actually, I am ashamed to say today, never thought much about people who did. I have to tell members that this was one of the greatest and most rewarding jobs I have ever had. Many people on income support payments are in situations about which I would say to anyone here, "There but for the grace of God go I." I met many fantastic people, some of whom I am still friends with today. When people think of income support, they think of people on unemployment benefits. Somehow, mainstream society tends to think that people on income support actually choose to be there, but I found that in the majority of cases that is simply not the case. Income support and welfare agencies are so much more than that. I visited people who were terminally ill, people who had just had babies, people whose family members had just died, people who had been affected by natural disasters, people who through no fault of their own were victims of violent crimes and dysfunctional families, people who had mental health and intellectual disabilities, and people who just wanted to get their lives back on track. I can say that many of them did. There were definitely stressful times, as members would expect when dealing with people who are often at their wits' end with no other place to turn. On the whole, most people struggled with their issues everyday with an aim to improve their circumstances, and rather than diminish my faith in humanity, it increased the degree of inspiration I felt from the actions of many. Many of these people, without opportunities having been provided to them during their childhood, do try to make the most of it and are trying the best they know how to etch out a happy life for themselves and their families. That, members, is definitely something to aspire to. During my time at Centrelink Carnarvon I was part of the statewide leadership team that delivered the new family tax benefit policy to Western Australia. The Carnarvon office at that time was also delivering support to the communities of Karratha, Port Hedland, Newman and Northam and surrounding districts. I travelled extensively to these areas. I am really proud to say that I think we changed the service delivery model of income support in a very positive way. The people who work for Centrelink today, or in fact any welfare agency, continue to face difficult circumstances; however, they achieve many great outcomes for the people they aim to assist, which unfortunately never get reported by the media at least.

After this period, I worked for the Shire of Carnarvon in local government as manager of the Carnarvon Civic Centre. It was at this time that I became increasingly frustrated with government at all levels. The support of government seemed very remote to me, and I could not understand how we had got to the point at which we could not replace a light in the theatre because there were no funds to do so. What I knew was that I was trying to deliver a community service with limited funds, and that the local government was relentlessly under pressure and with no apparent support from state or federal governments at any level. Members may not be aware that I have known Hon Col Holt for some 20 years. In 2007 he visited my home in Carnarvon. It was during a conversation I had with him about my increasing frustration about the lack of support for my community that he suggested I should meet Brendon Grylls and listen to what the Nationals WA had to say about a program called royalties for regions. I come from quite a political family, so my involvement in politics goes back to my parents' involvement, as Hon Ken Baston will attest to. At this time I was very negative about politics and indeed the general concept of government because I felt I had not witnessed the degree of support that I thought communities above the twenty-sixth parallel deserved, and this was in fact reflected in many regional towns and communities across the state. In the early 1990s my mother was actually the divisional president of the Kalgoorlie division of the Liberal Party. My parents had been members of the Liberal Party; however, after a period of disillusionment, their involvement waned as did mine. My mother also ran for the seat of Gascoyne for the National Party under the leadership of Hendy Cowan. Although it was a hard-fought campaign, at that time the Nationals were not quite ready to be a truly regional party, as it was still quite firmly based in the wheatbelt and it would be some time before that changed.

I go back to 2007 when Col Holt suggested to me that I needed to meet Brendon Grylls and listen to what he thought royalties for regions could do for Carnarvon. I can tell members that at that time my response was very negative. I said, "Who is he and why would I want to do that?" I have very much changed my views since then. It is hard for me to imagine now that I would have thought that. I was a very engaged member of my community; I served on volunteer boards and I was across local issues. I knew about local government and I had worked in local government but I had never heard of Brendon Grylls or royalties for regions. It is a testament to Brendon Grylls and the Nationals WA that today I think everybody in regional Western Australia knows and understands who the Nationals WA are and what they stand for. Once I met Brendon, I could not ignore the fact that I thought they were onto something. Once I heard about the concept of royalties for regions, I could not understand why a person living in regional WA at the time would not vote for the Nationals. I believed that only one party was listening to me and, as I said before, Parliament and decision making was a long way from my door, but all of a sudden here it was.

My family and I knew that this was something we just had to become involved in, and so my father ran for the seat of North West for the Nationals in 2008 against Vince Catania. It was a hard-fought campaign, one in which my entire family and friends were involved. We did not win the seat; however, we gained much support and we

watched the count for about a week and, as history records, Vince won that seat from my father. There is no doubt that the resonating message of royalties for regions had begun. Obviously, Vince Catania joined the Nationals WA in 2009 and I have to say that he is a great advocate for the people of the north west and it is a great pleasure to work with him.

So, 2007 began my interest in believing that someone somewhere in government actually believed that where I lived mattered. Prior to that, it really just was not happening. Today I see revived communities across the state of Western Australia as a direct result of royalties for regions and the Nationals in government. When I travel throughout the extensive Mining and Pastoral Region, everywhere I go I see the benefits of royalties for regions. I see how people's lives have been enriched as a result of investment in their communities. There is a definite cultural mind shift in residents in country towns all across the state. There is a degree of confidence, there is happiness and there is belief that regional communities will continue to grow and be looked after. That is what I think royalties for regions is really about—it is about the people who chose to live, work and invest their money, families and legacies in those towns that they call home. I can tell members that nowhere I ever came from mattered more than it does now. I am very proud of my home town of Carnarvon, the amazing, intelligent and generous friends I have throughout the region of the north west, and the fact that where we come from finally counts.

I take this opportunity to thank the Nationals WA state campaign team. This group of people worked tirelessly to assist all candidates within our team. As we all know, election campaigns can be stressful. However, the support I received as a candidate was outstanding. I have no doubt that the success that the Nationals WA achieved at this election was due in no small part to the efforts of those people and I thank them sincerely. I want to particularly thank the branches of Carnarvon, Karratha, Newman, Esperance, Kalgoorlie and Port Hedland. We had a wonderful campaign throughout the mining and pastoral electorate, all as a result of the hard work of those people. I also wish to thank all those people who voted for the Nationals WA. It is a truly humbling experience to be here representing you today and I give my 100 per cent commitment that I will do all I can to represent you well. I must individually thank Hon Martin Aldridge; Mia Davies, the member for Central Wheatbelt; and Clare Creegan for their tireless guidance, incredible professionalism and friendship over the past five years. I must single out, however, Hon Col Holt and Hon Brendon Grylls. These two people are just simply amazing; they have both individually made a massive contribution to the Nationals WA. I thank you for your support to me personally and I thank you for seeing something in me that at times I was not sure was there myself. I, and the people of regional Western Australia, owe you a debt of great gratitude.

Finally, I wish to thank my family—those present here in the chamber and those watching via the web. I cannot do this without you. To my children, Jackson, Ben and Sarah, thank you for always committing although not always understanding. I know it can be tough and really tiresome listening to me talk about politics. What I know now is that my children, before they even know it themselves, are working for their communities trying to achieve something better, and that I think is my greatest achievement as their mother. To my brother Mark and his family—Liza, Liam, Emma, Melissa and Cameron—you are truly a great support to me and I love you dearly. To my friends at home who have handed out how-to-vote cards, filled the room for political functions and allowed me to vent, laugh and cry, thank you. To my mum and dad, what can I say? It all began with you. I love you and this one's for you. Thank you.

[Applause.]

**The PRESIDENT:** Congratulations. Members, the question is that the motion be agreed to. I give the call to Hon Darren West, and once again I remind members that this is an inaugural speech and the usual courtesies should follow.

**HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural)** [3.09 pm]: Thank you, Mr President and honourable members. I am indeed privileged to be here. Only 95 members of Parliament represent the social, geographic and economic diversity of views and characters in a state that is nine times bigger than Texas. I acknowledge the former members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly and their good work, and I also acknowledge the traditional owners, the Noongar people, and pay my respects to elders past and present. I congratulate you, Mr President, upon your appointment, and other members upon their election, and I look forward to working in the institution that is the Western Australian Parliament. I give sincere thanks to all staff in the Council, the refreshment areas, even the outdoor staff, and those who have answered my several dumb questions on what has been a steep learning curve. I look forward to working up a strong relationship with you all as well.

I was born in Edenhope, a small country town in western Victoria, not far from where Bob Hawke was born, and moved to the midwest, near Geraldton, as a toddler when my parents started out farming at East Chapman with \$20 000 and a ute. I attended primary school in Geraldton until attending boarding school in Perth. I obtained a music scholarship and went there as an 11-year-old, which was very difficult as I was rather a small boy. I had a smart mouth and I sang in the choir. I learned some very sound survival instincts at Guildford Grammar School. Later, after we sold the property in Geraldton, we moved back to Victoria to a farm not far from where my father

grew up. During this time my father was diagnosed with degenerative heart disease and subsequently received the ultimate gift of life—a heart transplant. Ten years later we came back to Western Australia for good, purchasing Loughmore at Jennacubbine in the WA wheatbelt with my father, Howard, and mother, Lyn. I decided to go farming and give up a career and university. I probably would have ended up in the mining industry and might have been sitting on the other side with you guys!

**Hon Michael Mischin:** It's not too late!

**Hon DARREN WEST:** It is far too late!

Not so long after this Lesley and I married, and the children arrived soon after; our first child, Madeleine, arrived on this very day 18 years ago. This beautiful young woman is studying law at the University of Western Australia, speaks fluent French and plays piano like an angel. As you can tell, I am more than happy to have my inaugural speech rate as the second most important event in our family today. Happy birthday, princess. Dylan breezes through school at Aquinas College—Mr Sawle asked me to mention Aquinas today!—and consistently knocks out batsmen's stumps. He spends much of his time studying the physics of reverse swing—best figures: four for one. He can fill our house with Hendrix riffs; it is great. He is my new best mate. Tragically, our third child was taken from us as a result of complications at birth. To us, the first star seen in the night sky is always known as "Cooper's star". At around this time I also lost my father, who had the strongest influence on me; he taught me to never give up and that there is always a way. He was my best mate. He was tough in every sense of the word, having survived leukaemia and his heart transplant. We were blessed to have an extra 13 years with this great man. It was a difficult time for all of the family when he passed and I learnt firsthand the difficulties of the farming business and keeping a family together, both of which he did very successfully.

I had the honour of being appointed chair of the Wheatbelt Development Commission for six years, and I am very proud to have been appointed by both Labor and Liberal–National governments. This was a most fruitful time for me as I learnt about what makes the wheatbelt work. This allowed me to spend time with its amazing people and it exposed me to an amazing group of like-minded people who made up the Wheatbelt Development Commission board. They had a broad range of skills and ideas and were able to lift the profile and the public perception of the commission during this time. I was also the chair when royalties for regions started. It was great for country areas and we had to adapt to meet the new funding requirements. I was also exposed to the machinery of government and the associated bureaucracy, who I did not find to be all paper shufflers but, rather, a steadying influence on a young chair who wanted to fix the wheatbelt now! I was fortunate to be able to forge some strong working relationships and friendships during this time and I picked up a lot of good information on the way.

I have had strong involvement in education. I chaired the school board at Sacred Heart Catholic School. The Building the Education Revolution grant, despite all its —

**Hon Liz Behjat:** Faults.

**Hon DARREN WEST:** No; there was a lot of talk about the BER grant, but for us it was great. We rebuilt our little school and ensured its future. Enrolments have risen, resources are better and staff want to teach there. It has been fantastic for the school. After that I went on to be CEO of the School Resources Committee, which allocates over \$700 million to WA Catholic schools and I learnt a lot. A quality education can never be taken away, and it is my view that we are not doing enough in Australia's wealthiest state to address the inequity in education. Western Australia should embrace the opportunities the Gonski review provides and the associated federal funding model that will come with it.

I have always been drawn to the values of the Australian Labor Party, and as a legislator I will fight for those values in this Parliament. Equality, fairness and equal opportunity for all, regardless of postcode, race or social standing are important to me. We need to support our working people and ensure that they can hold aspiration and hope. Australia is powered by its workers. Similarly, WA appears to be the only state in the commonwealth not to care about the gross inequities in funding for those with disabilities by stonewalling the National Disability Insurance Scheme. It is way time that we gave the less fortunate a hand up to maximise the enormous potential of all Western Australians.

I would hope that in my time in this Parliament it has the courage and the energy to deal with issues such as voluntary euthanasia, an issue that I feel most strongly about. It is now the year 2013; there is a better way.

The Agricultural Region is rather large and has around 90 000 voters. The region extends from Kalbarri to Bremer Bay, and as the lone Labor member I look forward to the enormous challenge that lies ahead. I thank the voters for their confidence in me and the WA Labor state executive for endorsing me into this position. Special thanks to the four lower house candidates in the Agricultural Region, Kathryn in Geraldton, Peter in Moore, John in Central Wheatbelt and Josh in Wagin, for working as hard as they did against the odds. We were outspent 10 to one in these seats in real conservative country. These people are true believers indeed, and I thank them for their unwavering support of Australia's oldest political party and what it stands for. We had a great time during

the campaign and it was a great team. Thanks to all supporters and members for your help. Sadly, I also experienced firsthand appalling behaviour during the election campaign, with the recording of voice messages and their subsequent circulation to the media. I understand that the gloves come off during an election campaign, but the fight should be fair. I was extraordinarily disappointed and no apology has ever been forwarded.

It is well documented that the agricultural sector faces significant challenges, the like of which we have not seen since the 1930s. It is tough on the business but even tougher on its people. I applaud the federal government for acknowledging this and offering some meaningful help. Why is our state government not doing the same? The token effort those opposite have put forward is a kick in the guts to a strongly supportive community.

I would not have this opportunity without the unwavering support of my amazing wife and business partner, Lesley, who has been the cornerstone of my journey so far; also my mum and business partner, Lyn, and my sisters, Helen and Jennifer, along with their husbands, Greg and Rob, and my in-laws, Barry and Terri Chattaway, who have supported me all the way. I have enjoyed information and advice from a great many people. Thanks so much to Kim Chance, Geoff Gallop, Eric Ripper, Alannah MacTiernan, Mark McGowan and the many other MPs who have mentored me, taken innumerable phone calls and offered good advice. Thanks also to John Halden, Ruth Webber, Bill Johnston, Sally Talbot, Simon Mead and Lenda Oshalem at the party office who have taught me much about the behind-the-scenes business of party politics. I would especially like to thank Tanya and Kristian, David and Roslyn, Daine and Lisa, and Paul Tomlinson, along with several other family members and friends for the hours of discussion and their street wisdom.

I am a very fortunate Western Australian. It is my view that everyone should be afforded the opportunities I have. Our farm business is growing very well; we no longer have the \$20 000, but we still have the ute! I have had a look around the world and spent a year in the US on a scholarship; there is truly nowhere else like here. I look forward to working extremely hard with my Labor colleagues. We are the light on the hill and the voice of those without one. There is enough for everyone in Western Australia and I find it impossible to condone the allocation of hideous wealth to some and poverty to others. This needs to change. We are the ones who have the job and we need to do it as a collective. We must never give up when the going gets tough. I am proudly driven not by what I can be, but how I can help others. I look forward to the next four years. We have an obligation to future generations to leave the place better than we found it.

[Applause.]

**HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [3.19 pm]: It is with pleasure that I start my speech again, after some magnificent first speeches. I would like to congratulate all the members who have just delivered their first address in this place—Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson, Hon Mark Lewis, Hon Jacqui Boydell and Hon Darren West.

I had been saying that this is a special time in the house. As I said, I am happy that the loved ones and families of the new members are here to listen and enjoy their maiden speeches, because it will be the last time they do! From now on their dinner tables, barbecues, functions and parties will be nothing but politics! They will try to go undercover to a social event where people do not know them and not tell people who they are, just so they can be treated normally for a change. But that will not last long; the secret will get out and the barbecue conversation will turn to politics. They will be responsible for everything that went wrong in the past and will in the future. Whether it was a federal, state or local government issue and whether it was a Labor, Liberal or Green idea, they will cop it! So enjoy this pleasant time.

I was also reflecting on Hon Norman Moore's time in this place, and I will finish that off by saying it has been an honour to have been able to spend some time with him in this chamber. As I said, Norman will be feeling the same way we all felt when we first came into this place, but this is his time to experience life outside Parliament and beyond the walls of politics. I know he will not stray far—politics is always in our lives—but hopefully he will now enjoy a lazy morning and a cup of tea, and read the paper and have a laugh that it is not him in the cartoon this time; hopefully it will not be one of us!

**Hon Simon O'Brien:** He was here yesterday.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Hon Norman Moore cannot stay away! Now is his time to go and enjoy life after politics. Life is about challenges, and Hon Norman Moore's challenge now is to live his life outside politics. I wish him all the best, and I hope the biggest thing he gains from this is happiness, and he gets to spend a lot of precious time with his family because they are the ones who missed out during the 36 years he spent in this place.

Last week, Hon Simon O'Brien made a fantastic contribution to the Address-in-Reply. He spoke about an iconic town in his region that we all know—Fremantle. He spoke about how the retail sector in Fremantle is suffering, and that a lot of the big retailers have moved out. He said that the heartbeat of Fremantle is in danger, and that he is looking at ways to redevelop Fremantle to bring back business and revitalise it. I encourage him to do that because I was very lucky to become a member for East Metropolitan Region where the Midland Redevelopment

Authority exists—now the Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority. It, along with the City of Swan and the Swan Chamber of Commerce, has put the heartbeat back into Midland and brought back retail; I am afraid that that is maybe where some of Fremantle’s retailers have gone, Hon Simon O’Brien. They moved from Fremantle to Midland, knowing that that is the place to be in the metropolitan region.

**Hon Simon O’Brien:** They’re certainly lost then, aren’t they?

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Midland is the up-and-coming town centre for the metropolitan area; I often call it the “Subiaco of the future”. One day all members will come and enjoy coffee on the strip along The Crescent in Midland, I am sure—I will invite Hon Simon O’Brien along!

**Hon Simon O’Brien:** They are doing a great job out there.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** I thank Hon Simon O’Brien.

As Hon Simon O’Brien mentioned, he has a great working relationship with the City of Fremantle; I also have one with the City of Swan. I make special mention of the chief executive officer, Mike Foley, and the mayor, Charlie Zannino; their passion for Midland is second to none, and their understanding of how to work with state government and at the community level to get the best for the region is absolutely commendable. They worked very hard with the business community and other people in the community to make sure that a redevelopment authority was brought into Midland. I thank them for that and the working relationship we have had in the past four years; I hope that continues for at least another four.

Another of the bodies responsible for fighting for a Midland Redevelopment Authority was the Swan Chamber of Commerce. Many in this place know about my relationship with the Swan Chamber of Commerce, but it goes without saying that it is a very professional body that should be applauded; I know it is highly recognised by members on both sides of the chamber for its professionalism and dedication to the fight for what is best for Midland and its business community.

The Midland of today is a far cry from what it was 10 years ago. My first part-time job during my school years was in Midland, as was my first full-time employment. I started my first business in Midland, and, believe it or not, my electorate office is now on the same site—some anchor at that property keeps pulling me back for some reason! Midland has come a long way in the past 20 years through redevelopment. The high-rise apartments and inner-city living style in Midland has turned it around. For example, my office is on the ground level of a four-storey apartment building, and there are a number along Keane Street and The Crescent. That has enabled Midland to be vibrant after 5.00 pm. It used to be that everyone would leave work at 5.00 pm and go home; there would be nobody on the streets of Midland, so there was no reason for a coffee shop or a restaurant to stay open. As we know, as the streets empty, undesirables come in and the streets become unsafe. This inner-city living has created foot traffic after five o’clock, which has meant restaurants, takeaway services, cafes and local pubs are staying open; people are now walking around the streets and stopping in for dinner, a coffee or a drink on the way home, which, in turn, enables other retail outlets to pick up passing traffic. It is a bit like the chicken and the egg: the people need to be there first to make the businesses and retail sector viable, so then people want to invest in the town. But first we need people to live there, and people do not want to live there unless they have somewhere to shop or to eat. The Midland Redevelopment Authority, City of Swan and Swan Chamber of Commerce took a great risk in getting the development going; they encouraged people to come and invest in the future of Midland, and it is now starting to work and they are now starting to reap the rewards.

The foot traffic, as I said, also makes the streets of Midland safer after five o’clock. We all do long hours, and my street used to be quite busy, but after 7.00 pm local people would jump into shopping trolleys and have a little personal rally race competition up and down the street. I make special mention of the east metropolitan police, who are based next door. They have taken that on board and increased their presence around the centre of Midland and on the way to Midland train station, which has generally been an area to be avoided after 5.00 pm. With the help of the police and the redevelopment of the town centre, Midland is becoming a better, safer and enjoyable place to live. I honestly believe the people who live in and around Midland now enjoy it, and welcome the change.

That they have welcomed the change so much, I believe, was reflected in their vote on 9 March at the recent state election, when the people of Midland voted, for the very first time, for a Liberal candidate to be their member of Parliament. We had a very amazing, energetic and enthusiastic man run for our seat of Midland in Daniel Parasiliti, and I put on the record his amazing work, passion and never-say-die attitude. I actually wondered whether we were ever going to be able to keep up with him during the election. I have never seen someone doorknock so fast at so many homes! He used to run between the doors, even with a backpack filled with his paraphernalia as he was doorknocking. As he was running from one house to the other, a couple of gentlemen came out and started chasing him.

**Hon Jim Chown:** They thought he was the sitting member, obviously!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** No, no! They looked at him and recognised him, so they said, “Are you the young man running for the Liberal Party for Midland?” He said, “Yes, I am.” “They said, “Some words of advice—don’t run in the streets of Midland or we’ll think you’re robbing a house!” They stopped chasing him and had a good chat. We have quite a few good stories about Daniel, but his dedication and his—I cannot think of the right word—commitment to the people of Midland and the community is outstanding. He continues to work in the community as he is a local physiotherapist; he works with the Guildford Grammar football team as its physiotherapist; he is on the PCYC board; and he trains people in kickboxing out at Koongamia. Even though, sadly, he was not elected as the member for Midland, he will continue his work in the community.

It was outstanding that for the first time in history more people in the community voted for a Liberal candidate. Midland has been held by the Labor Party since 1996, but this time people voted very strongly in favour of the Liberal candidate, with 9 362 votes for Daniel Parasiliti as opposed to the sitting member’s count of only 8 489 votes. That is a difference of 873 votes; the local community of Midland preferred Daniel Parasiliti over its sitting member. I can only hope that the sitting member now realises her community wants change and is not happy, and that she takes that up and steps up and looks after them over the next four years. Until we are able to get in Daniel Parasiliti as our member for Midland, I will continue to represent the very worthy people of Midland as best I can. For example, members may recall in my first speech to this place, but also in a couple of others, I spoke of a need for a university in Midland. It was a very proud day in February when the Premier came out and announced that this government will support a university site at the old Midland railway workshops. When it was announced, a few bottles of champagne were cracked. I, unfortunately, had to keep on working. I received a couple of phone calls from businesses in the area which were celebrating and which, some of them told me, had been working for nearly 20 years to attract a tertiary education facility of some kind to Midland.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Since the last time Colin Barnett promised it.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** At least this government acknowledges that Midland deserves a university. I have not seen any representation or work from the other side to try to get a university for the people of Midland. The people in Midland and the surrounding area deserve a university. As I have heard so many times, students in the East Metropolitan Region have to catch a bus, a train and then a bus to get to a university. Sometimes it takes them three hours to get there and back. That is not very encouraging for getting people into tertiary education. I applaud the Premier and the Minister for Education, who came out on that day and announced our \$22 million commitment to constructing the facility at the old Midland railway workshops site. The Premier and the Minister for Education are working with Curtin University to see that happen. I promise the members in this house and the people of Midland and the East Metropolitan Region that I will make sure they keep their promise and we see a university for Midland.

Another issue that I have raised in this house is the Perth–Darwin highway. I am sick and tired of seeing the name Swan Valley bypass. I have tried to correct those more educated than I, but it does not seem to get through, especially to the media. The Swan Valley is a fantastic tourism destination and “bypass” should never be next to it. It should be the Perth–Darwin highway stage 1, or stage 2—whatever it is that we are about to build.

**Hon Jim Chown:** Gateway to the Swan Valley.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** It is not going to the Swan Valley, Hon Jim Chown. It is taking heavy haulage vehicles and trucks off the roads of our fantastic tourism destination, the Swan Valley, as Hon Jim Chown, as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport, well knows.

**Hon Jim Chown:** I stand corrected.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** It is designed to alleviate the impact of heavy haulage vehicles through our fantastic tourism destination of the Swan Valley by getting them off Great Northern Highway and onto Tonkin Highway. Obviously, we will need to build a new interchange to align Tonkin Highway with the new Perth–Darwin highway—please get that right: Perth–Darwin highway—which will go around the back of Ellenbrook to Muchea. The reasons for the need to build the new highway are many. I have spoken about it many times in this house, so members here are sick and tired of hearing my truck stories.

**Hon Jim Chown:** No; never!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** As members all know, I have taken two trips—in a heavy haulage truck and a road train—one to Tom Price and one to Karratha. It is vitally important to get these trucks out of built-up areas so that it is safe for the truck drivers and safe for our general motorists. I am pleased the Minister for Transport, Hon Troy Buswell, knows and understands that. I am also pleased that at long last the federal government has acknowledged that. I know how many times I wrote to Hon Simon O’Brien when he was Minister for Transport and to Hon Troy Buswell. I know also how many times they wrote to the federal government asking for assistance. I was delighted when I saw the federal government had committed \$400 million to get the Perth–Darwin highway up and running. I will keep this house informed, as I am sure will our parliamentary secretary,

of the progress of the Perth–Darwin highway. As I will for the university, I will continue to keep on that pressure to make sure it is delivered as soon as possible.

One of the other great events I went to in February, prior to the election, was the opening of the brand new Governor Stirling Senior High School. Hon Donna Faragher had been working long and hard on that even before I entered Parliament. It was unfortunate that she was unable to attend the opening, but she was about to give birth to her beautiful new baby boy, so I made sure she was represented. I and candidate Daniel Parasiliti attended and Hon Peter Collier and Hon Colin Barnett were also there. They came out to Midland and the East Metropolitan Region quite a lot during the lead-up to the election.

**Hon Peter Collier:** It was my second home!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** It was.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** You had the candidate at the school opening; is that correct?

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** He was there because he is part of the local community and was invited as a community representative.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** He wasn't there as a candidate.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** No. He was not even acknowledged as the candidate, Hon Sue Ellery; he went along as a community member. As I outlined earlier, he is a strong community member involved in the police and community youth centre, and with Guildford Grammar, and that is how he got his invitation. As Hon Sue Ellery may know, the students of Governor Stirling Senior High School shared the Guildford Grammar school site during construction of their new school. Daniel knows a lot of the students and parents. As well as coaching them in football, he did physio work with them. He was invited in his own individual right because he is a highly regarded member of the local community in Midland. Yes, we were all there. We were very happy to see this fantastic brand-new Governor Stirling Senior High School opened. The amount of \$63 million was spent on this public high school.

**Hon Peter Collier:** Sensational.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Hon Peter Collier, it is nothing like the school I attended, although it was a little while ago. If my school had been like Governor Stirling is now, I think I would have turned up more often! It is second to none; it is a two-storey building with commercial-grade kitchens, a fantastic science area and what we called back then a manufacturing area. I do not know what it is called now.

**Hon Peter Collier:** Design and technology.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** The students seem to love their brand-new school, but, more importantly, so do the teachers. They are overwhelmed with the room, the space and the view. For those who do not know, the location of Governor Stirling high school is right on the Swan River. As parliamentary secretary for tourism, I might have considered the site could have been better used for a hotel, but I am sure the Minister for Education would have fought us on that! There are fantastic views of the Swan River and our natural bushland. It will be a delight for students to go to school there. The school currently has 600 students from years 8 to 12, and can accommodate up to 1 000 students. As I said, it was \$63 million well spent on this fantastic public school.

Quite a few other commitments have been made to the East Metropolitan Region, and I would like to address a number of them. As most members here know, I live in Ellenbrook. Gngangara Road has been a bugbear of my life for quite some time, but the fantastic member for Swan Hills, Frank Alban, who had Ellenbrook in his electorate, had been raising the need to dual Gngangara Road, along with Hon Donna Faragher and me. Members need to understand that it is not the population of Ellenbrook that has increased the traffic on Gngangara Road. When I go home up Lord Street, we are stuck trying to get across the roundabout into Ellenbrook because of all the traffic going west. I do not know where it is going. I do not know whether it is going to the Vines, to Bullsbrook or to Midland, but all the people on the west coast are using Gngangara Road as their main—I do not know —

**Hon Jim Chown:** Arterial road.

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Yes, their route through. I am not sure why they are not using Reid Highway or Tonkin Highway. Members need to realise that Gngangara Road is a local government road, so it is the responsibility of the City of Swan. However, because Frank Alban had worked extremely hard on raising this matter, as did our candidate for West Swan, Natasha Cheung, we have announced a figure of \$14 million to dual Gngangara Road. Paul Miles, the member for Wanneroo, worked with his local government, the City of Wanneroo, and got Ocean Reef Road, as it is now called, dualled up to Alexander Drive, so now when people go along Ocean Reef Road and hit Alexander Drive, they hit Gngangara Road, which is a single lane. We really need to upgrade that, and that is what this \$14 million is going to do. There are 25 000 vehicles that travel along Gngangara Road per day. It is 7.9 kilometres of dual carriageway and the cost will be spread across the 2013–14 and 2014–15 budgets. By the time it is all finished, it will go from Alexander Drive all the way through to West

Swan Road, but I believe it will be done in stages between Beechboro Road and Drumpellier Drive, then on to Pinaster Parade, and then on to West Swan Road.

I look forward to being kept in the loop with that. The City of Swan will take ownership of that project. As it has demonstrated already, with the works that it has done at the lights at Drumpellier Drive and Gngangara Road, and the dualling between Drumpellier Drive and Pinaster Parade, it has done an excellent job. I know that the City of Swan will perform that work at the highest level and in the quickest time to make sure that there is less interruption to the local traffic. I have to tell members that the local community understands when there are roadworks. The community knows that those roadworks will improve the road, so generally it is a little bit more patient. But I ask members of the community to make sure that they keep being patient when the roadworks start, because in the long run they are for our benefit.

Still on Gngangara Road, another million dollars was given to the City of Swan to do a roundabout at the intersection of Gngangara Road and West Swan Road. I do not know whether many members are aware of this intersection, but if they frequent the Swan Valley to taste some of the magnificent wine and produce there and they go along Gngangara Road, they will hit West Swan Road. People call it a T-junction, but it is a four-way intersection, just slightly off to the left going through to the old church. It is a very dangerous intersection. When people are leaving Gngangara Road and going into West Swan Road, a lot of traffic is coming from The Vines, so a lot of people take little risks and plant their foot to try to get in front of a car quickly, and quite often accidents occur there. The roundabout at that intersection will allow traffic to flow more easily. As I said, the roundabout will work so much better than lights, because there is generally pressure on only one direction at a time depending on whether it is morning or night-time traffic. A set of lights would not work as well; the roundabout will allow traffic to keep flowing. Lights have recently been installed at Drumpellier Drive, so the break provided by those lights will assist with the traffic flow at the roundabout at Gngangara and West Swan Roads. Again, another million dollars has been spent by this government on the great people of the East Metropolitan Region, in particular in the seats of West Swan and Swan Hills. I have met with the mayor, Charlie Zannino, and the CEO, Mike Foley, at the City of Swan and we have looked at the roundabout. I travel through the intersection quite often. The roundabout is nearly finished. I cannot wait for it to be up and running. I know that the community is quite happy to see that money is being spent on roads in the local area.

Getting off roads but still staying on transport, during the election I went out with the then candidate but now member for Forrestfield, Nathan Morton. Nathan Morton has been a fantastic candidate for the last four years. He ran at the previous election and lost by just 98 votes. No matter what side of the chamber members sit on, 98 votes is a hard loss to take. It is just like our candidate in Midland losing by 24 votes; that was even harder. Nathan stuck in there for the following four years, being the deputy principal of a local high school, and has kept his finger on the pulse of the community over those four years. His hard work was rewarded when he won the seat on 9 March. I would like to put on the record my thanks to Nathan for his work. We in the upper house know that the work of our lower house members reflects the numbers in the upper house. Nathan worked hard and I worked with him. He will be a fantastic member. I know that he will represent his community with pride and vigour and will do everything he possibly can to deliver better outcomes for the people of Forrestfield.

While we were out and about in January, Hon Troy Buswell met us at the Kenwick train station, where we announced \$6 million to upgrade the station. As most members know, the Armadale line is quite an old line, and the train stations along the line are a bit tired, a bit worse for wear and, more importantly, quite unsafe. If the Maddington train station is not yet finished, it is due to be finished soon. We have also committed \$6 million to upgrade the Kenwick train station. The upgrade will include ramps and access for wheelchairs, as well as lighting and security. The problem with the Kenwick train station is that members of the local community do not like parking their cars there, so they drive to Maddington train station and park their cars there. Even though they might be closer to Kenwick, due to safety and security reasons, they opt to go to Maddington. As members can imagine, if the surrounding population of those two train stations uses only the Maddington train station, obviously it cannot cope. It is not designed to cope with those numbers, so the need for the upgrade of Kenwick train station is vital. I again commend the government for listening to the general public and to members. I spoke to the Premier when I took a train trip with him about a year ago. We went to the Kenwick and Maddington train stations, much to the despair of his security officers. I said that if he wanted to see the issues on the train line, he needed to stop at the train stations with the real issues, and, to his credit, he did. We got off at the train station at about eight o'clock at night in the rain. The first thing he said was, "I'm getting wet" and I said, "Yes; we don't have shelters at the train stations on the Armadale rail line." Part of the upgrade will include the construction of shelters, so that when people get off the train, they will not get wet if it is pouring rain and will not have to wait in the heat in summer. This \$6 million is well worth it for the Kenwick train station and for the local community. Hopefully, with the increase in lighting and security, the people who live within walking distance of Kenwick train station will feel safer to walk there and those who need to drive will feel safer about leaving their vehicles there. By doing that, obviously, the management of the train station can go back to operating for the numbers for which it was designed to operate.

I want to talk about Maida Vale Primary School. As I said, Hon Peter Collier really put a lot of effort into the East Metropolitan Region and again listened to me when I grabbed his ear a few times and wrote a few letters. Well over a year ago, I met up with the principal of the school, Darren Greaves, and the parents and citizens association president, Dee Cooke, to discuss their school. Maida Vale Primary School is situated along Kalamunda Road, and before I visited the school I assumed it was on the other side of the road because I could not see the school from the street. It is in a beautiful bush setting, which is fantastic for the students, but the problem is that people in vehicular traffic travelling along the road do not realise the school is there. So, the first thing I wanted to do was get the 40 kilometre flashing signs installed, which I am pleased to say are up and operating. General motorists much like I am drive along foolishly not remembering that it is school time, because they are in their own little bubble when they are driving from appointment to appointment. I am now reminded when I see those great big “40” flashing LED signs that this little idiot should slow down because it is a school zone and the signs are there to keep our children safe. That was the first reason for going out to Maida Vale Primary School, but when I was there I noticed how old the school was. Although it celebrated its fiftieth anniversary recently, I am sure the buildings were not built 50 years ago, but they are so old that they are like old dormitories.

**Hon Jim Chown:** In which electorate is this?

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** It is in the electorate of Forrestfield.

When I went out and looked at the school, the principal and the P&C president showed me around. The first thing the teachers wanted to show me was the ladies’ bathrooms. They are concrete toilets with a great big open gap underneath the doors. The toilets are quite low to the ground and the sinks are silver-coloured metal. They are not toilets that I expect people at work in this day and age should have to use—and there are only two cubicles for the entire staff at the school! Obviously, not only are they old and not up to the standard desired for the workplace these days, but also they do not cater for the number of teachers at the school.

Another thing I noticed when I walked in there was that everyone seemed to be on top of each other, including the person at the reception counter, the administrator and the principal, and the sick bay is just a little fold-out bed on the side of the hall as people walk into the school. There really are not enough facilities available for the school to operate at the standard we expect for our schools. Hon Peter Collier not only agreed to spend \$5 million when he saw that the school was worthy of the funding, but also gave me the honour and privilege of going out there on 7 December to play Santa Claus and deliver the good news to the school. I have to say that I have never seen so many teachers and parents screaming, jumping up and down and hugging each other with joy when they found out that they had received \$5 million. That \$5 million will provide a four-classroom block, an administration building, and an upgrade to the parking facilities and entrance statement, as well as a canteen. Planning for the work will commence next financial year, 2013–14, and will be completed in 2015. As I said, the principal was over the moon and so were the P&C president and members. I look forward to going back there and cutting the ribbon if Hon Peter Collier will allow me to share the scissors with him. We would love for the Minister for Education to come out and do that. This is a great milestone for this region and this electorate. An investment of \$5 million into one of our primary schools is fantastic. When I was there, one of the mothers told me that she had just moved to the area and had set about trying to find a school for her children to attend. When she walked into the school and saw the chaos—the sickbed in the hallway and a lady sitting there counting money from fees she had collected—she decided that the school was too disorganised and walked straight back out again. She looked at a couple of other schools, but there were no vacancies, so, as she said, she was forced to go back to the school. She is so glad that she did, because she said the students, teachers and principal are a fantastic group of people and a great community. She is now the president of the parents and citizens association because she wanted to work towards getting rid of the first impression she had had of the school so that new mothers who check out the school are presented with an organised school and are not scared by its appearance. As we all know, we should not judge a book by its cover, but often we do. That is another success story for the East Metropolitan Region, particularly for the seat of Forrestfield. I thank the Minister for Education for that.

Unfortunately—or, I should say fortunately—I have to thank the Minister for Education again because the money did not stop there! I was able to continue to be Santa Claus at another two schools. I went to East Kenwick Primary School, which is an amazing little community. Principal Janice Hepburn is a hardworking, dedicated woman. I take my hat off to her. I went along to the end-of-school assembly. I thought my parents had it tough when I had to learn the recorder. East Kenwick Primary decided not to do the recorder this year; rather, its students learnt the drums! I think my parents had it easy with my learning the recorder! The students played on 40 drums and did a session that went for 15 minutes. My ears were ringing when I got up to deliver the good news. The students were so enthusiastic. By the end of their 15-minute session, they would have been a bit tired. They may have been easier to teach after their drumming lessons. I take my hat off to the parents of students at East Kenwick Primary School for assisting their children in learning music and for encouraging them to practise their drumming at home. We were able to provide East Kenwick with \$200 000 for the construction of a kiss and drop-off parking area. The area where the parents drop their kids off is a sand track on the edge of the corner of

the school property. It is chaos at school pick-up and drop-off times, with parents angling their cars in the best they can before throwing their kids out of the car—they are lucky to get a kiss as they do—and driving off before another parent honks or toots to get into their spot. The kiss and drop-off parking area will make the school zone a lot safer. East Kenwick Primary School also received a 40-kilometre-an-hour flashing LED sign. That sign, together with the kiss and drop-off area, makes parents' daily picking up and dropping off of their loved children so much easier and safer. Hopefully, little Jimmy now gets a kiss before his mum throws him out the car door. She might also have time to make sure he has his lunchbox before he goes! Money has also been provided for play equipment for the senior students. They will be getting a flying-fox, a jungle gym, climbing rope and shade sails. I do not need to tell most members that the students of East Kenwick Primary School are not privileged students and that any additional resources we provide will go a long, long way.

Forrestfield Primary School was also a recipient of my Santa trip around the schools. It got \$150 000. Principal Diane Greenaway is amazing and outstanding. Quite often students at Forrestfield Primary turn up in the morning without having had breakfast or without shoes or a uniform. Diane runs a breakfast club and provides uniforms for the kids.

**Hon Peter Collier:** Is that the one that had the fete?

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** That is the one the minister came to. Hon Peter Collier came along to look at and launch the community garden centre. That was a great day. I thank the minister for coming out there. I know the teachers and students were happy to have the Minister for Education supporting their hard work.

Forrestfield Primary School started a community garden a couple of years ago and I became involved in that about three years ago when I sponsored one of the garden beds. The school pulled up an old tennis court and turned it into a community garden, and community members were asked to sponsor the garden beds. The garden beds are used to teach the students how to grow vegetables and herbs from seed. They are growing things such as mint, basil, capsicum, eggplant, cucumber, carrots and potatoes. I am sure they are growing more, but I cannot list everything. The kids are taught how to make the garden bed, prepare fertiliser and grow seedlings, and they have a worm farm. They plant the seedlings so they can nurture the plants and see how they grow. The students then pick the produce.

The next step in the school's plan was a kitchen, and so part of that \$150 000 will enable the school to convert a classroom block into a multipurpose learning area. There is a kitchen, dining table and a storeroom so they can keep their knives and cutting boards locked away safely. After all, we must remember this is a primary school. The kids pick the vegetables and go into the kitchen area to cook. Eggplants grew very well last year so the kids all learned how to cook eggplant lasagne. I imagine that none of those kids would have ever eaten eggplant before in their lives, and they probably had no desire to eat it—I know I did not when I was young—but there is a different passion and desire behind what you eat when you grow something from seed. What a novel way for children to learn about food and eating a proper diet. It was fantastic to see those kids eating their eggplant lasagne, especially given that, unfortunately, many of them would have eaten only canned or frozen vegetables before.

The community garden at Forrestfield primary grows so much basil and mint that the local butcher now swaps meat for those herbs in a gumnut exchange. He uses its basil and mint in his marinades and sausages and in return he gives the kids sausages or whatever other cuts he has to use in their cooking to add protein to the vegetables they grow. The school also has a chook farm. The kids have watched the chooks hatch from eggs and grow into hens, which now lay eggs. The children collect the eggs and they are added to the ingredients in the kitchen. As I said, they have a worm farm and they have just built a pizza oven, so they get to make pizzas using their produce. Part of that \$150 000 will also help fund the purchase of equipment for the junior playground and provide soft-fall surfaces and climbing equipment.

I congratulate the principals of all these schools. Like principals in all schools, they go beyond the call of duty. It is not just a job to them; they lead and put everything into their communities. The principals at the three schools excel in promoting community work among their teachers and also encourage the parents and citizens associations. Unfortunately, Forrestfield Primary School's P&C is lacking at the moment, but we hope that this new building will encourage parents to get involved in the cooking lessons and that will help establish and grow the P&C.

I turn now to one of the other commitments that were made during the election campaign. I was working with an amazing lady, Andrea Creado, the Liberal Party candidate for Mirrabooka. She introduced me to the Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club. The club trains at Celebration Park in Balga. The field is quite well kept and great for playing on because it has never had lights and so it has never been damaged or put to much hard use by people training on it. However, there were no appropriate change rooms; there was just a very old, concrete changing block that was designed for men's cricket. The changing room was a great big open room with hooks on the wall, and in the next room was the toilet and shower block, which was one long urinal on one wall and an open shower area on the opposite wall. If members were listening closely, they would have heard me say that I

had visited the Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club, so these facilities that were made for men were now being used by a women's soccer club. As members can imagine, there are members of the club as young as nine, right through to women in their 30s. Women of most ages, but especially teenagers, are not willing to shower openly in front of everybody else in an open shower area, and certainly women are not able to use a urinal, and there was only one other toilet available to them. One toilet for two soccer teams is not appropriate. Also, because it was an inappropriate facility for showering, they were not using the site; a lot of the girls were just packing up and going home after the game, which does not really create the team-building and social atmosphere experience that one gets when playing sport. When people just pack up and go home after the game, it is not a desirable outcome; it is better if they hang around and enjoy the social aspect afterwards.

I went out and had a look at the clubrooms with Andrea Creado and we also took the Premier, Hon Colin Barnett, down to have a look for himself. We explained about the facilities and showed him what the girls had to endure. I have to say, to the Premier's credit, he came back a second time and said, "If we win government, we will get you the money to renovate or build new clubrooms for this site."

On Thursday 9 May—just the other week—Hon Colin Barnett, Andrea Creado and I went down and met the president and players of the Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club. The president is Keith Anderson and the vice president is Neil Bennett. We actually presented them with \$500 000 to provide an upgrade to their rundown clubroom facilities. This was a promise that was actually delivered on 9 May, just the other week, to the people of Balga. The Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club is now designing the layout for their new clubroom, and obviously they would like to have a canteen so they can start raising funds for their soccer team. The Northern Redbacks Women's Soccer Club has 75 players, and it competes at both senior and junior levels; there are under 17s and under 14s teams. The club has actually won 11 premier league championships, which has a history of fostering elite talent, including Lisa De Vanna and Collette McCallum, who have represented Australia playing for the Matildas, as well as a number of other players who have represented Perth Glory in the W-League.

This is not just a soccer club in Balga; this is a soccer club at which women who want to play football can actually go through from under 14s all the way to a professional career. I am absolutely delighted—over the moon—that we were able to deliver these brand-new facilities for these very worthy people. I am very happy to say that although Andrea Creado was not successful in winning the seat of Mirrabooka, she can hold her head high, knowing that she delivered on one of the commitments that she went fighting for during the election. As I said, Andrea was there with us and she got to go around and shake hands with everybody, knowing that although she was not successful on the day, she was successful for them. I would like to thank Andrea for her commitment and dedication over the past year in working for the seat of Mirrabooka. I hope that Andrea is around in four years and will come back to represent us, because a woman of her calibre is greatly needed in this place.

**Hon Helen Morton:** Hear, hear!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** I would now like to touch on what happened after the election. I do not think we need to remind members of the result of the election —

**Hon Jim Chown:** Yes, we do! Please mention it again!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** It was an overwhelming result, with members of the WA public wanting to see a Liberal–National government in place. I look forward to our government proving to them that they did make the right decision, because they will then be able to make the right decision again at the next election.

I have to say that I was very humbled and honoured after the election to receive a phone call from our Premier, asking me to represent our Deputy Premier, Hon Kim Hames, as his parliamentary secretary. That was something I was not expecting but something that I appreciate and take on wholeheartedly. As I said to the Premier on the phone, "I'll do you proud and you won't regret making this decision." As I said earlier today, I learnt from a colleague who I used to work with at the Small Business Development Corporation that the secret to looking as though we know what we are doing is to be like a duck—smooth sailing, but with our legs pedalling like buggery under the water.

**Hon Helen Morton:** You might need to retract that word!

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Pedalling like billyo!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Yes! Thank you, Hon Sue Ellery. As I look around this chamber and see the iconic black swan depicted in the stained glass, maybe I will aspire to be a swan instead of a duck. So my goal will be to be like a swan—gracefully going along in the water, and hopefully no members will see my feet —

**Hon Helen Morton:** Going like billyo!

**Hon ALYSSA HAYDEN:** Yes, going like billyo underwater!

Minister Hames is a very experienced and intelligent member, and I look forward to working with him and learning as much as I can from him. This is a fantastic opportunity for a member in her second term, and I will be using it to my fullest. I have been asked especially to focus on the tourism portfolio. I know that that is a very hard and tough portfolio and one that not many people would aspire to! But I think they have picked the right person, and I will absolutely enjoy representing and listening to the tourism industry. The tourism industry is to me as vital to Western Australia as our mining and resource sector. At the moment, we are enjoying the fruits of our mining industry. But we need to make sure that we do not put all our eggs in one basket. I honestly believe that one of the baskets on which we should focus is tourism. Tourism can actually play a major role and is a major economic driver of this state.

I recently went to Sydney for the Australian Tourism Exchange. I had no idea what it was, and on my way to Sydney the advisers tried to brief me on it. I said to them afterwards that they could have talked to me until they were blue in the face but I still would not have understood what it was about if I had not gone to see it for myself. The Australian Tourism Exchange provides the opportunity for Australian tourism operators to showcase their product to not just the rest of Australia, but the entire world. Western Australia is represented by Tourism WA, and operators within Western Australia go to that exchange and sell their wares and product. I was overwhelmed with the professionalism of the WA stand at that exchange.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

[Continued on page 1071.]

*Sitting suspended from 4.15 to 4.30 pm*

### QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE

#### SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE

**100. Hon SUE ELLERY to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

- (1) How many members of the senior executive service—SES—were there as at 21 September 2012 and 1 May 2013?
- (2) What was the proportion of SES members to Western Australian public sector employees as at 1 December 2001 and 1 May 2013?
- (3) What is the average pay rate, level or classification for a member of the SES as at 1 May 2013?
- (4) What is the cost of any severance payments to SES members since 1 July 2012?
- (5) How many SES members were provided with a vehicle as at 1 May 2013?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of question.

- (1)–(5) Due to the complexity of the question, especially part (2), it is requested that the honourable member put this question on notice.

**The PRESIDENT:** Could I repeat what I said at the end of question time yesterday and reinforce the standing orders in terms of questions and answers. The question as well as its answer must be reasonable in terms of its comprehensiveness and the time frame given. With a question like that where only some notice has been given—about four hours—I think it will break down the system if we continue to have overly complex question asked along those lines.

#### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — EFFICIENCY DIVIDEND

**101. Hon SUE ELLERY to the Minister for Education:**

With the reduction in central office staff implemented as a measure to meet the efficiency dividend cuts to the Department of Education, what has been the reduction of staff achieved to date?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

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

Subsequent to a savings measure implemented in July 2010, central office staff was reduced by 100 full-time equivalents. However, as at April 2013, fluctuations brought about by the state and commonwealth programs as well as internal government restructures have resulted in an overall reduction of 82 FTEs since July 2012.

#### EASYVOTE CARDS

**102. Hon KATE DOUST to Minister for Electoral Affairs:**

I refer to the voter ID cards issued to electors for the recent state election.

- (1) What was the total cost of production and mail-out of the cards?
- (2) Did these cards have the capacity to facilitate processing the voters electronically?
- (3) If yes to (2), why was this feature not deployed?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

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

- (1) An EasyVote card was mailed to every elector on the electoral roll as part of a two-page letter providing a range of specific voter information. The total cost of production and mail-out was \$1 309 012, inclusive of GST.
- (2) No.
- (3) Not applicable.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT — METRO AREA EXPRESS LIGHT RAIL

**103. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to question without notice 52 asked on Thursday, 16 May 2013 and note the minister's answer that detailed planning and procurement is underway and is expected to identify a range of issues as this progresses.

- (1) Why did the minister not answer my actual question?
- (2) Can the minister now provide an answer to my original questions about any issues that have been identified since the start of the recent election?

**Hon JIM CHOWN replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. It is again acknowledged that, unlike the Labor Party, this Liberal–National government is committed to the Perth–Darwin highway, which will see heavy vehicle traffic removed from many local communities, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region.

- (1) Please refer to question without notice 52.
- (2) Not applicable.

## DISABILITY SERVICES — GROUP HOMES

**104. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Disability Services:**

- (1) Are any of the group homes catering for people with disabilities in WA currently run by Serco?
- (2) If yes to (1), which homes does Serco run and for how long has Serco held the contract?
- (3) If no to (1), is the Disability Services Commission planning to contract Serco to run any group homes in the future?
- (4) If yes to (3), which homes are included in the contracts and when will these contracts commence?
- (5) Is Serco contracted by DSC to provide any other services for people with disabilities in WA?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1) No.
- (2) Not applicable.
- (3) No.
- (4) Not applicable.
- (5) No.

## MUNGADA RIDGE — NATURE RESERVE

**105. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to the undertaking by the Minister for Environment, as stated in Environmental Protection Authority report 1321 of April 2009, that “the Government will set aside the Mungada Ridge as a Class A Nature Reserve and statutorily protect that reserve from development”.

- (1) Has the government declared the conservation area around Mungada Ridge?
- (2) If no to (1), why not, and what is the schedule for the declaration to occur?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. The Minister for Environment has provided me with the following advice.

- (1) No.
- (2) The process of reserve creation will follow the proposed relinquishment of a mining tenement over the affected portion of Mungada Ridge by the current tenement holder, DSO Ventures Pty Ltd, on behalf of Karara Mining Limited.

EDUCATION — SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

**106. Hon STEPHEN DAWSON to the Minister for Education:**

- (1) How many schools employed additional staff to improve attendance in 2011 and 2012?
- (2) How many of these schools were in the Mining and Pastoral Region?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question, and congratulate him on his election and first question.

- (1) As at 30 April 2013, there were 196 badged attendance officers legally authorised to stop, detain and question truanting or absent students during school hours.

Student attendance is the responsibility of all staff. Any staff performing duties specific to student attendance will be undertaking that role within the school's overall resourcing allocation. Schools are also provided with supplementary funding and make decisions about how to best meet the specific attendance needs of their students. While this may include employing additional attendance officers, as these are school level decisions, details regarding the specific location and nature of these roles are not held centrally. Education regional office staff provide consultancy advice and support to schools on attendance issues. The range and types of service are commensurate with the unique needs of schools and networks in the region.

- (2) Not applicable.

BROWSE LNG PROJECT — WOODSIDE WITHDRAWAL

**107. Hon LJILJANNA RAVLICH to the Leader of the House representing the Premier:**

I refer to the decision by Woodside Petroleum to not proceed with the \$50 billion Browse onshore LNG project.

- (1) What correspondence did the Premier have with Woodside in relation to that decision?
- (2) Will the Premier table that correspondence?
- (3) If no to (2), why not?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

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

- (1) The Premier has advised that, to date, no written correspondence has been received from Woodside Petroleum on this matter.
- (2)–(3) Not applicable.

GIFTED AND TALENTED EDUCATION PROGRAMS — ELECTION PROMISE

**108. Hon DARREN WEST to the Minister for Education:**

I refer to the National Party's election promise to establish a gifted and talented education program at senior high schools that have an associated country hostel—Albany, Broome, Esperance, Geraldton, Merredin, Moora, Narrogin and Northam. Has this now become part of the government's plan?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question and once again, I congratulate him on his election and inaugural speech. I do not actually have a copy of that question, when was it put in?

**Hon Sue Ellery:** It went in in this morning.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** It went in this morning, did it? Sorry, I do not recall receiving it or signing off on it, but if it comes in between now and the end of question time, I will provide the answer; if not, I will provide it on the next day of sitting.

GRANDCARERS — ELECTION PROMISE

**109. Hon SAMANTHA ROWE to the minister representing the Minister for Seniors and Volunteering:**

I refer to the government's election promise of extra cash payments for grandparents who are the primary carers for their grandchildren.

- (1) When will the payments start?
- (2) How can grandparents claim the payments?
- (3) How much will the payments be?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question, which is her first I believe, and I welcome her to the East Metropolitan Region. On behalf of the Minister for Seniors and Volunteering, the information I have is as follows —

- (1) Implementation details will be announced following the August budget.
- (2)–(3) As above.

PUBLIC TRANSPORT — METRO AREA EXPRESS LIGHT RAIL

**110. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:**

- (1) Please confirm that the Liberal election promise for the Metro Area Express light rail system is only partially funded by the state government.
- (2) As the federal opposition leader, Mr Tony Abbott, announced last month that a coalition federal government would not continue to fund urban rail projects, how will the state government proceed with its promised light rail plan in the event that no commonwealth funding is available after the federal election?
- (3) Which alternative funding models other than commonwealth funding is the minister considering to establish a modern, fast and efficient light rail network in Perth?
- (4) Will the minister undertake to investigate alternative funding models in order to deliver with some urgency at least some light rail transport options for Perth commuters who will face increasing congestion as the population of Perth continues to grow?

**Hon JIM CHOWN replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The Department of Transport advises —

- (1)–(4) As previously announced, Metro Area Express light rail will be funded through state, federal and private sector contributions.

MENTAL HEALTH — EARLY PSYCHOSIS YOUTH CENTRES

**111. Hon PHIL EDMAN to the Minister for Mental Health:**

Could the minister please update the house on the progress of early psychosis youth centres in Western Australia?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for the question and I also acknowledge the ongoing and substantial work that he does in supporting young people in his electorate.

The planning for the early psychosis youth centres started around two years ago and as people might recall, they were proposed to be jointly funded by the state and the commonwealth and are anticipated to see about 600 people each year in the age bracket of 15 years old to 24 years old. This program is about early intervention for people with a psychotic illness. It is very important to reduce the negative consequences on those young people and their families and carers. Of course, this type of centre would be open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. On 16 November 2011, the federal government invited the states to partner in these centres through a bidding process of 50–50, and \$10 million worth of costs would go into each of these facilities on an annual basis, building up over four years. On 31 July 2012, eight months later, we had confirmation that Western Australia had been successful in securing two of these centres. I quote from a letter from the federal Minister for Mental Health and Ageing, which I will perhaps table. The letter states —

Following recent discussions, between our officials, I am writing to confirm the Australian Government's offer to the Western Australian ... Government for two Early Psychosis Youth Services under Round One of the implementation of the Expansion of Early Psychosis prevention and Intervention Centre ...

Just skipping along a bit, on 20 December 2012, after a lot of negotiation at our level to make sure we could match the commonwealth's offer of funding, we went to cabinet and we got that confirmation that the state government would match the level of funding required. On 4 February we got another letter from the minister,

who made it absolutely clear that these centres were going to commence. The letter dated 29 January states in part —

Following execution of the NPA, the IP can be finalised and implementation of these centres can commence.

Very shortly after that, of course, there were a number of discussions backwards and forwards between the minister and me. Two weeks ago the federal budget came out and it was really good news. I was thrilled to note that in budget paper No 3, under “Part 2: Payments for specific purposes”, a budget was allocated to WA for the national partnership on EPYCs. The funding amounts to \$3.5 million, \$6.3 million, \$8.8 million, \$10 million and \$10 million over the five fiscal years. Unfortunately, yesterday I had a phone call from Minister Butler saying that the commonwealth had decided to withdraw its funding. It is unbelievable that after that amount of confirmation, including the fact that the budget papers stated that this was going to happen, and after this commitment, which was two years in the planning between the state and —

*Point of Order*

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Standing order 102 provides for statements by ministers and parliamentary secretaries. We just heard from the minister that she got the phone call yesterday. She could have prepared a ministerial statement and done it today if she wanted to give this information to the chamber. This is wasting question time when she is giving a ministerial statement.

*Ruling by President*

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Let me make a comment. It is not a point of order, but the relevance applies to the standing orders that I pointed out yesterday. Standing order 105 states that an answer shall be concise and relevant. This answer has already taken about five minutes. This chamber does not want to, and should not, become a mirror image of another place. In that other place there are dorothy dixers, for want of a better term. That has not been the practice in this house; question time has been used to obtain information. That is not to say that every member does not have the same right as everybody else to ask a question, but I do not want to see it develop into a practice whereby lengthy statements are made in question time by ministers. I am sure the minister on this occasion is going to bring her answer to a rapid conclusion.

*Questions without Notice Resumed*

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** Absolutely, Mr President, and thank you for that clarification, because I do recognise that Hon Phil Edman has been incredibly interested in the development of these early psychosis youth centres from the very beginning. He asked me the question so I am giving him the answer.

At this stage we have to work out what we are going to do in WA, given that the federal government has withdrawn funding from the most vulnerable group of young people in Western Australia—those with early psychosis.

**The PRESIDENT:** Did the minister want to table a document associated with that answer?

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** Thank you, Mr President. I will happily table two of the letters that were provided to me by Minister Butler.

[See paper 281.]

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — STAFF REDUCTION

**112. Hon AMBER-JADE SANDERSON to the Minister for Education:**

Since June 2011, how many staff have been reduced from the central office of the Department of Education?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question, and once again congratulate her on her election and on her inaugural speech. The answer is none.

MENTAL HEALTH — TAX EXEMPTIONS

**113. Hon ALANNA CLOHESY to the minister representing the Treasurer:**

I refer to the announced changes to legislate to exclude certain business, professional and industry organisations from accessing state tax exemptions for charities.

- (1) How many organisations in total will be affected by this change?
- (2) How much extra revenue is this change expected to bring to the state?
- (3) Which Western Australian organisations are expected to be affected by this change?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

The information I have been provided by the Treasurer is —

- (1)–(3) Until the legislative changes have been finalised, a response cannot be provided.

OFFICE OF ENERGY — TARIFF AND CONCESSION FRAMEWORK REVIEW

**114. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Energy:**

Some notice has been given of the question.

- (1) Is the tariff and concession framework review complete?
- (2) If yes to (1), why has the review not yet been released?
- (3) If no to (1), what stage of development has the review reached, and when will it be released?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

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

- (1) Yes.
- (2) The former Office of Energy completed the tariff and concession framework review in September 2011. As some time has now elapsed since the completion of the review, the content of the review is no longer relevant. As such, there is no intention to publish the review.
- (3) Not applicable.

MENTAL HEALTH — INPATIENT SECURITY

**115. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Mental Health:**

- (1) Is the minister aware of the recent findings of the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council that 45 per cent of women who are inpatients in Victorian psychiatric hospitals are sexually assaulted while an inpatient?
- (2) Given that there is no contemporary research in Western Australia similar to that undertaken by VMIA, will the minister now order that research to be undertaken?
- (3) Does the minister accept that these findings add urgency to the longstanding demand by the Mental Health Law Centre (WA) for closed-circuit television surveillance recordings to be introduced into all WA psychiatric hospitals authorised to hold patients without their consent?
- (4) If no to (3), why not?
- (5) If yes to (3), when will the minister take action to introduce CCTV surveillance?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question.

- (1)–(5) This has been quite a difficult issue that I have been aware of over a number of years of being involved with mental health services. Yes, I am aware of that particular report, and, of course, it was reported in the paper as well. I think I read it in the paper as well. It is of some concern, obviously.

As a result of that, I have asked the Chief Psychiatrist to review the recommendations from the Victorian Mental Illness Awareness Council report with respect to WA's situation and provide some advice to me on where we need to go with this in WA. There are some people, of course, who think that the only answer is to have separate units for women and separate units for men, but I do not know that that is necessarily the answer. In terms of CCTV, all mental health inpatient units have CCTV located in areas that do not breach patient confidentiality and/or privacy.

HON JIM CHOWN — ROLES

**116. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:**

- (1) What roles or jobs has the Minister for Transport asked the parliamentary secretary to do as his parliamentary secretary?
- (2) Has the parliamentary secretary advised the minister of any potential conflicts he might have in undertaking those roles or jobs?
- (3) If yes to (2), what is the conflict; when did the parliamentary secretary advise the minister; and how will the conflict be managed?

**Hon JIM CHOWN replied:**

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

- (1) The member should refer to question without notice 23.
- (2)–(3) The member should refer to standing order 103, and a recent ruling made by the President.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Hang on a minute! I put it on notice; I am asking the minister.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order; for those of you who have been around this chamber for a while, you will remember a past President had a favourite saying: you might not like the answer you are given, but you have to listen to it.

**Hon Ken Travers:** But it does have to be relevant, Mr President, and that one wasn't.

*Point of Order*

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Mr President, I think if you did a count, there may be three members who were here when that President was in the chair, so most of us would not remember that.

**Hon Ken Travers:** Actually, there is only one.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** There you go! You might have to start your own little sayings for us, Mr President.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — EFFICIENCY DIVIDEND

**117. Hon SUE ELLERY to the Minister for Education:**

I refer to advice from the acting director general of Education to the Standing Committee on Estimates and Financial Operations on 4 October 2012 outlining savings measures to meet the efficiency dividends over the four years outlined in the 2012–13 budget and stating that further information will be available when the midyear review is completed on the identification and implementation of efficiencies. Will the minister table that information now; and, if not, why not?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

No. The identification of efficiencies is continuing and will be considered by government as part of the 2013–14 budget process.

HIGH STREET — STIRLING HIGHWAY INTERSECTION — UPGRADE

**118. Hon LYNN MacLAREN to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:**

- (1) What is the minister's understanding of the option preferred by the Fremantle City Council for the upgrade of the intersection of High Street and Stirling Highway in Fremantle?
- (2) Does the minister's preferred option differ from that of Fremantle City Council; and, if so, how does it differ?
- (3) What community and stakeholder consultation has Main Roads undertaken following confirmation of the concept design?
- (4) Has a community focus group been formed to provide advice on noise walls, pedestrian and cycle access and public art?

**Hon JIM CHOWN replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. Main Roads Western Australia advises —

- (1) It is a refinement of the Department of Transport's option 4 concept.
- (2) Yes. In terms of the design curve radius at the proposed main intersection of Stirling Highway and High Street West.
- (3) Unfortunately, sir, I do not have a response to (3), but I will endeavour to get a response at some stage in the future.
- (4) This process is in progress.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION — VOTER EDUCATION FORUMS

**119. Hon KATE DOUST to the Minister for Electoral Affairs:**

I refer to the recent state election and to plans of the WA Electoral Commission to conduct forums for culturally or linguistically diverse or ethnic communities prior to the election in order to reduce informality and to provide voter education.

- (1) How many such seminars were held?

- (2) What were the names of the organisations hosting these seminars?
- (3) How many organisations were invited to participate in such seminars?
- (4) How was the list of organisations compiled by the WAEC?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

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

- (1) Two.
- (2) The Edmund Rice Centre and the Australian Arab Association (WA).
- (3) Information packages, including a letter of invitation, were sent to 46 organisations in December 2012.
- (4) It was compiled from a listing of organisations on the Office of Multicultural Interests website, plus a directory provided by the Fremantle Multicultural Centre following a meeting with that organisation.

## MENTAL HEALTH BILL — INTRODUCTION

**120. Hon SALLY TALBOT to the Minister for Mental Health:**

I refer to the minister's statement in November 2012 that the government was well positioned to introduce a final mental health bill as a matter of priority when Parliament resumed in 2013. When will the mental health bill be introduced?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. As members would probably remember, the green Mental Health Bill 2012 was tabled in Parliament and made available for public comment on 8 November 2012; that consultation period went until the end of February 2013. Obviously that feedback needs to be considered and incorporated in the bill. A lot of that feedback is coming from people with lived experience of mental illness—families and carers—as well as clinicians and advocacy groups. We have reviewed over 100 written submissions this time around and the Mental Health Commission, which is doing that work, will provide me with a briefing once its analysis of the submissions has been finalised. I am looking forward to making sure the bill being introduced in the lower house is a priority, and that will happen this year.

## ADELE ISLAND NATURE RESERVE

**121. Hon ROBIN CHAPPLE to the minister representing the Minister for Environment:**

I refer to question without notice 89 regarding the Adele Island Nature Reserve asked on 22 May 2013.

- (1) Has the minister contacted the federal Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, or been contacted by him, regarding the nomination of Adele Island to the Ramsar Secretariat for inclusion on the Ramsar Convention list of “Wetlands of International Importance”?
- (2) If yes to (1), when did this occur and what was the outcome of the correspondence and/or discussions?
- (3) Will the minister table the correspondence?
- (4) If no to (1), why not?

**Hon HELEN MORTON replied:**

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

- (1) No.
- (2)–(3) Not applicable.
- (4) Please refer to my response to question without notice 89.

## TAXIS — DRIVER PENALTY POINT SYSTEM

**122. Hon KEN TRAVERS to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the Minister for Transport's announcement on 14 April 2011 that the government planned to introduce a demerit point system and probation for taxidivers and the subsequent advice that these measures would require legislative changes.

- (1) When does the minister expect legislation to be introduced to the Parliament to allow for the demerit point system and probation for taxidivers?
- (2) When does the minister expect these measures to be implemented?

**Hon JIM CHOWN replied:**

I thank the honourable member for some notice of this question. The Department of Transport advises —

- (1) Mid-2013.
- (2) The transition period will commence within six to 12 months of the bill being passed. The taxidriver penalty point system will commence following the six-month transition period.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION — FTE EMPLOYEES

**123. Hon SUE ELLERY to the Minister for Education:**

What is the current number of average full-time equivalent staffing levels in each of the categories of administrative and clerical, teaching, support, and cleaning and gardening; and for each of the operational areas of Education and Training shared services area, central strategic and corporate services, regional education offices and schools?

**Hon PETER COLLIER replied:**

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

The information requested cannot be provided in the time available. I will provide this information to the honourable member on the next sitting day of the house, 11 June 2013.

**QUESTIONS WITHOUT NOTICE 87, 93 AND 95**

*Answer Advice*

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [5.02 pm]: On behalf of the Premier, I would like to provide answers to Hon Ken Travers' questions without notice 87 and 95 and also to Hon Sue Ellery's question without notice 93.

I seek leave to have them incorporated into *Hansard*.

Leave granted. [See papers 282 to 284.]

The following material was incorporated —

**Question without notice 87 —**

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I thank the Hon. Member for the Question.

- 1 (a)–(g) The projects have been submitted to Infrastructure Australia for funding under the Nation Building 2 Program.
  - 2 Yes, costings included future allocations from the Nation Building 2 Program.
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**Question without notice 93 —**

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I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.

- (1)–(6) The contract between the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and Luna Ventures Pty Ltd replaces a prior contract for the services of Mr Geoffrey Wedgwood that terminated on 6 February 2013.

The contract is for the provision of advisory services on strategic projects as required. The contract was established under the Ministerial Contracts for Services Engagement process and the consultancy fees are based on the payment of hourly and daily rates for hours worked.

The Ministerial Merit Panel recommended to the Director General of the Department of the Premier and Cabinet that the contract be let in April 2013.

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**Question without notice 95 —**

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I thank the Hon. Member for some notice of this question.

- (1)–(4) Yes the Premier has met with the Western Australian Football Commission on a number of occasions, and on some of these he discussed the new stadium. In particular, he met with the WAFC on 25 March 2011, for the express purpose of discussing the stadium.

The summary of this meeting was included as part of a submission to Cabinet. Within this document there is a reference to in principle approval for the WA4LFC to manage the new stadium. It is also worth noting that in this document there is also a reference to the management of the new stadium being something that will need to be looked at closely and more broadly.

Ultimately the New Perth Stadium Steering Committee will make recommendations to Government for the management and governance arrangements for the new stadium to be decided on at a later date.

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**SUPPLY BILL 2013***As to Statement*

**HON HELEN MORTON (East Metropolitan — Minister for Mental Health)** [5.02 pm]: This is not in response to a question. This is a statement that I have been asked to make in response to a bill that I read in last time. It is not applicable for now, I do not think.

**The PRESIDENT:** Is it a correction?

**Hon Peter Collier:** Yes.

**The PRESIDENT:** If it is a correction to an answer, that is fine.

**Hon Helen Morton:** No.

**The PRESIDENT:** We are still in question time at the moment, so the member could use members' statements as an opportunity to do that. Otherwise, she can seek leave to make a personal explanation at some stage when question time has finished, perhaps. Are there any further answers from ministers or parliamentary secretaries? Minister, if you want to do something, you have to jump up.

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** Yes.

**The PRESIDENT:** Have we got another answer?

**Hon HELEN MORTON:** No.

**The PRESIDENT:** Unless someone else gains my attention, I am going to move into orders of the day.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Members, if you want to gain the attention of the chair, you do not just bob up. You have to command the attention of whoever is in the chair. That will be "Mr President" or "Madam Deputy Chair" or whatever the saying is. Technically, with the resumption of orders of the day, we go immediately back to the Address-in-Reply. When and if there is a break in that sequence of events, that is an opportunity for somebody else to do something. I have some messages, so that is an opportunity I will take to read some messages. We go back to the Address-in-Reply.

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

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting.

**HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.04 pm]: I seek leave to continue my remarks at a later stage of this day's sitting.

[Leave granted.]

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the House)** [5.05 pm]: I seek to adjourn debate to a later stage of this day's sitting. As a brief explanation, we have a couple of bills for introduction, the President has a couple of messages, and I think Hon Helen Morton has an explanation on one of the bills that she introduced.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Peter Collier (Leader of the House)**.

**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON DELEGATED LEGISLATION***Assembly's Resolution*

Message from the Assembly received and read requesting concurrence in the following resolution —

The Legislative Assembly acquaints the Legislative Council that it has agreed to the following motion —

- (1) That the terms contained in Legislative Council message 1 for the establishment of the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation be agreed to.
- (2) That the members for Albany, Bunbury, Fremantle and Southern River be appointed as members of the committee.

*Appointment of Members — Motion*

On motion without notice by **Hon Peter Collier (Leader of the House)**, resolved —

That the following members be appointed as members to the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation: Hon Peter Katsambanis, Hon Mark Lewis, Hon Ljiljana Ravlich and Hon Robin Chapple, and that the Legislative Assembly be advised of these appointments.

### QUEEN ELIZABETH II MEDICAL CENTRE AMENDMENT BILL 2013

#### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Alyssa Hayden (Parliamentary Secretary)**, read a first time.

#### *Second Reading*

**HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.07 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

This bill seeks to amend the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre Act 1966, following a review of the act in accordance with section 21. The amendments are to enhance the governance to support the increasingly complex role of the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre Trust to operate in a more flexible and responsive manner, given the current ongoing and proposed development on the site. It is important that trust members can meet through the most efficient and effective means, in order to ensure that development on the site is not delayed and, additionally, that health services continue to improve and to meet the public's expectations in this rapidly evolving area.

New state-of-the-art hospitals and facilities are planned and are being constructed on the site to meet the future healthcare needs of the public of Western Australia. This government is committed to the following major developments on the site. Construction works completed or underway include: the new children's hospital, to be completed in 2015, incorporating an integrated health research centre; the Western Australian Institute for Medical Research, with a completion date expected in 2013; the PathWest facility, which was completed in April 2013; the Comprehensive Cancer Centre, which is now completed; a multideck car park with 5 100 car parking bays, which is being completed in stages, with stages 1a and 1b already opened, providing an additional 1 500 car parking bays; a Ronald McDonald House, which is to be completed at the same time as the new children's hospital; the Neurosciences Research Institute, which is in the design stage; and the expansion and improvement of facilities at Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, which will include a new mental health unit.

The bill also comprises the following amendments. Firstly, the trust is established under the act and is composed of five members. A quorum of the trust is currently prescribed as four members; it is intended that three members will comprise a quorum. Members are sometimes unable to attend meetings due to illness or other commitments such as travel. This change will enable the trust to continue to make decisions when only three members are present at a meeting.

Secondly, to assist the trust to operate more efficiently it is intended that members will not be required to hold all meetings face to face. Meetings could be held remotely by electronic means or by telephone, and resolutions could be made without holding a meeting. Written resolutions of the trust could be agreed by signing or other written methods, as if they had been passed at a meeting of the trust.

Thirdly, it is intended that eligible members of the trust will be remunerated in accordance with a recommendation from the Public Sector Commissioner, determined by the minister. This is standard practice for all government boards and committees, when a statutory provision provides for sitting fees and allowances.

Lastly, it is intended to increase the maximum penalty rate and modified penalty rate to \$200. The penalty rate would be up to \$200 and be prescribed in the Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre (Delegated Site) By-laws 1986. The penalty rate is currently set at \$50, which is not considered to be a deterrent for offences such as vandalism. All amendments to the by-laws would be scrutinised by the Joint Standing Committee on Delegated Legislation.

The main aim of the amendments is to ensure that patients and the public can continue to access world-class facilities on the site by enabling trust members more flexibility in performing the functions required of them under the act. The increase in the general and modified penalty rates is to deter persons who would cause, amongst other things, damage or injury to persons on the site. The bill was previously introduced into the Legislative Assembly of Parliament on 13 September 2012 and second read. The bill lapsed due to the proroguing of Parliament because of the state election on 9 March 2013.

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 I now table the explanatory memorandum.

[See paper 285.]

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

## HOSPITALS AND HEALTH SERVICES AMENDMENT BILL 2013

### *Receipt and First Reading*

Bill received from the Assembly; and, on motion by **Hon Alyssa Hayden (Parliamentary Secretary)**, read a first time.

### *Second Reading*

**HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan — Parliamentary Secretary)** [5.12 pm]: I move —

That the bill be now read a second time.

These amendments to the Hospitals and Health Services Act 1927 are the first tranche of legislative changes that WA Health is undertaking to enable Western Australia to take full advantage of the National Health Reform Agreement. The National Health Reform Agreement aims to improve patient access to services and public hospital efficiency through activity-based funding and the establishment of a number of agencies, such as the Independent Hospital Pricing Authority and the National Health Performance Authority, and the establishment of local health networks. The decision of the state government was not to establish local health networks but to streamline the structures presently in existence within the public health system to take advantage of federal government funding and improve local accountability and responsiveness.

In August 2011, cabinet endorsed the creation of new health service boards to replace the existing legal and employing structures of the Metropolitan Health Service and the WA Country Health Service. Four new health service boards will replace the existing administrative area health services and will be known as North Metropolitan Health Service, South Metropolitan Health Service, Child and Adolescent Health Service and WA Country Health Service.

The creation of these four legal entities will occur in June 2014; however, in researching the creation of these four independent health services, it became clear that the increase in the number of entities from two to four would disadvantage staff and increase the administrative workload. Currently, hospital and health service staff are employed by the MHS in the metropolitan area and by WACHS in regional areas. Hospital and health service staff regularly move between hospital facilities. The volume of relocations is estimated to be in excess of 2 000 hospital and health service employees each year. Where staff move between country and metropolitan locations, they will be terminated from one employer—for example, the MHS—and re-employed by another—for example, WACHS—resulting in additional human resources processing, the reissue of employment contracts and taxation forms, and production of multiple payment summaries.

The amendments in this bill allow for the creation of a single employing agency that will ensure convenience and flexibility for staff working across and with the four public health service entities, as well as reducing administrative workloads of the present HR shared service. These amendments will enable WA Health staff to be employed by the State Health Service Agency Board and work in any of the state's public hospital facilities without a break in service in the move to the new health service structure, and into the future. The legislation aims to provide legal surety by clarifying the minister's powers to create an agency for such a purpose, defining a number of terms associated with setting up the State Health Service Agency, the roles the hospital boards may perform and the delegation necessary, as well as the impact of the Workers' Compensation and Injury Management Act 1981 on staff working within a health service while employed by a separate agency.

As stated earlier, the bill is about providing legal surety and ensuring that staff are not disadvantaged by the formal restructure Western Australia is undertaking to comply with the National Health Reform Agreement. The majority of hospitals and health service staff will be unaware of their change of status from either the MHS or WACHS to that of the State Health Service Agency; their entitlements will remain the same.

Pursuant to Legislative Council 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 the explanatory memorandum.

[See paper 286].

Debate adjourned, pursuant to standing orders.

## SUPPLY BILL 2013

### *Minister for Mental Health — Personal Explanation*

**HON HELEN MORTON (East Metropolitan — Minister for Mental Health)** [5.17 pm] — by leave: I wish to advise of two corrections to the second reading speech of the Supply Bill that I delivered yesterday. The sentence beginning, "This bill appropriates the consolidated account in aggregate" refers to the financial year

ending 30 June 2013. This date should read 30 June 2014. The second correction is to remove the following clause, which reads —

or, in respect of which payments of an extraordinary or unforeseen nature were charged against the consolidated account in respect of the financial year ending 30 June 2013 under the Financial Management Act 2006.

### **HELEN MCNEAIR**

#### *Statement*

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [5.18 pm]: I want to make a few comments tonight on the passing of a woman who was a leader among our Aboriginal women, Helen McNeair, from the Gascoyne-Murchison region, who passed away in April, just a few weeks ago. She was the chair of the WA Indigenous Women's Congress, a peak women's group established under the Gallop government. I met Helen when I was Minister for Women's Interests. The Indigenous Women's Congress provided advice to me on matters of importance to Aboriginal women across Western Australia. Helen was a wife, a mum, a much loved mother and a much loved nan. Family was very important to Helen. Her community was important and her culture was important but it was as leader of Aboriginal women that Helen's passion and talent, and sensible and pragmatic but very determined advocacy, shone. In the mid-2000s, Aboriginal women such as June Oscar from Fitzroy Valley, who became very well-known, and those less well-known, such as Helen, led the campaigns to ban access to takeaway alcohol in their communities. They did this because they desperately wanted to stop the devastating effects of alcohol on their families, and they were prepared to take on very powerful people in their communities to give effect to this campaign.

Helen, as chair of the WA Indigenous Women's Congress, led that group in its advocacy on that issue and on many other issues. The work in advocacy of the Indigenous Women's Congress focused on family and community, the safety of children, the eradication of domestic violence and poverty, and greater opportunities in health, education and leadership. Those issues were the issues that Helen had spent her life working on. Chairing a disparate group is no small task but Helen did it well. Helen was deeply disappointed and hurt, but I have to say probably not surprised, when the incoming Liberal government and the then Minister for Women's Interests, Hon Robyn McSweeney, abolished the Indigenous Women's Congress, but she continued her advocacy in her community and across Western Australia.

I was contacted on Helen's death because her family and friends wanted me to know of her passing. I asked them if it would be all right if I spoke about her today, and they were delighted that I was going to do so, although obviously for them it is in very sad circumstances. I want to place on the record, Mr President, my condolences to Helen's family, to her friends and to the women whom she worked alongside for so very many years; and to place on the record my respect and admiration for the strong and proud Aboriginal woman that Helen McNeair was.

### **HON DARREN WEST — INAUGURAL SPEECH**

#### *Statement*

**HON LIZ BEHJAT (North Metropolitan)** [5.21 pm]: I will not hold up proceedings for too long. I rise this evening to make a short apology to the house, in particular to Hon Darren West. During his inaugural speech this afternoon at one point he was lost for a word he was searching for. I was heard to provide a comment. That is totally unacceptable in a member's inaugural speech, and for that I do apologise to Hon Darren West and to the house.

### **GOVERNMENT — ANSWERS AND PERFORMANCE**

#### *Statement*

**HON KEN TRAVERS (North Metropolitan)** [5.22 pm]: That was very gracious of you, Hon Liz Behjat.

I want to make some comments about some of the answers to questions from and the performance of the government over the last couple of days. Starting with the correction that the Minister for Mental Health gave to the house about the Supply Bill, I was amazed, given what must have been some fairly fundamental issues about the bill and the purpose of the bill, that the minister clearly had not read the speech. I cannot believe that if she had read the speech before she gave it, she would not have picked up those errors in the speech. That says to me that there is a lack of attention to detail by members on the other side.

**Hon Sue Ellery:** Or by whoever gave her the speech and didn't check it.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** The minister ultimately has the responsibility. She should have read it and would have picked that up as soon as she had read it.

The second point I want to make tonight in terms of attention to detail is the answer to a question I got today from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport. I am sure members who have been in this place

long enough will recall numerous occasions when a member has stood in this place and said, “Look, I have an answer from the minister but I’m not satisfied with the answer; I’m going back to get a better answer and I’m not going to give the answer that I’ve been provided with because I’m not satisfied with it.” Today I asked a question about question without notice 52 that I asked last Thursday, 16 May. The title given to it in *Hansard* is “Public Transport — Metro Area Express Light Rail”. The question was around any complex engineering issue the minister had become aware of since the recent state election, and whether there was any other issue the minister had become aware of since the state election that he was not aware of before the state election that may impact on building the MAX light rail by 2018. The reason I asked the question just two months after the election is that the Premier said that things had changed and there were these new complex engineering issues that the government was aware of that it clearly was not aware of before it made its commitment during the election campaign. That was the question, but I got what I believe was a disrespectful answer in this house. I did not get an answer about whether the government had learnt of anything between the election and when I asked the question; I was told that the detailed planning and procurement options were still underway and would identify a range of issues as this progressed.

This goes to the heart of the integrity of the government and the integrity of people such as the Premier when they make public comments, which is what question time is supposed to be about. That is the point of this house. We have heard over the last couple of days new members opposite and the outgoing member Hon Norman Moore talk about the importance of this house as a house of review. If that means only one thing, it is that we should get proper answers to questions. I accept that under standing orders, we can ask questions and ministers can give whatever nonsensical answer they like. But let us remember that when they give nonsensical answers, it shows complete and utter disrespect for this house and the role that it plays. The answer I got that did not answer my question was bad enough, so today I noted the answer that I had been given and I asked why the minister did not answer my question and whether it was because the government was politically embarrassed that there had not been a change and it simply did not have a fully costed and funded plan at the time of the last election. I think that is the real problem. We understand why the government might want to try to run and hide from giving a proper answer, because it highlights the embarrassment of the government that it did not have a fully costed and funded plan, as it told the people at the last election. I asked why the minister did not answer the question and whether the minister could provide an answer to the original question that I asked about what had been identified since the recent state election.

This is where it gets even more intriguing. I think the parliamentary secretary clearly did not read the answer or look at question without notice 52 from last week. He just thought he would wander into this house and give whatever was put in front of him. If the parliamentary secretary does that, he will be constantly humiliated in this place. Those of us who have been parliamentary secretaries know that we have to keep a check on members in the other place. As I have said, many a parliamentary secretary or minister representing another minister has said in this place that they were not happy with an answer. So this is where the answer that I got today becomes quite farcical and almost comical. Did I get an answer about the MAX light rail? I will read what the parliamentary secretary said today in answer to my question about the Metro Area Express light rail. He said —

It is again acknowledged that, unlike the Labor Party, —

That statement almost borders on misleading the house —

this Liberal–National government is committed to the Perth–Darwin highway, ...

What was the parliamentary secretary thinking? A question was asked about the MAX light rail and he started giving misinformation about the Perth–Darwin highway. Did he not check what question 52 was about? There is stunned silence. I would sit in stunned silence too, because I would be humiliated and embarrassed by the answer that he gave today.

**Hon Jim Chown:** I can assure you that I would never be humiliated by any of your responses, honourable member.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** So how does the parliamentary secretary explain giving an answer about the Perth–Darwin highway to a question about MAX?

*Point of Order*

**Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN:** Mr President, as you have mentioned on many occasions, the Chair should be addressed and there should not be debate across the chamber.

**The PRESIDENT:** Members are required to direct their comments through the Chair. In that respect, I think the minister has a point. On the rest of it, I am not quite so sure.

*Statement Resumed*

**Hon Peter Collier** interjected.

**Hon KEN TRAVERS:** It is fascinating, is it not? The Attorney General raises a point of order, and then the Leader of the House immediately tries to engage me across the chamber with an interjection. I accept that that is the free flow of this place, and that we do need to address our comments through the Chair. But it is fascinating that the government wants me not to engage with a member across the chamber, which is not unheard of in this place when the government is under a bit of pressure, but as soon as the pressure is off, the Leader of the House wants me to engage him across the chamber, rather than address you, Mr President! That is a quite extraordinary performance from the government.

So let us go back to where we were. The answer that I got today from the parliamentary secretary started by giving me a whole list of gibberish about the Perth–Darwin highway, when my question 52 was about MAX light rail. If the parliamentary secretary is not embarrassed by that, he has a very thick hide and clearly it will be impossible to embarrass him. The parliamentary secretary cannot comprehend how embarrassing it is to give an answer that talks about the Perth–Darwin highway to a question that is about MAX light rail! If the parliamentary secretary cannot see how humiliating that is, he will be humiliated on many occasions in this chamber. The parliamentary secretary goes on to say that it “will see heavy traffic removed from many local communities, particularly in the East Metropolitan Region.” What does that have to do with MAX light rail and question 52, parliamentary secretary? That is the sort of nonsense that we are now getting out of this government in terms of answers to this question.

It comes back to what the Leader of the House told us this week. This is a house of review. If we cannot get a straightforward answer to questions in this place, we have to start to wonder what is the point of having the Legislative Council. I say to the Leader of the House, through you, Mr President, that I hope he will go back to his cabinet colleagues and make the point at the next cabinet meeting that answers like this are simply unacceptable and are a disrespect to this house.

Can I also say, because I think this is the funniest bit about it all, that I was then referred back to question without notice 52. I assume that means that the parliamentary secretary is now referring me back to the nonsense that he gave me last week, which apparently was supposed to be about MAX. Clearly, the parliamentary secretary is completely and utterly confused in his new role about what is the difference between the Perth–Darwin highway and MAX light rail. If I remember correctly, this afternoon, during the speech of Hon Alyssa Hayden in the Address-in-reply debate, I think she also clearly understood that this parliamentary secretary has absolutely no idea about these two significant issues.

Can I finally, in conclusion, correct the record. It is completely wrong to say that the Labor Party is not committed to the Perth–Darwin highway. I challenge the parliamentary secretary to come into this place and show me a statement in which the Labor Party has ever said, “We do not support the construction of the Perth–Darwin highway.” In fact, what I would also say is that the federal Labor Party is actually incredibly committed, because it has put on the table half the cost of building that road. So, the parliamentary secretary cannot say that the Labor Party is not committed, when on the table at the moment there is more money from the Labor Party—admittedly the federal Labor Party—to build that road than there is from the state Liberal Party to build that road. So, at the moment, Labor is winning, with over \$400 million to build that road, and with under \$200 million from the Liberal Party to build that road.

What the Labor Party said during the election campaign is that we cannot give a promise to the people about the timing of when we will build that road until we know whether we can get federal government funding. That is because the Labor Party is not prepared to make promises—unlike the Liberal Party, which lied to the people of Western Australia when it said it had fully funded, fully costed plans—about the timing of the building of that road without knowing whether we can deliver that. That is the key question. Do not say that we are not committed to it, when the fact is that we were not prepared to lie to the electorate—as the Liberal Party did—during the recent state election.

**The PRESIDENT:** Members, in relation to one aspect of the member’s comments, in which he referred to part of an answer to a question that referred to a President’s ruling, I will undertake to check that again to make sure that the answer complied with that ruling that I gave last week.

*House adjourned at 5.34 pm*

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