

DAYLIGHT SAVING — ADOPTION

Motion

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [1.04 pm]: I move —

That the Legislative Council —

- (a) notes the recent trend towards flexible working arrangements that balance work with leisure and family time;
- (b) acknowledges the challenges faced by local businesses due to the three-hour time difference with the eastern states during summer months; and
- (c) recognises the economic, health and lifestyle benefits of adopting daylight saving in Western Australia.

Members, it is time to talk about the time. This chamber has been in darkness for far too long —

Several members interjected.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: There are plenty more zingers, members!

This chamber has been in the darkness on the topic of daylight saving for far too long. I am here to enlighten members on the history of daylight saving. From the outset, I will frame this debate by putting the if and how of daylight saving to one side; those points have been criticised and have been, dare I say it, controversial to a degree over the years. Today, I will not talk about what would happen if lightning were to strike the government and it decided to implement daylight saving or how a vote on daylight saving would occur. Rather, I will talk about the benefits of daylight saving.

Before I talk about the benefits of daylight saving, I will provide a brief history lesson on the issue of daylight saving in Western Australia. I ask members to cast their minds back to the very progressive year of 2006, when John Dozario, an Independent MLA, introduced a daylight saving bill.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: It's D'Orazio.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: I thank the member for the correction.

In 2006, John D'Orazio introduced a private member's bill on the issue of daylight saving. The bill proposed to implement daylight saving through a vote in Parliament. Another bill on daylight saving was introduced in parallel, you could say, by Matt Birney, who was a Liberal backbencher at the time. Discussions were held behind the chair. John D'Orazio's bill lapsed; Matt Birney's bill was debated and passed. Its passage was supported by the Labor Party, which allowed its members a conscience vote and, subsequently, there was a three-year trial, which was followed by a referendum, a vote by the people of WA, on the topic of daylight saving. That bill achieved royal assent in November 2006. Before the 2009 referendum, a few other milestones on the topic of daylight saving occurred in this chamber. The Daylight Saving Amendment Bill 2007 was introduced by the then Leader of the National Party, Brendon Grylls, as a way to curb debate and not allow the public enough time to digest the topic of daylight saving. It was not successful. The Daylight Saving Amendment Bill (No. 2) was introduced by Matt Birney as a way to truncate the daylight saving period. The original bill proposed daylight saving from the last Sunday in October to the last Sunday in March. The community provided some fairly loud feedback about the dark early morning starts in March. Matt Birney's bill proposed to truncate the daylight saving period by removing the months of February and March from the trial, but it was not successful. A referendum was held in 2009. I do not need to remind members of the result of that referendum, but I will remind members that referenda in WA typically fall in the negative. I will not go into that now. I am not here to labour the result of the referendum. The referendum was the referendum; the result was the result. The people spoke and I respect the will of the people. There have been four referendums on the topic of daylight saving in the history of Western Australia. I remind members that these referendums were narrowly defeated by margins of three to four per cent. Matt Birney framed that quite well when he said that it was a change-of-decision margin. There is a minuscule difference between for and against. We are not talking about landslide results, but WA has generally stayed on course with that position on the topic of daylight saving for the last 30 years.

They are very small percentages. A couple of things went wrong with the 2009 referendum. The opposition to March was strong. Certainly, there are groups of people who get up early in the morning and essentially do not like getting up in the dark. Matt Birney tried to listen to constituents and truncate that period, but there were people who were supportive of daylight saving but not supportive of getting up early in the dark in March.

The WA daylight saving trial period was also out of sync with the eastern states. The states that observe daylight saving start on the first Sunday in October and finish on the first Sunday in April, so WA loses the benefits of having a uniform time zone with the east coast in the summer months. That is a drawback and something that I do

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not think the authors of the original bill anticipated. In addition, the referendum was held at the end of a very long and hot summer. I spoke to Matt Birney about this and he was of the opinion that if the referendum had been held in the winter months, there would have been a very different result. I think everyone was a bit burnt out and had experienced a bit too much sun, and then had to basically talk about sun. Perceptions change, and the referendum yes vote was defeated by a margin of 54 per cent.

Again, the result is the result; let us put that to one side and talk about the benefits of daylight saving. Before I do that, I will give members a quick quote from Matt Birney back in 2006 on the topic of the referendums. At the time, the question was put to Matt Birney and the Parliament that the issue of daylight saving had come up quite often and Western Australia had held four referendums on it: why would we need another one? Matt Birney's response to that in the other place on 25 October 2006 was —

The fact that three referenda have previously been held on this subject is certainly not an argument against holding another one. It is, in fact, an argument to do the opposite. We need to recognise that people's lifestyles change substantially over time and that we have a responsibility, and indeed an obligation, as elected members to continually test public opinion regarding issues such as this. In doing so, we can ensure that our policies actually reflect the modern-day lifestyle and not that of yesteryear.

I absolutely agree with what Matt Birney said back then. The comments he made in 2006 absolutely ring true in 2023. There were also arguments put forward by Labor Party members. I remind members that Labor actually supported the passage of the Daylight Saving Bill (No. 2) 2007 and allowed a conscience vote on the issue of daylight saving in 2006. It allowed a free vote for its members to express their opinions on the issue of daylight saving, and Labor members supported it. The benefits of daylight saving were recognised in 2006, and those benefits remain the same today, if not more potent.

Matt Birney made some further comments in the same speech back in 2006 on the benefits of daylight saving. He stated —

Western Australia is so rich in natural assets and opportunities that it has the potential to market itself as Australia's premier lifestyle state. The rest of the country, and indeed the international community, is recognising very quickly that we have the very best beaches, the best major river system, the best climate, the best parks, the best tourism precincts and the best and most interesting country regions in the nation. Eastern staters and internationals are migrating here at a rapid rate of knots. We now have a once-in-a-generation opportunity to capitalise on that level of interest.

Whilst daylight saving alone is not the silver bullet, it is a very necessary part of the overall strategy to paint WA as the lifestyle state, the state where living is an experience and not just a state of existence. Melbourne used to be known as the al fresco city. Perth could steal that title without any trouble at all, and daylight saving would ably aid that process.

He was highlighting the flow-on effects that could be realised in Western Australia by leaning into the lifestyle benefits that daylight saving could bring.

I turn now to the pro-business argument. Comments were made by John Dozario, who introduced the bill back in —

Hon Stephen Dawson: D'Orazio.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: D'Orazio; I thank the minister. He introduced the Daylight Saving Bill back in 2006, and the benefits he mentioned in his second reading speech on 25 October 2006 have exactly the same relevance today. He stated —

When daylight saving is in place and a business opens in WA at nine o'clock in the morning, it is already lunchtime over east. The busiest time for retailers in major centres is between 11.00 am and two o'clock. Not only is that the busiest time, but also it is the lunch-hour period for staff. When they come back from lunch and that busy period is over at two o'clock, the businesses in the eastern states have closed and there is no-one left to answer queries. Therefore, there is a limited amount of time in which to do business with the eastern states. That is a bugbear for the retail industry. It is very difficult to do business with people from the eastern states during daylight saving hours. The majority of dispatches to Western Australia are sent from the eastern states.

Members, does that sound familiar? The case made by John D'Orazio back then certainly rings true today. The only difference is that the pandemic has fundamentally changed how we do business and how we work. We are moving towards more location-agnostic working environments in which time zones play a much more prominent role in how we do business and how we communicate. The benefits John D'Orazio was talking about back then are certainly compounded in 2023.

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The reality is that WA is very much beholden to the east coast time zone. We saw that recently during the AFL grand final when it was held in Perth for, I believe, the first time. It started at a very early time of day to make sure that the east coast was aligned and east coast viewers were satisfied. We see that every day; we see it with the ASX and with businesses having to conform with bank trading hours. That is a reality that we deal with; we are very much beholden to the east coast. That is a fact that is not going to go away. One might say that it is just one hour, but it adds up. Daylight saving has been described as a “big-little” issue. It is big in the sense that it affects everyone in Western Australia, but it is small in the sense that it is only one hour. But it is a very crucial hour, and it could give time back to people in the afternoons for recreation. As we continue down the path of more businesses adopting more flexible working arrangements, the case for daylight saving will continue to build, year on year.

I have highlighted some of the economic and lifestyle benefits. In respect of health benefits, an article was published in 2009 titled *The power of policy to influence behaviour change: Daylight saving and its effect on physical activity*. It found that across the population of Western Australia there had been an increase in physical activity during the daylight saving trial in WA in 2006; more people were active during daylight saving. Some people changed their exercise timetable patterns, moving from the morning to the afternoon, but as a whole, we saw an increase in physical activity and obviously there were health benefits along with that.

Noting the time, I will skip over the other benefits. In a nutshell, health, lifestyle and economy are the three main benefits that we should take into consideration. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Carpenter government of 2006, and the Labor Party, for its courage and conviction for supporting the issue, but also for allowing a conscience vote on the issue of daylight saving. Matt Birney summarised this really well. In 2006 he said —

... I think that genuine debates that involve members having a free vote, only from time to time, are very rewarding and much better reflect the nature of our work as members of Parliament.

If we look back to 2006, 12 members in the thirty-ninth Parliament under the Carpenter government are still with us today in the forty-first Parliament. We are fortunate enough to have six of those original members in the upper house today. We have Hon Donna Faragher, Hon Kate Doust, Hon Peter Collier, Hon Dr Sally Talbot, Hon Sue Ellery and, last but not least, Hon Dr Steve Thomas. I did some digging through *Hansard* and found some contributions. As I mentioned, the Labor Party supported daylight saving in 2006. None of those benefits have changed, in fact they have compounded since then. Members were allowed a conscience vote and they expressed themselves in the chamber. We heard some fantastic contributions from members. From *Hansard*, Hon Kate Doust said —

This decision came very easily. I have always been in favour of daylight saving.

...

We should not hang everything on what has happened in the past. If we did that with every issue, we would never move forward, there would never be change and there would never be an opportunity to find out if things have changed in our community.

...

I am looking forward to it ... We should bring it on.

Wise words, Hon Kate Doust. I know Hon Peter Collier’s views on this have been very supportive and I think they remain to this day. He said —

... it is a personal lifestyle issue. As members of this chamber we must consider that in the daylight saving debate ...

People feel very passionate about daylight saving. Unfortunately, it impacts upon relationships and friendships. I know that it has seriously tested my friendships.

I feel Hon Peter Collier’s angst. Hon Dr Sally Talbot said —

It always irks me to have to wear my sunglasses to drive to the pool or the gym at 5.30 am.

...

I have listened also to my lower house colleagues, as all conscientious Legislative Council members should do—at least on occasions!

...

This will not be a road to ruin ... people will realise that the sky will not fall in.

I completely agree, Hon Dr Sally Talbot. Hon Donna Faragher said —

... on a matter as sensitive as this, which creates unnecessary division and which inevitably affects each and every Western Australian, the people should have a say, sooner rather than later.

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There are also comments from the then Premier and Deputy Premier in support of daylight saving. Alan Carpenter at the time said —

“This is a lifestyle thing, it’s also important for business,” Mr Carpenter said.

“I think business will appreciate the elimination of that three hour time difference, in bringing it back to two hours.”

In a media statement from the then Deputy Premier, Eric Ripper, he said that he was confident that Western Australians would see the advantages of daylight saving. In his words —

“I believe daylight saving will enhance our lifestyle and make WA an even more attractive place to live, work and invest,” ...

These are wise words, members.

In 2006, the Labor Party had the courage and conviction to allow for a conscience vote. It recognised the benefits and allowed its members to express their free will, listen to their constituents and have a debate in the chamber on the merits of daylight saving. I would humbly request that during this debate today we put the knives down, we talk about the benefits of daylight saving and we have a conscience vote. Let members think and feel. If their constituents are telling them that they do not want daylight saving, that is perfectly fine, but let us hear from members on the benefits of daylight saving. Let us hear members’ viewpoints, let us hear from their constituents if they want to echo those, but let us talk about the benefits, not the if and how, on potentially why daylight saving would be beneficial for the people of Western Australia.

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West — Leader of the Opposition) [1.24 pm]: We flipped for it, President, and I won. I would like to thank Hon Wilson Tucker for the motion before the house today. I note that I was one of the six members of Parliament who were in Parliament when my good friend Matt Birney, who is still my friend, moved his original motion, and that Hon Wilson Tucker did not use any of my quotes. I was a little disappointed, but that is okay, because I like to have both sides of the debate going forward. I have great sympathy with most of Hon Wilson Tucker’s motion. President, if you read the motion that the member has moved, it states —

That the Legislative Council —

- (a) notes the recent trend towards flexible working arrangements that balance work with leisure and family time;

I do not think anybody in the chamber would disagree with that. I think that is a pretty reasonable statement. The motion continues —

- (b) acknowledges the challenges faced by local businesses due to the three-hour time difference with the eastern states during summer months ...

I do not think anybody could say that the challenges do not exist, because challenges certainly do exist. There is difficulty for those who are very time sensitive in business; I used to find that myself. There was a stage in my business, which I ran for 17 years, when ordering from the eastern states meant that daylight saving curtailed my capacity to purchase things. I do not think that that is necessarily unmanageable, and we simply had to be better organised when we established that the time difference was slightly greater. I think that argument can be taken too far though. Most industries can adapt to that, but some are more impacted. In the old days we talked particularly about those dealing with the stock exchange that operated on eastern states time. They had to adjust their time frames. I think the first two paragraphs of this motion have a lot of recommend them. The only part I have a problem with is paragraph (c) which states —

- (c) recognises the economic, health and lifestyle benefits of adopting daylight saving in Western Australia.

I gave some thought to perhaps move an amendment to the motion to strike out paragraph (c) and simply approve paragraphs (a) and (b), but I am trying to play those games with only the Labor Party and the government, rather than the crossbench. I resisted the urge to make changes to the motion before the house today.

I will say though, in relation to daylight saving, that I think the member is right. I will come back to Matt Birney in a moment. A little history is important to understand the benefits and pluses and minuses. From my research, daylight saving was first tested in Canada in 1908 on a trial basis, but it actually took off around the world during World War I. Believe it or not, it was first introduced in Germany when it was trying to save energy. It thought that moving the clocks back an hour over summer would save energy for the war effort. Germany was quickly followed by Britain and France doing exactly the same thing. The problem is that although that was a very good thought, the reality is that it did not save any energy. One of the problems that goes forward is that the argument around energy saving does not exist.

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A really good study took place in America, because not many places have introduced daylight saving as late or as measured as has America. I think it was in the state of Indiana; someone can correct me if they know the history better than me. It introduced it in about 2006. Indiana measured energy consumption in that state in both the year before, when there was no daylight saving, and in the year daylight saving was introduced and the year after that, in 2006 and 2007. It discovered that energy consumption in 2006 went up by only 10 or 15 per cent, but it went up because the clocks were moved back and it was hotter when people finished their day's work later in the day. Cooling costs caused total energy consumption to rise rather than decrease. The next year in 2007, it was much more neutral. I am not sure how hot Indiana gets, but Hon Wilson Tucker could probably tell me as he is more experienced in America. The change in the second year was basically energy neutral. The problem is that the argument that one might put forward, that this is an energy saving exercise, is not true. That has been generally proven around the world. That in itself is potentially not an argument to not have it, but it removes one of the positive arguments.

The argument around whether the extra hour of time difference is critical is also one that although I have some sympathy for those businesses, I think businesses can adapt. In my view, daylight saving really affects—I think the member quoted Matt Birney—people's lifestyles. The member basically said that people's lifestyles change. When we look deeply into daylight saving, we discover that it is effectively a lifestyle issue. Again, that is not a reason to say it should not exist. However, in my view, it is primarily a lifestyle issue.

Matt Birney was, and is, my friend. I was there for those early debates. I do not think some of the things that I said have changed significantly in the nearly 20 years since. The first concept is that there are winners and losers in almost every lifestyle change that is made. I am an advocate for deregulating trading hours.

Hon Dan Caddy interjected.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Much to the chagrin of the honourable member and his union, that is a lifestyle decision rather than an economic decision, and so is daylight saving. There is a group of people who can generally benefit from daylight saving. In my view, there is a group of people who will be negatively or adversely affected. Basically, when we make the choice, we are winners or losers.

I have lived through a couple of trials of daylight saving. I have seen it in action at various stages of my life. The most difficult stage was when I had young children. When Matt Birney introduced his bill in the lower house in 2006, my memory is that that was before he got married. It was certainly before he had children. He reflected the demographic that probably gets the greatest benefit out of daylight saving. Who gets the greatest benefit? It is people without wider than eight hours' general attachment or obligations and people, particularly younger people, who work at a 37.5-hour week or a 40-hour week. Those people who have a set start time and finish time can most easily shift an hour. That is not the complicated part. They basically gain an hour. They have to remember to try to go to bed an hour earlier. Some very good studies have shown that a section of the community, not everybody, actually experiences a degree of sleep deprivation. Some members of the community can adapt more easily to shifting that hour. Some members of the community struggle. Some young children and families can adapt to that shift in a reasonable way. I remember debating it at the time. People were saying, "We simply black out our windows so that the kids don't realise that there's still sunlight when they're supposed to be going to bed." People can manage that, but there is a group for whom that is very difficult. There is a group, particularly children, for whom daylight saving makes life more difficult. This is a lifestyle decision which is very much about some people getting a lifestyle benefit, but some, particularly that proportion of the group who have younger children or cannot shift their workload, are the losers in the argument.

My business was probably a prime example. This is stuff that I did use back in 2006. As a regional vet, I would normally start my workday when everybody got up—at six o'clock. The last check of the cattle and the horses happened when the sun went down, because that was the last opportunity to check. My workday went from six o'clock to when the sun went down. When the clock was moved back, an hour of work was simply added to my workday to do the same amount of work. It is the case that in terms of work, a group of people are negatively impacted. If people are not on set hours or they cannot easily manage to shift their hours, they are negatively impacted.

Again, there is a group for whom it is a positive and there is a group for whom it is a negative. That is why these referenda are always fiercely fought, highly emotional and tightly contested. I want to put away all the silly arguments that come out on occasions, because I think that we can do better than denigrate people who are opposed to it. Some foolish and derogatory things were said. It is absolutely true that regional people, in general, have been more opposed to it. From memory, during the trial and referenda a couple of years later, only the North Metropolitan Region voted in favour of a permanent application of daylight saving. I am relying on my memory, so someone might be able to correct me if I am wrong. I definitely remember that the North Metropolitan Region voted in favour. Certainly, my electorate in the South West Region was quite opposed. Certainly the electorate of Hon Wilson Tucker in the north west was violently opposed.

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Hon Kyle McGinn: Yes, I have got the figures on that one.

Hon Steve Martin interjected.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Yes. It was not all that popular in the Agricultural Region either. I am not sure about the East Metropolitan Region or the South Metropolitan Region, but I do not remember more than one region being in favour of it. It was probably representative of the demographic of each of those regions. The people who would advantage from it outnumbered the people who would be disadvantaged by it.

This has been a highly contentious debate. I accept that Hon Wilson Tucker was elected on this mandate. It is appropriate that we have these debates. I am never afraid of debating daylight saving. I will be incredibly interested to see how the members that Hon Wilson Tucker quoted as being very much in favour of it end up voting. The opposition has granted its members a free vote so they can express themselves as they see fit in this particular debate. My view is that it is not the most pressing matter that we have to address. I understand why Hon Wilson Tucker has moved his motion, but it is not a battle that I intend to take up. Over the next two years, I would rather not be involved in a battle over whether I support or oppose daylight saving. There are far too many more important things to battle.

The problem is that daylight saving just develops its own head of steam. It becomes a massive issue that overtakes the rest of the debate. We have all these things that this government is struggling with, despite its massive wealth. This government is struggling in a range of areas. That is the area that I would like to focus on over the next couple of years, rather than the debate on daylight saving. We are absolutely going to have the debate. If I thought it was appropriate, I would try to remove the third part of Hon Wilson Tucker's motion because part (a) and part (b) are inarguable, even if we might vary in how much we think businesses will be impacted, as set out in part (b). I personally cannot support the motion in its entirety. I suspect that a number of members of the opposition, particularly those who represent regional areas, will feel the same way. I suspect this motion will not get up. We can then move on and focus on keeping the government to account in a few other areas.

HON KYLE MCGINN (Mining and Pastoral — Parliamentary Secretary) [1.38 pm]: I thank Hon Wilson Tucker for finally bringing this motion into the chamber to have a discussion on it. I am really looking forward to it. Funnily enough, I am going to focus pretty heavily on the first part of the motion. I do not genuinely agree with the statement in part (a) of the motion. Although I think the sentiment is great, I do not believe that there has been a trend of employers moving towards equal time and flexibility in rosters. I think the four and one roster and the two and one roster still exist. We need to take note that we have not got there yet. It is great that we are moving towards more flexible working arrangements that balance work with leisure and family time. Unfortunately, not all employers are doing that. There are some good situations. When Gruyere started up out in the goldfields, it went to a week-on week-off roster straight off the bat, which was excellent, and it filled up with workers very quickly. But up in the north, particularly in the iron ore industry, contractors who do not wear the company's T-shirt end up doing some absurd hours.

There is also an opportunity to look at shutdown crews. That has always been a big issue because shutdown work is periodic and only so much shutdown work is happening. It happens during one half of the year and then there is nothing during the other half. I have said in this chamber before that it would only take employers talking to each other to coordinate shutdowns, particularly in the north west. If the work were spread across the whole period and everyone's shutdowns were lined up, it would allow shutdown crews to potentially operate for 12 months.

Again, I have said in this chamber before that I am very proud of the goldfields for that because it is ahead of the game in that space. I talked with Kalgoorlie Consolidated Gold Mines when I first got into this chamber. I was from Karratha so I did not know too much about the working arrangements of workers in the goldfields, but speaking with KCGM I learnt that it was already sharing information on shutdowns to ensure that when the shutdown crews finish up operations at KCGM, they have a few weeks off and then go to work at BHP. Having that discussion meant that KCGM did not have a skills shortage because there were not enough shutdown workers at the time and shutdown workers had a little bit of security in their work. Whereas, friends of mine and constituents who live in Karratha do four weeks straight and then have a couple of days off before they have to do another four to six weeks straight because a shutdown is starting at another workplace. It is not fair to say that that is the only way that things can be done. Employers need to speak to each other around how they can make it work. If they did that, there would be far more flexible working arrangements that balance work with family and leisure time, which I think would also benefit productivity and people's general mental health at work.

We all know that mental health has been a massive issue in this state, Australia and across the world. I think that is only magnified when rosters are thrown in that are referred to—I will say it in this chamber—as suicide rosters. That is the six-and-one rosters and the four-and-one rosters. To clarify, that is six weeks on and one week off and then six weeks on and one week off. I have stuck to this view since coming in to this place in 2017: that type of roster needs to be phased out. We need to be getting to eight-and-six rosters, which is eight days on and six days off, or

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seven and sevens. I come from the maritime industry, which was month on and month off. People would go, “Wow! A month of work is a long time.” But the month off really did compensate because I was getting an equal amount of time with my family to what I had missed out on. With the two-and-one roster, people really do not get back one week every time they go to work, and that puts a strain on workers.

Part (a) of the motion that was brought to the chamber today is very well done, Hon Wilson Tucker. But I would not go as far to say that there is a recent trend in that space. I think absolutely some employers have taken it on board, and a lot of work is being done in the fly-in fly-out mental health space. There was an inquiry in 2015, I believe, and then a code of practice was released by the government that highlighted equal-time rosters were a better option for ensuring mental health in the FIFO industry. That being the case, a code of practice came out, which was meant to be where employers would get the standard for creating agreements, but they are still not doing it. It is not good enough to force a workforce into a position in which they do not have equal opportunities. Workers who wear a subcontractor’s T-shirt get treated completely differently from workers who wear a BHP, Rio Tinto or Woodside T-shirt. That is not a fair workplace or a way to balance work with leisure and family time, in my view. I do not believe the trend is going in that direction or giving people that opportunity.

I will now look at the daylight saving part of the motion. As Hon Wilson Tucker knows, I have probably stirred him up a little bit trying to learn about daylight saving. Despite living in South Australia for a bit when I was younger, I did not understand the benefits of daylight saving. Since looking into daylight saving and talking with people in my electorate, I have a pretty clear response. Four losses at a referendum is four losses, Hon Wilson Tucker. We cannot wipe clean history and not look at the referendums, but that does not mean we should not have another one. In the last referendum, 13 952 people in Kalgoorlie said no and 4 391 said yes. In the Kimberley, 15 913 people said no and 2 766 said yes. In the Agricultural Region electorate in Geraldton, 21 432 people said no and 3 734 said yes. In the Pilbara, 11 122 people said no and 2 228 said yes. I am a Crows supporter and I know when I am beaten! That is a very clear message from the electorate that daylight saving is not something people are interested in. It is the electorate that we represent, member. The more the member has a crack at this issue, the more he may find that those figures will inflate, because what is relevant to the areas I have spoken about? It is the resources sector in which people work 12-hour shifts and there is FIFO, drive-in drive-out and residential employment. I could not care about the east coast getting upset about the time difference with us because the resources, the resource companies and the engine room of Australia is in Western Australia. If they want to deal with us, they can stay up a bit later!

I found it interesting that the member did not mention that Asia, for example, does not have daylight saving. Western Australia is in a very good time zone to work with Singapore and other Asian countries, which is a benefit to Western Australia over the eastern states. Hon Wilson Tucker focused solely on the positives of daylight saving to try to convince us to get back on board and maybe support another referendum. In my view, from what I have seen and heard, particularly from my constituents, it is pretty clear that the electorate voted in a member of the Daylight Saving Party but they do not support daylight saving. It would have been interesting to hear about Hon Wilson Tucker’s experiences in the electorate pushing the daylight saving agenda, and to know whether he had a response or could turn 13 952 voters in the Kimberley across to voting for daylight saving. I think he will find that people, particularly in resource rich areas, will not be contemplating daylight saving, but I am interested to hear about daylight saving from other members and learn what I can. I went to the airport yesterday morning at 5.00 am and it was dark. I like that it was dark because I knew it was early and I am not normally out of bed at that time!

I commend Hon Wilson Tucker for bringing the motion to the chamber and giving us a bit of a lesson on the history of daylight saving. It is something I have been absolutely hungry to hear for the last two years. Thank you very much and I look forward to listening to other contributions of the chamber.

HON STEPHEN DAWSON (Mining and Pastoral — Minister for Emergency Services) [1.48 pm]: It is my role this afternoon to respond on behalf of the government, noting of course that the parliamentary secretary has already given a contribution. I acknowledge the debate brought forward by Hon Wilson Tucker. It is interesting that it is happening a day after this chamber was advised that the Daylight Saving Party no longer exists and the member is no longer its leader. I think Hon Kyle McGinn made a good point that although Hon Wilson Tucker represents the Mining and Pastoral Region, as has been said in this place before, it was on the strength of, I think, 98 votes and a bit of preference whispering that got us to where we are. Having said that, the member makes a good contribution in this place and I am very thankful. I congratulate him on his work with the Parliamentary Friends of Technology and Innovation. He hosted an event here last night with Caitlin Collins, MLA. I acknowledge his contribution. Certainly, I have to say this afternoon that I and the government will not be supporting the member’s motion.

It is important to look at the history of this issue in Western Australia. As has been mentioned previously, we have had four referenda on daylight saving in Western Australia. The first was on 8 March 1975. The second was on 7 April 1984. The third was on 4 April 1992, and the fourth was on 16 May 2009. Each time, the issue has been

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voted down. In 1975, 53 per cent said no. In 1984, 54 per cent said no. In 1992, 53 per cent again said no, and in 2009, 55 per cent said no.

I have to say that this is not an issue that is raised with me in our electorate, which is the electorate I share with Hon Wilson Tucker, Hon Neil Thomson, Hon Rosie Sahanna, Hon Kyle McGinn and—whom have I missed? My good friend Hon Peter Foster is behind me. Hon Peter Foster reminded me a few minutes ago that in summer in our part of the world it can be bright at about 5.30 am, as it is. That hour's difference would make it bright at 4.30 am. As a parent of a young child who rises earlier in summer at the moment, I dare say that extra hour would take its toll on parents.

The McGowan government respects the outcome of the four referenda that have taken place in Western Australia in the last 50 years, and it is not the government's intention to revisit the issue. It is certainly not its intention to again use taxpayer funds to fund a campaign on this issue. Our priority is to help invest in those areas that need investment. Our priorities are to help diversify our economy and ease the pressure on our health system, amongst other things.

I will touch on the 2009 referendum. To put it in context, the world has changed dramatically since that time. Obviously, we have been through the COVID-19 pandemic, during which people were able to work in a variety of places and around the world, doing their job wherever it needed to be done. In those days, in 2009, we were a society with fewer emails, videoconferences and communications technologies, but, of course, that has rapidly changed over that period of time. It does not matter what time of the day it is, quite frankly, I am sure we have all been contacted by constituents via email, and we have had videoconferences or Teams meetings. Granted, it is galling at times when we have to go to a ministerial council meeting that starts at 6.00 am as opposed to 9.00 am, but that is one of the things that we have to make do with.

As I said, the global COVID-19 pandemic showed us that businesses could connect across different time zones and distances. Hon Kyle McGinn, in his contribution, mentioned the importance of our location in relation to Asian countries. We are in the same time zone as China, Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Taiwan. About 60 per cent of the world's population is in this time zone. I contend that our future is as a hub for those places and not, in fact, for Sydney, Melbourne or the east coast of Australia. If we are serious about diversifying our economy, it will be with a focus on those countries in Asia that are, at the moment, in our time zone. I think to move us away would just put an extra barrier in place. At this stage, we are ideally located where we are.

We have one of the strongest economies. We certainly have the strongest in Australia and one of the strongest in the world, and that has nothing to do with daylight saving. It is the result of responsible budget management and sustained effort to attract investment to our state. Our state economy continues to grow without daylight saving.

It is interesting to look back. The Western Australian Electoral Commission has some interesting information on its website about the results of previous referenda and the "yes" and "no" campaigns from the last referendum, in 2009. In his contribution, Hon Dr Steve Thomas spoke about the history of daylight saving. In fact, the "no" case in 2009 said —

The idea of daylight saving was first conceived by Benjamin Franklin during his time as an American delegate in Paris in 1784, —

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: That is in dispute; it is a disputed attribution.

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON: Well, this is the "no" campaign from last time. He continued —

in an essay, "An Economical Project." as a way to save on the expenditure of candles which were expensive and a staple in his day. Franklin intended it as a joke. It was first advocated seriously by London builder William Willett in 1907 in the pamphlet, "Waste of Daylight". This is not a new or even progressive idea. It was conceived in circumstances vastly different to what we experience today.

Whether we have daylight saving or not, there are 24 hours in our day. If the time was changed, our focus would change, but it is an undeniable fact that our kids would get up earlier if the sun is there an hour earlier. As I said, as a parent, I do not want that extra hour at this stage.

It is interesting to look back. Hon Kyle McGinn spoke about the electorate we share with Hon Wilson Tucker, and the figures are quite clear. Our electorate did not support it, and I do not think any regional electorate supported daylight saving the last time we had a referendum, which was in 2009.

I think Hon Dr Steve Thomas was correct: North Metropolitan Region was the only region at that stage that voted in favour of it. Many of the electorates that were close to the beach—regardless of being in the North Metropolitan Region or not—were the ones that more strongly favoured daylight saving. Electorates further from the beach were less likely to support it.

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It is an issue that I have had an interest in for many years, and it is an interest that comes up from time to time. Obviously, the last time it came up was with the election of Hon Wilson Tucker. It is not an issue that is raised by the vast majority of people in the general community; they care about things like the cost of living and access to quality health care, good schooling and jobs. Those are the issues that the state government will remain focused on. With the greatest respect to the honourable member, we will not be supporting the motion today.

HON SOPHIA MOERMOND (South West) [1.56 pm]: I support the motion by Hon Wilson Tucker. I like how it relates to a work–life balance. Having worked for several companies that were based in the eastern states, I attended Zoom meetings in my pyjamas long before it was fashionable. The issues that were caused by the time differences in working with my colleagues and in getting orders through on time were quite frustrating, and they hampered efficiency. If we look at the work–life balance, we had meetings at 6.00 am or 7.00 am, which was 9.00 am in the eastern states, and we were still expected to do appointments until 5.00 pm. There was not necessarily any financial compensation for that, and this is still the case for many employees of companies based over east. Not everybody in WA works in the resources sector.

The other aspects relate to recreation. I grew up with daylight saving in the Netherlands and loved the balmy nights, when we would have dinner outside and go to the beach after work. I do not remember children finding it difficult to cope with daylight saving and going to bed while it was still daylight. I would love to see that here. I have not heard anything from anyone in my electorate, and they may well have very different opinions, so I realise that this is my opinion. I also acknowledge that the previous referendums were very clear noes—I get that—but I enjoy going to the beach after work. I feel safer when it is still daylight. I love watching the sun set over the ocean while I am having dinner on a restaurant balcony. I thank the honourable member very much for the motion.

HON MARTIN PRITCHARD (North Metropolitan) [1.59 pm]: I also celebrate the fact that Hon Wilson Tucker brought this motion forward, having been elected on that basis. I think it is appropriate and timely. But we are a representative government, and one thing I can say is that if this were a burning issue, it would have been a burning issue going into the last election and there would have been parties promising to introduce daylight saving or to hold a referendum on daylight saving and there might have been more people on the crossbench who were elected on the platform of daylight saving. Lots of things might have happened. If the government did not get in and introduce daylight saving or hold a referendum on daylight saving, the constituency could vote it out, but it is not a burning issue. I agree with previous speakers in saying that there are often winners and losers in this debate, and the referenda we had previously have demonstrated that there are more losers than winners, and so the majority of people voted against it, although it was close. This is a representative government. We cannot keep going back and having a referendum. I do not have a problem with referenda, but we cannot govern by referenda. As I said, you govern as a representative government.

I was listening to Hon Wilson Tucker's contribution very closely because I wanted to find out what the benefits of daylight saving were. Hon Wilson Tucker mentioned retail. I worked in retail for a long time before I came to this place, and I was struggling to work out how daylight saving impacts retail. Does it impact the person who works on the shop floor? Do they get impacted by the fact that the time in the eastern states is an hour's difference? No. It may impact retail in some respects with ordering, but most ordering is done electronically. If it is not picked up at night, it is picked up the following morning. Most companies deal with that. I was struggling to work out how daylight saving would positively impact retail. I can certainly see, through lived experience, how it can negatively impact on retail. Most people working in retail have family responsibilities, in the main, and getting up an hour earlier to get their children off to school an hour earlier would certainly negatively impact those families. I was trying to work out whether the member would talk about some other industries that I am sure do get impacted and have contact with the eastern states on a daily basis and for which that hour may make a difference, but, unfortunately, that was not raised. As I said, when the member raised retail, I felt that I needed to stand up.

The member mentioned lifestyle, as have others. To be perfectly honest, obviously, I exercise rarely! The most time I exercise is in summer when there is actually time in the morning to get up and go for a walk and go to the gym and do those sorts of things. Trying to move that exercise to the afternoon is difficult and also, given that my father died of complications from skin cancer, people do not want to be out in the sun walking and running when the sun is at its worst. Bringing the time forward tends to bring that time closer to the worst time of the day. Exercise and lifestyle in that regard, I think, is a 50–50 proposition, at the very best.

I will go back to companies for just a moment. I have seen many, many companies, including retail, that have the flexibility to start people earlier or later, but they never do that. My view is that if a company felt it was better to start people a little bit later so that they could have more communication with the eastern states, they would do that. I cannot see very many ways in which that would be opposed. I am finding myself still struggling to work out what benefits the member can demonstrate that would bring me on board. Unfortunately, I have to say that I will not support the motion.

HON DARREN WEST (Agricultural — Parliamentary Secretary) [2.04 pm]: Very briefly on this motion, I will not bore the house with stories of faded curtains and confused cows that we sometimes hear about when we talk

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about daylight saving, because that is quite silly. I acknowledge Hon Wilson Tucker's motion and why he has brought it to the house. I also acknowledge his passion for actually believing in the benefits of daylight saving. To a certain extent, he is right. There are some benefits that have been adopted in other parts of the world and in the other states of Australia. Those of us who have lived in other parts of the world and in other states of Australia have seen that there are significant benefits to having daylight saving. For example, when I lived in Victoria, which is very far south, it is a short enough day. It is similar in Esperance. There is a shorter day and tacking on that extra hour makes it a bit late when the sun comes up in the morning, but the extra hour in the evening is a benefit, and there is some economic benefit.

But the argument against daylight saving in Western Australia is one of geography. I do not know whether anyone knows where Yellowdine is. Hon Kyle McGinn would know where it is. The significance of the point 33 kilometres east of Yellowdine from the Great Eastern Highway—members can imagine a north–south line running right through the state—is that it is our time meridian. That is where time is measured for Western Australia. That is the actual coordinated universal time meridian. The time at that place on earth is the time right across the state. Western Australians live relatively north, in Perth, and in most of the rest of the state, and a significant number of people also live west of that meridian line. In reality, in the Perth metropolitan area, we have somewhere between 15 and 20 minutes of daylight saving anyway by virtue of living west of that meridian line. That is one of the reasons that I believe people are opposed to daylight saving, because if we added another hour on to that, it would make it an hour and 15 or 20 minutes of daylight saving, which is too much. It would get dark too late. I know from the daylight saving trial period that the great criticism of daylight saving was trying to get kids to bed before school the next day when the sun was well and truly up. That is an issue that we faced, and that is why many people opposed it. The model might work well in other parts of the world and in the eastern states, which are predominantly east of their time zones, especially Sydney—although Melbourne is south of its time zone and Adelaide is about right on its time zone, but is quite south as well—but those advantages would not apply to us as they do to the other states. The honourable member might want to go away and think about a different model; for instance, reverse daylight saving in winter, which I think would have some benefits, or maybe even having only 30 minutes of daylight saving, which would give us 45 to 50 minutes of daylight saving. That would still make our time zone a bit closer to the eastern states. It would throw us out of whack with the greatest populated time zone in the world, which is the one we are currently in. There would maybe be more merit in that for the Western Australian people.

I think the arguments that the member made are sound, but I do not think that geographically it will work for us here with the model the member is proposing. I think that perhaps most people would be open to a different model, but the people have spoken pretty clearly about the model of one hour—the same as everybody else. A bit of creative thinking around this could be beneficial to the member's cause and his debate. I am not arguing that there are not some economic and health and lifestyle benefits, but I am arguing that one hour and 15 minutes for the Perth metropolitan area is too much and that the people have rejected that.

HON WILSON TUCKER (Mining and Pastoral) [2.08 pm] — in reply: I thank all members for their contributions. It is unfortunate that the government is opposed to the motion and would not allow a conscience vote on the issue of daylight saving, as it did back in 2006. It is also sad to see that the opposition will not support it either, but that is hardly surprising. At least it is true to its word in 2006, as it were, and continues in its opposition to daylight saving, at least at a party level.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: We are consistent.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: It is consistent.

I will address members' individual comments. Hon Dr Steve Thomas, the Leader of the Opposition, spoke about energy saving. The jury is out, in a sense, on whether daylight saving gives us any energy savings. I have read reports that are for and against it. When we look at Western Australia, we see that we are a very solar state; we have a very high uptake of solar. If people are given more time in the afternoon, it means they get home earlier—when I say earlier, I mean they still have more sunlight—so they are coming home during a period of higher solar intensity. I have seen some evidence to suggest that there is a very slight energy saving under the daylight saving model.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas: But you also need more air conditioning when you get to the house; that's the problem.

Hon WILSON TUCKER: That is draw and demand, member. There is an asterisk. I do not want to mislead the house but I have seen some evidence to suggest that there is a slight energy saving under the daylight saving model, but that is not an argument I will die on a hill about. It is the lifestyle argument for daylight saving that is more compelling. Hon Stephen Dawson mentioned the four referendums. I alluded to the results previously. We have had four referendums. They all finished in the negative. It is a logical fallacy to suggest that just because four finished with negative results, a fifth would also finish with a negative result. I do not want to throw away those results. I think the people have spoken but it has been a long period since then. As I mentioned, there are comments from

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Hansard in 2006 that we as elected members have to do a litmus test occasionally. Just because we had a result back in 2009 does not mean we should not ever have another decision on this. It is expensive but democracy is expensive. I think it would be about \$2 million to hold a referendum. If \$2 million is put into the general equation of this government's surplus, I think it would be \$2 million well spent. Again, I am not arguing to have another referendum now. I am arguing for a discussion on the benefits of daylight saving.

Hon Stephen Dawson also mentioned Asian countries and diversification. Diversification is fantastic. I think aligning ourselves with Asia is a step in the right direction. We want to encourage businesses to obviously do business with Asia but the reality is that more businesses communicate with the east coast. I do not think that reality is going to change anytime soon. It is certainly not the reality now and I do not think it is going to be the reality in the future. We are very much beholden to the east coast time zone. We are debating a difference of one hour but it does add up. As we have heard previously, when we talk about the Australian Securities Exchange, the banking sector and our financial markets, one hour does make a big difference. The reality is that most businesses in Western Australia conduct business with the east coast of Australia as opposed to Asia. Both Stephens spoke about the larger issues in the economy and that they should be given more weight—they are. We have not had a debate on daylight saving in a very long time. There were the now infamous comments made by former Premier Colin Barnett after the referendum. The former Premier back then supported daylight saving but he commented that the issue is there for a generation and that it should not be touched for 20 years—and we have not. We have been in the darkness since then. We have not heard much of a debate on the issue of daylight saving since then. Certainly, there are a number of larger burning issues in the economy, but they are getting the attention and the focus that they deserve in and out of Parliament.

Division

Question put and a division taken, the Acting President (Hon Steve Martin) casting his vote with the noes, with the following result —

Ayes (2)

Hon Sophia Moermond

Hon Wilson Tucker (*Teller*)

Noes (27)

Hon Martin Aldridge
Hon Klara Andric
Hon Dan Caddy
Hon Sandra Carr
Hon Stephen Dawson
Hon Colin de Grussa
Hon Kate Doust

Hon Sue Ellery
Hon Donna Faragher
Hon Nick Goiran
Hon Lorna Harper
Hon Jackie Jarvis
Hon Steve Martin
Hon Kyle McGinn

Hon Shelley Payne
Hon Stephen Pratt
Hon Martin Pritchard
Hon Samantha Rowe
Hon Rosie Sahanna
Hon Matthew Swinbourn
Hon Dr Sally Talbot

Hon Dr Steve Thomas
Hon Neil Thomson
Hon Dr Brian Walker
Hon Darren West
Hon Pierre Yang
Hon Peter Foster (*Teller*)

Question thus negatived.