

ESTIMATES OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE

Consideration of Tabled Papers

Resumed from 16 June on the following motion moved by Hon Barry House (Parliamentary Secretary) —

That pursuant to standing order 49(1)(c), the Legislative Council take note of tabled papers 773A-H (budget papers 2009-10) laid upon the table of the house on 14 May 2009.

HON ALYSSA HAYDEN (East Metropolitan) [7.32 pm]: I take this opportunity to congratulate you, Mr President, on your recent election. It will be an honour to work with you in this chamber. It is with great honour that I enter this chamber as a member of the Liberal-National government. It is a wonderful privilege to be able to work alongside so many experienced parliamentarians. I look forward to their counsel, as I am sure many of them will be great mentors. Today I stand here as a member of the east metropolitan team, as the third Liberal member, and as one of the five female members elected by the people of the East Metropolitan Region. I join Hon Helen Morton, Hon Donna Faragher, Hon Ljiljana Ravlich, who unfortunately is not here this evening, and Hon Alison Xamon, and the one male member of this petticoat junction, Hon Jock Ferguson. Obviously, the people of the East Metropolitan Region know that if they want something done right the first time, get a woman. I take this opportunity to thank the electors for this humbling opportunity to represent them at this important level. I will do my utmost to bring their issues to the forefront and to ensure that our region is in the minds of our ministers when they make decisions on our future. Before continuing, I thank Hon Helen Morton for her warm welcome and true kindness, along with her support, advice and encouragement throughout the past 12 months. She is truly a beautiful person. To my new colleague, Hon Liz Behjat, it is wonderful to be able to share these new experiences with a new member and a friend.

The East Metropolitan Region is a unique and diverse district; an area that I have grown up in and worked in for the majority of my life. I am fortunate that my two loving parents, Arthur and Sandra Wallis, wanted a safe, caring and adventurous environment for their two children, and the hills provided exactly that. I grew up in Mt Helena, a special place that reflects life across this region. Teachers taught during the day and they coached sports on the weekends. Parents were involved in their children's lives and playing outdoors in the bush was the norm. This environment plays a major role in the healthy development of children in this area and I guess that is why so many return to raise families of their own.

I started my schooling at Helena College and then Darlington Primary School, before moving to Mt Helena Primary School and then on to Eastern Hills Senior High School. I grew up playing sports in the local area and became a ballroom dancer after taking lessons in the community hall. I also joined the Marloo Theatre company and I held my first job in Midland. My own business career started at the age of 19 and my working career continued for the next 15 years in and around the Midland district. This was a wise decision, as it turns out. Midland, if we ask the local and business community, is the centre of the universe. Still living in the region, I have been lucky to watch how this unique section of Perth has grown and developed. This community has never stopped working on improving the area and creating a better lifestyle. Together, the Swan Chamber of Commerce, the City of Swan and the Midland Redevelopment Authority share a proud community vision for this fast developing centre. Although there has been a lot of hard work from these groups, there are still many issues that need our attention. I will be encouraging our government to make the following issues a priority: the Lloyd Street extension, which must include the rail underpass to enable safe and efficient ambulance services to and from the new Midland health campus; the Perth to Darwin highway, which has been on the drawing board for well over 11 years, and is essential for the Swan Valley tourism precinct, along with the growing residential areas, to relocate our trucks to a safer route; and obtaining a university college, which will provide a higher education presence and employment opportunities that are long overdue for this region. Additional train stations are required throughout the East Metropolitan Region, especially along the Thornlie line, as is the upgrade of the main station in Midland. We also need to look at an ongoing commitment to redevelop our older suburbs, such as Maddington and Kenwick, and a continued commitment to the great work being undertaken by both the Midland and Armadale Redevelopment Authorities.

Recently, I took up an offer from a business operator in Hazelmere to tag along with her to get an understanding of her industry's issues. Never shying away from a challenge, I set off in a Scania, otherwise known as a "ladies truck", as the boys call it. After five days we returned from delivering and installing our oversized load in Tom Price. In the East Metropolitan Region, we have the three main routes that our truck industry uses to transport our everyday consumables. Without our truck drivers delivering our fresh bread, milk, clothes and mail—I could go on—our world as we know it would stop turning. What was obvious to me on my short trip was the lack of respect that we as a community show our truck drivers. Educating all our local and visiting motorists is essential to not only help the truck industry but also ultimately save lives. There are many issues within this industry which need our attention and which I will raise during my time in Parliament. However, if I could stress just one

issue, it would be for our community to respect and understand the importance of our truck industry. I would like to thank Heather Jones from Success Transport, who is with us tonight in the gallery, for allowing me to see firsthand the issues surrounding her business. The experience of travelling, eating and sleeping in a truck for five days, which included sleeping at truck rests with no facilities whatsoever, or stopping at a truck stop shared with 12 other truckers and bikers, will stick with me forever. I assure Heather that I will take seriously the many issues that need addressing in her industry and I will push tirelessly to see these changes implemented.

Mr President, when I say wineries, retreats, marron, orchards, chocolate, wagon rides, tulips, markets, and both rural and high-density living, not only are these products and services supported by our truck industry, but also they are just a few that make up our diverse East Metropolitan Region. This is why one of my passions is tourism. We must sell our beautiful state and region to not only interstate and international visitors, but also Western Australians. Approximately 447 000 Western Australians travelled overseas in 2008. Of those 447 000 over 50 per cent travelled for the purpose of a holiday. Another 123 000 Western Australians travelled interstate for the same purpose. In other words, approximately 346 500 Western Australians left our state for a holiday. If we could tap into, say, 10 per cent of the people who travel outside WA for their holiday, that 10 per cent would increase tourism numbers in WA by at least 34 500. In these economic hard times the government needs to be looking at ways to encourage people in our local community to holiday in their own backyard, thus ensuring that that money stays in our state. It is heartening to learn that I am not alone in my passion for people to holiday at home. In February, Liz Constable, our Minister for Tourism, launched the Holiday at Home campaign, which has been linked to the increased bookings experienced in Broome, on Rottnest and in the mid-west.

Western Australia's main source of international tourism comes from the United Kingdom, the United States, Singapore and New Zealand. All of these countries are currently in recession. This will impact on the number of international visitors to WA and it is another reason that we should be focusing on our local visitors. Like any business plan, we must start small—you target your local audience, you create your core business and then you expand. We seem to have lost what should be our core business; that is, our local tourists.

It has been estimated that over 46 000 people are employed in tourism-related jobs in WA. If Western Australians simply spent more of their holiday time in our state, not only would it enhance our tourism industry and generate a healthy economy, but we will also increase employment in WA. Graham Moss, the chief executive officer of Tourism Council Western Australia was quoted in *The West Australian* of 4 May as saying that it is time to look for fresh ideas and a new approach as the state faced uncertain uneconomic times. I could not agree with him more.

During my time in Parliament I hope to see changes to the way we market Western Australia and the pooling of resources to ensure that our entire tourism industry is on the same page. We need to create smart, simple but effective ways to advertise our state to our local community as a desired destination, be it a one-day visit, an extended weekend or the annual holiday.

Most members are aware of the beauty of the south west region, but not all members are aware of what is on offer only 25 minutes from the city. One of my suggestions is to start advertising local activities at the end of weather reports—a 30-second advertisement giving information on local places to visit and activities to do for the weekend ahead. If we do not know what is on offer locally and experience it ourselves, how can we start selling our state to others? We need to start holidaying at home.

We have just heard the announcement of the Ocean Reef marina, which has received the full support of the tourism industry. To assist our tourism industry we need to provide drawcards. People love to link leisure with water. Mr President, I ask you to picture family picnics, walk and cycle ways, boats, wine tours and cafes, and then take that image and place it along the Swan River, through Belmont, Bayswater, Bassendean and Guildford—the Swan area. This is what developing our Swan River could bring to these areas, linking our heritage, community and environment. We seem to be a community that is afraid of change. However, once change occurs and sites are developed we flock to them and enjoy them. Hillarys Boat Harbour was a vision of Trevor Kitcher's. He had a pretty difficult time selling his plan and the local community was afraid of what the changes might bring. Now look at what occurs: people fight for car parking, boats line the jetty, holiday chalets overlook our beautiful oceans and the boardwalk is bustling.

Since 1955 studies have been undertaken on a variety of aspects of the Swan River. These documents have focused on individual issues, such as zoning of property, landscaping and environmental. I understand that most of these studies have assisted with educating the landowners and industry to protect and develop a healthy river. The river is a resource available to the community to enjoy and live on. If planned correctly, using the previous studies to ensure that the integrity of our river is maintained, there is nothing to stop us from developing this natural asset to its fullest potential. Put simply, if we do not use it, we will lose it. It is my opinion that an action group needs to be formed with the purpose of developing the Swan River into a drawcard for the local community and WA visitors. Redevelopment authorities have a successful track record of linking the relevant

groups together in order to obtain a vision shared by the entire community. For example, the East Perth Redevelopment Authority transformed what was an old tip and an ugly site into what it is today. People new to Western Australia would never guess the history of East Perth.

Locally, in the East Metropolitan Region, the Midland and Armadale Redevelopment Authorities have made, and continue to make, dramatic changes and impacts on these areas. A redevelopment authority for the Swan River would allow for the local governments along the river, the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council, the Swan River Trust and other relevant groups to work together to ensure that the development will not only provide a recreational destination for WA, but also protect and improve the health of our river.

Today, I and our transport minister, Hon Simon O'Brien, announced an investment of \$76 633 for new recreational boating facilities and infrastructure for the Swan River. This funding will allow for an additional 15 courtesy moorings throughout the upper Swan region, which will encourage the community to use our river. With projects such as these, I believe that with government and industry working together, people will have no doubt that WA is a beautiful state. With so much to offer, it will be a must for their next getaway.

Small business makes up 96 per cent of our business community in WA. Because of this, we are known as the lucky state. Although we are feeling the pain of this world economic crisis, it will be our small business community that will see us through. These business owners are the ones who will put their shoulders to the grindstone. And why? Because they have everything to lose. They do not have excess staff whom they can lay off. They do not have exorbitant CEO wages that they can reduce. They cannot put a hold on their overdraft or mortgage payments, and they cannot afford to lose good staff.

Starting my first business at the age of 19 years, I employed just over 15 staff. The most difficult part of running my business was neither the business plan nor the training of staff; it was keeping abreast of government legislation, licences, regulations, insurances and tax changes. A few years later my husband and I were operating our second business, with over 35 staff. This was when the goods and services tax was implemented and when the compulsory employees superannuation scheme was put into place. These changes required new systems, professional advice, time and training, which all equalled money. To implement these changes into our business was not only expensive, emotionally challenging and extremely difficult; we still had to find the time to conduct our normal business activities. Unfortunately, there were many businesses that were unable to adapt and did not survive through these changes. Governments and departments need to realise that decisions made in their boardrooms have a huge impact on our business community, especially our small to medium businesses. These people simply do not have the time, nor the resources, as they are too busy just running their business.

Over 20 years I have had experience in running a few businesses of my own and assisting with the set-up of others. I understand the heartache and the struggle that business operators face each and every day. I also understand the feeling of pride and success that a person gets from running a good business. Employment issues are one of the most daunting things for a business, especially with the federal Labor government's changes to the industrial relations laws. The Rudd government would have us believe that business owners cannot be trusted and that they need regulating, not that business owners are self-starting entrepreneurs who have got off their backsides and have contributed heavily, may I add, to our nation's export, service and manufacturing industries, to employment, to infrastructure, to the retail sector and to our country's economy. The most important thing that we as a state government can do to assist our business community is to allow it to operate with fewer regulations. Let it do what it does best; that is, operate a business. I am proud to say that the need to cut the burden of red tape that surrounds business is something that this government is taking seriously. I have had the privilege of participating at one of the meetings that have been held with our business community throughout Western Australia. My colleagues Hon Ken Baston and the hard-working member for Scarborough, Liza Harvey, head up the government's Red Tape Reduction Group. Together they have met with business groups and industries from all over our state to identify opportunities whereby this burden can be reduced. This group has identified that WA is the most overregulated state in Australia. We are suffocating small business, and small business is the backbone of our state.

Our business community needs the government's support. I understand that regulations and licences have been put in place to protect consumers from risky backyard operators, but the fact that we have become so over the top in our regulations has actually encouraged some businesses to bypass this system. The businesses that are open for audits and checks are the ones complying with the rules. These are not the businesses that consumers need to be protected from. It is comforting for me to know that we have a number of members in this place with business backgrounds. Both Ken Baston and Liza Harvey, along with our Treasurer, Hon Troy Buswell, are committed to seeing the reduction of unnecessary rules and regulations and to allowing our business community to grow, and therefore our state to flourish. I am offering them my full support for and commitment to reducing red tape. I intend on bringing my small business experience to Parliament to ensure that business is enhanced by government and not restricted.

One of the roles a member plays in the Legislative Council is to review and scrutinise legislation. Over the past four years I have had the privilege of working for a former federal member for Parliament, Stuart Henry, and one of our WA senators, Judith Adams. I thank both of them for the opportunity to have been able to learn and work in our federal system. I know that the knowledge I gained during this time will assist me to be a better member. Each of us in this chamber today has been elected by the people of Western Australia to review all legislation with their interests and views at heart. I believe that the people of WA have elected a team that reflects the true diversity of our state. I look forward to using our real-life experiences and our community views with you all over the next four years to ensure that the legislation that passes through this chamber reflects our state's needs.

A maiden speech is not complete without its thankyou's. Before giving one, I never fully appreciated the importance of it all. But when I was writing this speech I found that I was pulling not just from my own experiences but from experiences of the people within my life. My family is a family of small business, from my dad's car yard to luxury furniture hire, tyre retailing and fitting, telemarketing and sales, security sales and installation, to my mum as the chief executive officer of the Swan Chamber of Commerce for the past 20 years. The love and support that I have received from this very strong family has led me to be the person I am today. I have been brought up on the values of respect, discipline, hard work and belief in yourself. My mum is also my best friend, and she has shown me strength, professionalism and diplomacy, which is something I have yet to master. My dad has taught me independence, determination and how important it is to stop and listen. The rest of my family and a few close friends are my backbone. They provide me with balance, support, love, humour and friendship. I have lived with two sayings from my parents that will stay with me forever: the first—if it is to be, it is up to me; and the second—if you just stop and listen, everyone has something to teach you. So to my entire family and friends, I thank you from the bottom of my heart, and I hope I make you all proud.

I can imagine those in the gallery thinking, "Oh, my God, she's forgotten her husband!" For those who know him, there is no way he would let me forget him! Terry is the love of my life. We have been through many ups and downs together but I have always been able to rely on his sense of humour to get us through. To Terry, I hope you have a lot of humour stored up for the next four years; I think we are going to need it!

I have no children of my own but Terry's daughter, Kelly-Ann, entered my life when she was only eight years old. She is now a beautiful 28-year-old woman, making her way through the music industry in Melbourne. I would like to thank her for the challenging, yet rewarding, experiences of raising a daughter.

To the lower house candidates and successful members of the 2008 election, I wish to thank you all. Without their hard work I would not be standing here today. I make special mention of Frank Alban, our new member for Swan Hills, whom I worked closely with during the election, along with Dean Smith, Ben Finlay, Ron Dolliver and my husband, Terry.

To Ben Morton, Zak Kirkup, Vicki Moore, Diane Nichols, Sam Calabrese and Catherine Johnston at Menzies House, I thank you all for your tireless work throughout the year and for a successful campaign. Well done.

To all the Liberal divisions across the East Metropolitan Region, I know there were many early starts and late finishes. The Liberal Party is only as strong as its members, so I thank you all.

I am a person who has real life experiences. Everything I have learned has been from the school of hard knocks. I have street smarts. I can relate to and understand the people of the East Metropolitan Region. I will bring my lessons of life and the wishes of my electorate to this Parliament. I do not pretend to know everything but I promise I will stop, listen and learn. When issues need to be heard and acted on, if it is to be, it is up to me. Thank you.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT: I neglected to do this with the previous member, but as this is Hon Colin Holt's inaugural address, I ask members to observe the usual courtesies.

HON COL HOLT (South West) [7.57 pm]: Before I start I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land upon which we meet.

It is a great honour for me to stand in this house to give my inaugural speech. Some very good colleagues of mine have always said that all we have done in our past is in preparation for what we are about to take on or our next challenge. With this in mind, I would like to relay to the house and guests in the gallery a little bit about myself, to paint a picture about what I have been through in preparation for my time in this house.

One of my distant cousins, Janice Young, wrote a book about the origins of our family. She traced the history of our arrival in Australia in 1842. The book is entitled *In search of Elizabeth*. I have it here for show-and-tell! My family was, let me say, very prolific. I would not be surprised if other members or people in the gallery were related to us somehow from the past! When Janice Young released the book, she was asked by a journalist, "So who are you descended from?" She replied, "An English farm labourer, a Welsh convict and the Romani." He

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replied, “But haven’t you found someone important in your family?” Janice said, “Yes; an English farm labourer, a Welsh convict and the Romani.”

I feel a little the same way. I come from humble beginnings, of which I am truly proud. My father was a Telecom linesman for 35 years. My mother was a dedicated mother-of-six, of whom I am the youngest. We lived in a little fibro house in Goomalling. Although it may not seem too exciting, I was part of a loving and very caring family. I think it is a credit to our parliamentary system that someone who feels they come from humble beginnings can participate in our Parliament. Mum and dad were committed totally to their family values and they worked hard to ensure their family had a roof over their heads and food on the table. They often went without so that we, their children, had our needs met. I would like to acknowledge my mum, who is in the gallery tonight. She is an incredible woman with amazing strength and fortitude who would crawl over burning coals for her family. I would also like to acknowledge my dad, who passed away two years ago and so has missed this chapter in my life. However, I can imagine what he would say of this latest adventure. It would be along the lines of what he said when I left my very secure job after 14 years, when at that time I had four young dependent children, a mortgage, all the normal expenses of family life, absolutely no client base and no job. My first job after I left my secure government job—I had set out to be a community development consultant—was drenching sheep on a mate’s farm. What do you expect, really! My dad grew up in the Depression years and so had a very conservative outlook on life and was very risk averse. He said to me about leaving my job—I beg forgiveness of the house—“What the bloody hell do you want to do that for?” I think he would probably say the same thing now! However, I am sure he would be proud of his youngest son.

I would also like to acknowledge my three brothers, Lester, Frank and Jeff, and my two sisters, Anne and Jen, who are always there to help when you need them most. I must add that they keep me totally grounded in what I do. They keep me totally aware of all the issues that most Western Australians face, and there is no way that I will be able to get away with anything with them. I am sure they will keep me on track.

I would also like to recognise my beautiful, enigmatic wife, Floss. She made me put those words in here! She is the perfect foil for me. She is very gregarious in nature, and has a fantastic ability to gather friends around her. I would also like to acknowledge my children, Ebony, Zeke, Denzel and Frazer, who undoubtedly have helped make me the person I am today. I thank them publicly here now for their love and support, and for their blind faith in me. It was interesting on induction to this house, I received some forms from the Legislative Council office. One of the questions was: do you have any significant relatives? “Of course”, I wrote down, “Yes, all of them!” For me, they are all significant, especially my wife and children.

Back to my story and where I come from. In Goomalling Primary School I was part of a classroom that had 14 students. I was faced with the prospect of going away to school to further my education. My folks asked me when I was 14 whether I would like to travel by bus to Northam every day so I could be home at night or board in Perth away from home. For some reason, I jumped at the opportunity to test myself in a new school and a living-away-from-home environment. I guess I wanted the opportunity to test my social and leadership skills. I think it was an indicator of my developing attitude to life: let’s give it a go and we will work out details a little later on! That kind of attitude has followed me through life.

That decision at that time was a good one. I formed many great friendships—friendships that are still relevant today. Those friendships are nearly 30 years old and I thank all those friends for their support and belief in me. I would like to name them all, but, in fear of missing someone, I will not do it. It would also sound like a metrosexual zoo! However, there is one group of people I would like to mention, and that is the Spinifex, who are lifelong friends and will continue to be till the day I leave this earth. After school I stayed in Perth and completed a Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Western Australia, orienting myself around the footy team, which was full of country boys just like me.

I then joined the Department of Agriculture and worked there for 14 years. I was a little young and naive when I first joined the department. One of the executives asked me what I would like to do. I said that I hoped I would go a long way. They immediately sent me to Derby in the Kimberley! However, I saw this as another opportunity to expand my horizons and my experience and another chance to put up my hand to see what would happen. Fortunately for me, that is where I met my wife. Again, I thank her for being here and sticking by me. While working in the Department of Agriculture I lived and worked in almost every region of Western Australia, including Bruce Rock, Halls Creek and Carnarvon, Narrogin for almost seven years, and Australind. It seemed that we had a new child in almost every new town that we lived in, keeping the maternity ward busy in those country hospitals. I had many roles, including border quarantine. I was involved in donkey control. I was a coordinator for the feral goat eradication campaign. I was a LandCare officer. Eventually I moved into a training role, which sparked my deep interest in helping others to gain skills and knowledge and to reach their potential.

I have lived in many places and participated in many different types of communities and met a lot of regional Western Australians. I have learnt that although Western Australia is geographically large, the WA regional

community is really quite small. We just never know where we will run into people. Almost every day I run into someone whom I know from school or from sport or whom I worked or socialised with, and I never know where they might turn up. From all those years in regional WA I have gained a wealth of experience that I believe will help me greatly to work as an elected member.

I would like to tell of a little experience I had when we were camping in the heart of the Murchison one day. A group of us were there talking about feral goat eradication. We were standing around a camp fire. A Vietnam veteran was there, who was obviously a very proud Australian. He was the president of the Returned Services League in Carnarvon at the time, he truly lived for Anzac Day and he ensured that he marched every year. There was also a Canadian-born Australian, who emigrated to Australia when he was about 20 years old. Anyway, the discussion turned to who was truly Australian. The Vietnam vet of course stood up and said, "I am truly Australian because I fought for this country under that flag." The Canadian stood up and said, "Well, you are just lucky you were born here, mate. I chose to be Australian, so I am Australian." As they shaped up to each other around the fire to settle the argument with fisticuffs, I was struck by the passion they both showed. Of course, they were both right; they both had a claim to be truly Australian and, just as importantly, they had the right and permission to express their views.

I think I learnt a valuable lesson from that observation. Just because I was fortunate enough to be born in the greatest state in the greatest country does not make me a greater Australian than anyone who has chosen to make Australia home. I welcome any new Australian to add culture to our country. We have already heard in a number of maiden speeches here of the origins of some of the members. I would like to acknowledge them and any other members who have chosen Australia as their home and have chosen to contribute to our state through parliamentary service. I also note here that it is national Refugee Week. I urge our immigration authorities to act with passion and empathy for all those looking to make Australia their home.

As I have said, I left the Department of Agriculture seven years ago and began a consultancy in community development and sheep handling. At the time I did not know I was doing community development work; in fact, often we do not. I just had a desire to work and learn with communities in a new way. I wanted to make a difference to people's lives. One of the early projects I was involved with was the Western Australian Community Leadership program. My colleagues and I—some of them are present in the gallery—visited 27 communities, from Wyndham to Esperance, asking those communities to identify two Indigenous and two non-Indigenous leaders from each community to participate in a program on their behalf. We worked with existing and emerging leaders from all over Western Australia. These were regional people who were developing their leadership skills to be an asset to their families, communities, region and state. This was real work that engaged people in a very personal and community interface, and it gave me a much greater understanding of all people and of Indigenous communities.

Everyone who came into contact with that program was in awe of the calibre of people we have in regional WA. I note that a graduate of the program is present in the gallery, a woman who joined the program as a young Indigenous radio announcer from Kununurra, and after completing the program she put up her hand and said, "I want to be involved with the Kununurra Chamber of Commerce and Industry." She now works for Argyle Diamond Mine as a training officer. These are the sort of people we worked with, who gained the knowledge and confidence to go where they wanted to go. I am in awe of all these people and eternally grateful to them for generously sharing their experience.

Unfortunately, the government of the day discontinued the program, and all the momentum and experience provided by the WA Community Leadership program was in danger of being lost. However, the coordinators of the program decided to form a new community development company. I joined six like-minded colleagues to continue to work with communities the length and breadth of Western Australia, and this work has continued for the past six years. I am passionate about this type of work and I am passionate about the people of this state who want to make a difference, on whatever level they choose, be it at family level, at community level as a volunteer, in leadership roles within their community or region, standing up for state politics or industry or, if they choose, to take on leadership roles at national level.

The company that we helped form held the belief that everyone can be like a pebble in a pond; everyone can make an impact beyond their own presence. In communities, small things matter and can make a huge difference. People just have to be willing to make a wave. I believe everyone deserves to have the opportunity to learn and develop the skills to make a difference in their community.

Before I move on, I would like also to touch on the social isolation that faces many people in regional Western Australia. I am especially concerned about the social isolation of young people in the regions. I remember being told a story by a person from Hyden who had organised two busloads of young ladies to travel from Perth to Hyden for a get-together and cabaret at the Hyden town hall. She told me how the young men of that community did not have too many social skills; they spend their lives on the farm, seeing maybe their mum and their sister

and working with their dad all day long. They go to footy training and play for the local footy team, but they do not have very much social interaction with girls in the community. It struck me that this could potentially become an issue if we do not do something about it. Social isolation is an issue. If members looked at the suicide statistics for young people, especially young men, in regional Western Australia, they would be appalled.

I would like to make special mention of a very dear mentor of mine, Leigh Hardingham, who started me on my journey to this house. I remember sitting with her at the back of Dumas House when we were involved with the WA Community Leadership program. She asked me what my leadership aspirations were. I said, "I'm thinking about joining the local shire." She looked over here to Parliament House and she said, "Have you thought about that house over there?", which of course I had not, but immediately I did. As goes with my attitude to life, I thought I will put up my hand and give it a go. I ran in the south west as second on the ticket in 2005, and I was unsuccessful. I ran not really knowing what I was getting into, but with the faith and the confidence that I would be able to work it out when I got there. Thank you, Leigh, for those many, many hours of mentoring conversation. You truly have given me the confidence that I can stand here tonight—even though I am a little nervous—and address my peers and the people in the gallery.

At this point I would like to acknowledge my parliamentary colleagues from the National Party who have helped me to start this latest chapter in my life. I would especially like to acknowledge those who masterminded the royalties for regions policy for the brilliant campaign that they ran at the last election. It goes without saying that all the hard work from those dedicated party members—an army of rank and file members—and from the range of volunteers who helped me, and the faith shown in the royalties for regions policy by the people in regional Western Australia, in particular the south west, is why I am in this house now. Thank you, guys.

The royalties for regions campaign was built on a simple but effective message that captured the imagination of the people the Nationals represent. They dared to imagine their region having services and infrastructure that would meet their needs. They dared to imagine their region having effective health services and more education resources, including vocational education. They dared to imagine their region having adequate policing. They dared to imagine their region having funds to invest in assets that the community believes are important. They dared to imagine their region having improved housing for essential workers such as police officers, nurses and teachers. They dared to imagine their region having increased assistance through the patient assisted travel scheme and the country age pension fuel card. They dared to imagine the Royal Flying Doctor Service having five new planes. They dared to imagine having new funds for local governments to spend on community projects that would make a real difference to their lives. The royalties for regions policy is not just about increased services and infrastructure. It sends a clear message to the people who live in the regions—who have felt ignored for far too long—that they do matter, that they are an integral part of this state, and that they and their families and their communities are worth investing in. I am sure that any members who travelled around the regions after the election would not have gone far without noticing the difference in the attitude of the people in the regions because of the royalties for regions policy. I share the belief that royalties for regions will make a great contribution to the lives of people in the regions.

I intend to spend my time in this house representing the people of the south west by building on and delivering the royalties for regions policy, and to complement the delivery of services and infrastructure in the regions. I intend to spend my time in this house investing in the social and human capacity of the people in the south west and throughout the regions. I intend to spend my time helping the people in the regions to help themselves by gaining the skills and experience that will allow them to become leaders and advocates for their communities and their regions. I am passionate about the regions of Western Australia and the people who choose to live, work and raise their families in the regions. I intend to work towards the development of regional programs and services that will give people in the regions the educational and experiential mechanisms that they need to build their skills and self-confidence so that they can make the most of the opportunities that royalties for regions presents for them. I am passionate about helping those who will put up their hand and take on a role. If someone is willing to have a go, I want to help that person to have a go.

I cannot finish without a quick mention of the balance of power. The Nationals hold the balance of power in both houses of this Parliament. That is a great responsibility. It is a responsibility to provide good government to the whole of Western Australia. It is also a responsibility to the people the Nationals represent—the people of regional Western Australia—to ensure that we deliver for them.

In closing, I would like to thank the house and guests for their indulgence. I also, once again, want to thank my wife and family, and my friends.

When I embarked upon the process of preparing my maiden speech, I was given about 100 different pieces of advice. One piece of advice was: do not be too idealistic. That was from Dan Hatch from "Inside Cover". Another piece of advice was: do not bring out too many quotes, because everyone does that. However, I will bring out one quote from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, who once said —

We judge ourselves by what we feel capable of doing, while others judge us by what we have already done.

That says to me that we should not be faineant or idle while in this house, but that we should grab the opportunity that has been afforded each and every one of us not only to represent the people of Western Australia, but also to make the most of every opportunity to make a positive difference in the lives of the people of Western Australia, because in the end each of us in this place will judge our own performance by ourselves. We must, in other words, “go large”. Thank you, Mr President.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT: I remind members once again that even though this speech may be more aptly termed a recycled speech rather than an inaugural speech, it is an inaugural speech and members are asked to observe the usual courtesies. I ask Hon Lynn MacLaren to please make herself comfortable at the podium.

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [8.21 pm]: Thank you very much, Mr President, and congratulations on your election.

I would like to support the motion to take note of the budget papers. I also take this opportunity to introduce myself for the first time to this Council, assembled with a bit of *deja vu*. Four years ago I served briefly as a member for the South Metropolitan Region upon the retirement of Hon Jim Scott, MLC. At that time my inaugural speech was followed fewer than two months later by my valedictory speech. Someone suggested that this would be better termed my comeback speech rather than my inaugural one.

I begin by acknowledging that we meet on the traditional land of the Nyoongah people, and by paying my respects to their elders.

I also acknowledge my Greens (WA) parliamentary colleagues, Hon Giz Watson, Hon Robin Chapple and Hon Alison Xamon, who have worked tirelessly for many years in pursuit of the aims of participatory democracy, social justice, ecological sustainability, peace and nuclear disarmament. In particular I honour Giz for her unswerving commitment spanning 12 years as a member of the Legislative Council and for her wise guidance in the Greens party. I look forward to working beside those members and to contributing to the development of a kinder, more innovative and sustainable society. I also welcome an opportunity to work with each member of this Council to create a better world for future generations of Western Australians.

I say thank you to those who have ventured out tonight and joined us in the public gallery. In particular I acknowledge former Senator Jean Jenkins who is in the public gallery this evening, and the member for Fremantle, Adele Carles, who also joins us in the gallery; thank you. I will try to reward your efforts with a bit of reason, a bit of passion and a promise.

From the accent, members would have guessed by now that I am a migrant. My first inaugural speech reveals more about my personal journey. Briefly, I was born in the United States and have lived in Western Australia for 27 years. It is to Rotary International and in particular the clubs of Apple Valley, California and Albany, Western Australia that I am forever grateful for widening my horizons. It was during my youth exchange in 1979 amongst the granite outcrops, stunning blue bays and wild southern seas near Albany that I developed a reverence for Western Australia’s unique landscape and biodiversity. Later, as a young adult, I returned to Western Australia, eventually settling in Perth, where I used my experience in journalism as the sole proprietor of a technical writing and desktop publishing business. Over seven years operating my own small business, I learnt to appreciate the Western Australian flavour of work-life balance. I shied away from public life until my 30s, when the live sheep trade from the port of Fremantle triggered my sense of outrage at the cruelty and my passion to make a difference. Community activism put me on a path to work for my local member of Parliament, Hon Jim Scott, MLC, and later as a researcher for Hon Giz Watson, MLC. From 2005 to 2008 I worked as a senior policy officer at the Western Australian Council of Social Service, researching antipoverty strategies and housing policy, providing training for organisations and developing regional community services networks.

Last week I was privileged to be present in the other place to witness the maiden speech of the first Greens member of the Legislative Assembly, Ms Adele Carles, MLA for Fremantle. I congratulate Ms Carles on her historic election, and warmly welcome her to the Greens parliamentary team. Adele’s promise is as an independent thinker and a deeply committed environmental activist. The newly elected Greens member for Fremantle and three new Greens members of the upper house represent a growing percentage of electors who courageously voted for change. The change that our constituents expect includes, but is not limited to, parliamentary leadership to tackle climate change; an increase in renewable energy sources in use; community involvement in development decisions; conservation of our remaining wetlands and remnant bushland; sensible planning processes that take both climate change and community involvement seriously; protection from genetically modified organisms in food and agriculture; preservation of Western Australia’s biodiversity; and expansion of public transport to not only help us prepare for the impact of peak oil, but also dramatically

improve our cities. In the South Metropolitan Region, we would like a light rail system, linking all our communities.

I express my heartfelt appreciation to the hundreds of volunteers who mobilised quickly back in September to win this seat for the Greens in the South Metropolitan Region. Several people dedicated long hours most days on our campaign. I especially thank Kim Dravnieks, Jan Currie, Val Tomlin, Andrew Sullivan and Scott Ryan. I also thank Gill Irvine, who generously supported me personally. Fourteen individuals stood as candidates across the South Metropolitan Region, which stretches south of the river from Victoria Park to Warnbro. These candidates heroically represented the Greens and attracted more support than ever before. In particular, for their vision, commitment and enthusiasm, I thank Adele Carles, Dawn Jecks, Christine Cunningham and Andrew Sullivan. My sincere appreciation also goes to Sol Hanna, Rob Delves and Colin Booth, and I am grateful to James Mumme, Andrea Callaghan, Michael Bennett, Serena Breadmore, Roslyn Harman, Nicola Wiseman and Kim Lisson. I apologise to members if that sounded like a metrosexual zoo. I am also deeply grateful to a dozen or so individuals who interrupted their work lives and normal routine and sacrificed time with family and friends to wage last year's professional campaign in a difficult snap election, including Rachel Pemberton, Trish Cowcher, Adie Wilmot, Dave Paris, Jonathan Hallett, Luke Edmonds and Kate Davis. Finally, I thank the officers and staff of Parliament House for making me feel so welcome and for providing such high-quality induction materials and support for new members.

On reflection on the events over the past few years, and looking back at the inaugural speech I delivered on 31 March 2005, it is clear that some things change and some things remain the same. Australia changed our national leader by electing the Australian Labor Party and Kevin Rudd as Prime Minister. Western Australia elected to Canberra a second Greens senator, Scott Ludlam, who presented a climate of hope to electors with visions for sustainable cities and an economy based on renewable energy sources. Then the double whammy of climate change and peak oil intensified with the global financial collapse into what we now refer to as the "triple crunch". On the world stage, a new player appeared with a dramatically different agenda. President Barack Obama made history as the first black man to be elected as the United States President. His campaign for change we can believe in evoked memories of the 1950s US civil rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr and John F. Kennedy. His first legislative action was to sign an act giving women equal pay. This is a battle that many thought we had already won. Here in Western Australia this battle is still being waged. President Obama also had the wisdom to include green jobs in his stimulus package and to employ energy advisers who are long-term experts in renewable energy, not lobbyists for fossil fuels. His presidency has the potential to herald a global shift in politics that focuses on opportunities and community building rather than dividing and conquering. Here in Australia the changes under our new Prime Minister include a long overdue apology to Indigenous Australians, a national strategy and a new ministry for social inclusion, a national affordable housing strategy, national consultation on human rights, and the release of asylum seekers in detention centres. Unfortunately, in recent months world events have led to a number of asylum seekers fleeing their countries and seeking refuge in Australia—escaping from violence, civil war, and persecution from regimes that do not tolerate political, religious or sexual differences. In Western Australia we have witnessed the detention of more asylum seekers, with 340 on Christmas Island and seven in the Perth Immigration Detention Centre at the airport. Australia-wide 100 children under 18 years of age are in detention, but at least they are not being held in detention centres.

Things have changed in the climate change debate, too. Not so long ago, this Parliament shunned the climate change debate; now it is widely accepted and documented. I particularly enjoyed Hon Phil Gardiner's speech on climate change the other day. Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation and Bureau of Meteorology projections reveal that no matter what the cause, climate change is upon us. We have been shocked and dismayed by the Rudd government's proposed carbon pollution reduction scheme, which is aptly referred to as the "continue polluting regardless scheme". All indications are that this Australian government will not effectively tackle the single most important public policy challenge of our time—that is, the transformation to a low carbon-no carbon economy to arrest greenhouse emissions. This makes it all the more important for Western Australia to demonstrate leadership in this area.

Taking a closer look in Western Australia at those things that have changed and those that remain the same, I know that in the four years since 2005 the state economy soared high on the back of our resource sector and an unprecedented economic boom. We are in a good position to face the challenges of the triple crunch, yet it must be said that the state government failed to make the most of those booming years. In my view, we missed a golden, or perhaps I should say ironclad, opportunity to build a foundation for social inclusion. The "no room in the boom" campaign lobbied for an increase of 3 300 public housing units each year to increase public housing to six per cent of all housing stock. Public housing is declining in Western Australia while the waiting list grows. Secure accommodation is the most important factor in putting people who are doing it tough back on their feet. With a place to call home, people can attend school, improve their health, hold down a job and become part of the community.

In the South Metropolitan Region, our outdated transport planning threatens to destroy one of the last remaining wetlands on the Swan coastal plain; a habitat for migratory birds and threatened species and an Aboriginal cultural heritage site. Mr President, members have already heard in question time some of my concerns about the proposal for a Roe Highway stage 8 extension through the Beeliar wetlands. These concerns are unchanged from 2005 when I implored the then Carpenter government to delete stage 8 of Roe Highway from the metropolitan region scheme. This road to nowhere would not solve truck traffic problems along Leach Highway.

Although the previous government went some way to proving that better options exist, unfortunately it failed to delete the proposed road. Today we face the challenge not only to save the Beeliar wetlands, but also to ensure that the Fremantle eastern bypass remains dead and buried. This challenge is one of many that remain unresolved after four years. Therefore, it is with wry humour and, hopefully, the support of many members both on this side of the house and opposite that I set on a mission to make a difference this time around as I have considerably more than a 94-day term.

There is a better solution to our transport and planning dilemmas, and better than roads. Take, for example, the following development proposals along our coast. The Cockburn coast plan has been released. Here is the perfect location for a carbon-free sustainable iconic development. Some people might think it is known as NPQ, an abbreviation for North Port Quay. Although NPQ was represented as an exciting city plan, it was quite simply in the wrong place, being touted to be constructed offshore, just off the working port in Fremantle. Whereas in Cockburn these brilliant suggestions for water recycling, electric cars and renewable power can be implemented without having to first mine and then truck in tonnes of limestone infill to build the islands as proposed by the developer consortium.

As well, the Cockburn development near South Beach is in trouble. The beachfront has all but eroded, as has the hope of building two of four tower blocks due to financial constraints. The case arguing against its sustainability credentials is articulated in my inaugural speech in 2005. Some things change and some remain the same.

Proposals to develop our metropolitan coast have mobilised communities from Moore River to Warnbro Sound. We achieved some success in improving the planned urban village now taking place at Leighton Beach to incorporate a regional beach park. I can expect that much of my term will be focused on improving the sustainability of proposed developments and preserving public space and coastal environments for future generations.

Of those things that have not changed but remain the same, the transport of sheep from Fremantle is the most haunting. In the four years since I last spoke in this Council, 145 716 sheep have suffered and died en route to the Middle East. Our animal cruelty laws have fallen short of protecting them. These sheep are loaded onto trucks, hauled to the port and then shunted onto ships of varying condition. Just on Monday this week a new online campaign to end live exports, Handle With Care, was launched. Supported by Animals Australia, the RSPCA, Compassion in World Farming and the World Society for the Protection of Animals, the humanechain.org website states —

You can help to end the cruelty of live sheep export from Australia to the Middle East and stop the needless deaths of tens of thousands of animals a year en route. During their transport by sea, sheep are generally confined in poorly lit, cramped conditions. They are at risk of injury, heat stress and disease. Many starve due to stress or because they fail to recognise unfamiliar pellets as food. The sheep that do reach the Middle East are often exposed to appalling handling and slaughter techniques that would neither be legal nor tolerated in Australia. But worst of all, this suffering is completely unnecessary, as alternatives do exist.

Since 1985, when a Senate inquiry found that the trade was inimical to animal welfare and should be banned, the community has waited for the government to take action. Sometimes it has to wait. If there is one lesson echoing back in almost every childhood, it is that sometimes one has to wait. Members will easily relate to this principle by reflecting on the eight-month wait from the extremely early election in September 2008 to our inauguration on 22 May 2009. Even now many of us are waiting—some less patiently than others—to establish our offices.

But, Mr President, I will draw members' attention to a few more things that Western Australians are waiting for. Though we have some of the best laws in the country for gays and lesbians, unfortunately, these laws are slow in being implemented. We still have really high suicide rates amongst gay men. When Hon Colin Holt was talking about the suicide rates in the country, I thought immediately of that. We have problems with homelessness amongst gay youth, and bullying. I congratulate the Labor Party for passing these laws, but we still need to work on implementing them to protect the human rights of these people. I must acknowledge that I am in that community and so I have a special interest in it.

A critical issue that comes to mind is the long overdue expansion of WA's renewable energy industry. The peak in oil production was first predicted in the 1950s by United States geologist M. King Hubbert. Simply put, if it

takes the energy of a barrel of oil to extract a barrel of oil, then further extraction is pointless, no matter what the price of oil may be. Leading-edge researchers predict a combined global oil and gas peak some time between 2005 and 2011. WA, which supports a globally significant energy industry, needs a transition strategy that does not hinge on more coal-fired power plants. WA is rich in potential for wave energy, solar power, wind farms, geothermal power and new generation biofuels, yet the state government insists on squandering tax dollars to subsidise and build new coal-fired power stations. These greenhouse gas factories bring the globe closer to climate catastrophe. At this point, I am kind of glad that this is my inaugural speech, Mr President.

On our watch, WA flora and fauna are threatened with extinction due to degradation or loss of habitat and changes in weather. We need to prepare for higher temperatures, less rainfall, and more frequent and more severe droughts. On our watch, coastal communities are endangered by severe storms, coastal erosion and rising sea levels. Climate change will have significant impacts on agriculture, water supply, settlements and infrastructure, natural resources, biodiversity and human health. Though the destructive impacts are predictable, our state government continues to support new coal-fired power stations, approve developments along the coastline and destroy native habitats for urban sprawl. For sensible planning policies, sometimes we have to wait.

For emergency accommodation and secure, affordable housing, we have to wait. In fact, people have to wait 18 months for high-priority accommodation. With more than 20 092 people on the waiting list for public housing, they have to wait a long time. This state government could make a real difference to WA's future simply by adding more housing to its public housing stock. While the capital outlay is significant, the benefits are even more so.

This housing, whether it is newly constructed or retrofitted, could be the cornerstone to develop Perth into a transition town to put us in a better position to thrive in a post-carbon society. Public housing could be built to be energy efficient, making the most of passive energy design, renewable power and water efficiency. This housing, with cheaper energy and water bills, could set the tone for a whole walkable neighbourhood. With employment and services within a 20-minute walk, the pressures on our road system and the demand for energy would diminish. For more sustainable cities, sometimes we have to wait.

A human rights consultation is timely. In WA, we recently bore witness to a continuation of human rights abuses as evidenced by the recent death of Mr Ward while in the care of the state in custody. On Saturday, Western Australians will gather in Forrest Place once again to cry out for justice and human rights when we protest the death in custody of Mr Ward. For decades people have died in custodial care. For decades we have rallied for justice. Since 1993, following the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, from 1987 to 1991 the Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Watch Committee of WA has monitored the implementation of the royal commission's recommendations. The committee reports that WA continues to incarcerate people at a rate far higher than any other state and, in particular, has a huge overrepresentation of Aboriginal prisoners, with the result that they make up just over 40 per cent of deaths in custody. This is one of those times when the wait for justice has been too long and the consequences dire. Like many before me, I call on this government to take urgent action to protect human rights and prevent this suffering. Yes, sometimes we have to wait but while we wait, we have not chosen to rest. I quote: "We who believe in freedom cannot rest, we who believe in freedom cannot rest until it comes." In those moving lyrics from American civil rights activist Ella Baker, sung by Sweet Honey in the Rock, Bernice Johnson Reagon provides an anthem for the struggle for freedom and justice. This struggle continues right here in Western Australia. Like my colleagues, and in response to the community, I will not rest until the state government acts to ensure that people in custody are safe, to reduce Indigenous imprisonment rates in WA, and to tackle racism in the justice system in WA.

In concluding my speech tonight, I am mindful of those who have gone before and those yet to be born. With the deepest love and respect, I remember my late father Alan, my mother Madeline and her partner Walter. I express my gratitude for the wisdom, compassion and loving kindness of my mother, who could not be here in person this evening but who I hope is able to use the World Wide Web to be with us. I pledge that I will bring to this Parliament my intellect, my abilities and my sense of humour to pursue my aim of creating a better world.

[Applause.]

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