

**ORDER OF THE RISING SUN, GOLD AND SILVER RAYS — PAULINE VUKELIC**

*Statement by Member for Vasse*

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse — Leader of the Liberal Party)** [12.54 pm]: I congratulate Pauline Vukelic, who was formally presented with the prestigious Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Rays, on behalf of His Majesty, Emperor Naruhito of Japan, at his birthday celebrations and conferment ceremony in Perth on Friday, 23 February 2024. The government of Japan first announced the conferment on 3 November 2023, with the Consulate-General of Japan offering its congratulations and sincere appreciation, stating that Ms Vukelic's many contributions will continue to benefit the ties of both countries profoundly for many years to come. The Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Rays is one of the highest conferred orders bestowed by His Majesty, the Emperor of Japan. Ms Vukelic's significant contribution over more than 30 years has been dedicated to building relationships and cultural understanding between Australia and Japan. Ms Vukelic was recognised for her outstanding achievements in laying the foundation for the strong and active sister-city exchange that continues to benefit our community. Student exchange visits have resulted in cross-generational inter-regional exchanges between Japan and Australia.

The Order of the Rising Sun Gold and Silver Rays was first established in 1875 with several foreigners presented with the prestigious award before World War II. However, it was not until 1981 that the modern version of this honour was conferred on non-Japanese recipients. We are proud to live in a multicultural society and Pauline's contribution has enabled the wider community to appreciate, understand and embrace diversity. Thank you for your outstanding contribution in the interests of the community.