

**MINISTER FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT; AGRICULTURE AND FOOD —  
MINISTERIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

*Motion*

**HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition)** [10.14 am] — without notice:  
I move —

That this house expresses its concern with the manner in which the Minister for Regional Development;  
Agriculture and Food has discharged her ministerial responsibilities.

I have only 20 minutes today, so I will not take interjections. The irony of some of the comments made by Hon Alannah MacTiernan during debate in Committee of the Whole House two days ago on the standards in this place in comparison with the other place escaped no-one on this side of the chamber. Effectively, she told us not to be so precious about some of the deplorable comments made by members in the other chamber. If anyone in this chamber should not be talking about standards, it is Hon Alannah MacTiernan.

**The PRESIDENT:** Can I just say there is no need to raise your voice. Let us keep it calm today.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** I have raised a number of issues on the comments of Hon Alannah MacTiernan. The first was an accusation she levelled at me very early in the term of this government that I purportedly closed 150 Aboriginal communities. That was manifestly wrong, and I asked her to withdraw that comment—she refused. Another example of the lowering of standards was of course when Hon Sue Ellery cancelled pairs on one occasion. When I made some critical comments about that, Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected and said, “Oh, pairs are cancelled all over the nation—who cares? Pairs are cancelled in Parliaments all over the nation.” That is good. If that is the standard the Labor Party is going to adopt in this chamber—we will adhere to it as well.

The big one for me relates to Carnegie Wave Energy. Carnegie is a clear conflict of interest for this minister. If this minister does not understand that her involvement in that company raises a clear conflict of interest, she should not be in this chamber. If she had declared a conflict of interest in the cabinet room the day when Carnegie was dealt with, or on any occasion that Carnegie was dealt with, I would not be standing here today. Carnegie has its problems; that is not the issue. My issue is upholding the conventions of this chamber and parliamentary democracy around conflict of interest. In this instance, we have consistently had a two-fingered salute from Hon Alannah MacTiernan with regard to Carnegie Clean Energy. She has a clear conflict of interest, and she refuses, despite constant requests, to acknowledge that. I have asked dozens and dozens of questions about this. I have made at least six speeches on this issue, and there is a clear conflict of interest. The only person who does not seem to understand this is Hon Alannah MacTiernan. The responses I have had have been vague and dubious at best, and they do not answer my questions.

Let us first of all look at the conflict of interest, because Hon Alannah MacTiernan has form in this area. She was drawn up on a conflict of interest issue in 2005, when her husband had shares in Alinta Energy at a time when she was in cabinet making decisions. At the same time, Hon Bob Kucera was sacked from cabinet for the same reason. I raise that, not to be malicious, but because when we were on the other side of the chamber the guys opposite went absolutely ballistic when Hon Donna Faragher’s husband happened to work at Woodside and Hon Norman Moore’s wife had shares in a joint superannuation fund. These guys cried out for their heads! Those are the standards that these guys expect.

The Ministerial Code of Conduct is very clear and unambiguous on conflict of interest. I have mentioned this before: ministers must declare a conflict of interest. The Ministerial Code of Conduct states quite categorically what ministers must do if they have a conflict of interest. It states —

Public duties must be carried out objectively and without consideration of personal or financial gain. Circumstances which could give rise to a serious conflict of interest are not necessarily restricted to those where an immediate advantage will be gained. They may instead take the form of a promise of future benefit, such as a promise of post-parliamentary employment. Any conflict between a Minister’s private interest and their public duty which arises must be resolved promptly in favour of the public interest. The same is as true for a perceived conflict of interest as an actual conflict.

The Premier has confirmed that—a perceived conflict is exactly the same as an actual conflict. Has Hon Alannah MacTiernan had a perceived conflict of interest in Carnegie? Without a shadow of a doubt she most definitely has.

The Labor Party went to the last election promising a wave power project in its plan for Albany. The Premier was wrong when he said that the Liberal Party changed the location from Albany to Garden Island. That came from Carnegie itself; it requested the change. I make that quite clear. Carnegie made that announcement and then the Labor Party won the election. I have been through this before, so I will be very quick. The Labor Party won the

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election, and two days after, Carnegie made an ASX announcement. The announcement included a photo, which was the same photo used in the Labor Party's announcement. It included the CEO of Carnegie, Hon Bill Johnston, Hon Mark McGowan and Hon Alannah MacTiernan. I can understand why Bill Johnston was there; he was shadow energy minister. I can understand why Mark McGowan was there; he was the Leader of the Opposition. I cannot understand why a candidate for the North Metropolitan Region was there, aside from the fact that she had a very close affiliation with Carnegie. Carnegie stated in this ASX announcement —

Carnegie Clean Energy Limited ... developer of utility scale wave, solar and battery storage projects, is pleased to note the election of a new Government of Western Australia ... confirming the commitment of \$19.5 million in funding for its Albany Wave Energy Project.

As I have said before, it was not promised to Carnegie; it was promised for a wave energy project. The fact that Hon Alannah MacTiernan had such a close connection to Carnegie meant that it probably thought it was in with a good shot, at the very least. Hon Alannah MacTiernan has very strong connections with Carnegie—let me make it quite clear. Energy Made Clean was purchased by Carnegie on 26 October 2016 to form Carnegie Clean Energy. Hon Alannah MacTiernan was a director of Energy Made Clean, so she had a direct connection with Energy Made Clean. The person who appointed her was Mr John Davidson. He said in a press release about the announcement —

Alannah MacTiernan joins Board

“Alannah, as a former long serving Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, brings a wealth of experience and a reputation for getting difficult jobs done and we are extremely pleased that she has agreed to take on this role,” said Mr Davidson ...

This is the same John Davidson who then became an executive director of Carnegie. At the same time as all of this was going on—at the same time as the decision on who was going to get the wave energy project was being made—John Davidson appointed Hon Alannah MacTiernan as the executive director of Energy Made Clean. How can there not be a perceived conflict of interest? It is extraordinary. Are the standards of the Labor Party members so low that they cannot understand that?

Moving on, what happened was that when the Labor Party won the election, there was already that connection between Hon Alannah MacTiernan and Carnegie. It is there. It is unambiguous. She was a director and had shares in Energy Made Clean. That company was purchased by Carnegie and then Carnegie got the contract. It might be aboveboard. All I am saying is that there is a perceived conflict of interest. If Hon Alannah MacTiernan sat in that cabinet room and was part of the decision, it is a conflict of interest, and it shows the deteriorating standards of this government already. Let me tell members, as I have said over and over again, the seeds of destruction of a government are sown in this place—the Parliament—and they have definitely germinated.

I will move on. A month after that, Hon Alannah MacTiernan's acting appointment secretary rang Carnegie and asked for a meeting with the minister. A month after the election she met with Carnegie. She did meet with Carnegie, so I said that I would find out about that meeting. I asked: Who attended the meeting? Will the minister table all meeting notes? Did the minister receive a briefing from any of the other proponents that submitted to the Albany wave farm? Why did the minister receive a briefing from Carnegie? She was all over the place, but one of the responses she made was, “I convened a meeting of renewable energy industry stakeholders in Albany.” She met with Carnegie but she did not meet with any other proponents—no-one else. A briefing note from that meeting was tabled. I thought, “Okay; she has met with the other proponents at this workshop down in Albany”, so I asked more questions. They were: Who attended the renewable energy stakeholders meeting in Albany on 9 June 2018? Were any of the other nine companies—because there were nine companies originally—that put in a submission for the tender process for the Albany wave energy technology development project in attendance at the meeting? Apart from Carnegie, did the minister meet with any other proponents? Let me go through this because there are two very serious issues here, guys. Do members know who was at the meeting? There was a whole pile of government officials. Out of the 20 people in attendance, six were from the minister's or member's offices, five were from the University of Western Australia, five were from government departments and four were from three other energy companies. This round table had three companies. Do members know how many attended that put in a submission for the contract? There was one. Do members know what company that was? It was Carnegie. The only company that attended and provided a tender application was Carnegie. The other two did not put in a tender. Did the minister meet with anyone else? She absolutely did not. When I asked whether she met with anyone else, do you know what she said, Madam President? She said, “I have not been advised which companies submitted a proposal.” Wrong! Let us look at a briefing note from Hon Alannah MacTiernan that I got through the freedom-of-information process on 5 October 2017. It reads —

A Request for Proposal for the Technology Development Project was issued on Tenders WA and five proposals were received.

The footnote reads —

Proposals were received from: Carnegie Clean Energy, ROC Technologies, Wedge Global, BioPower Systems, and Society with Limited Liability/Foundry Co-Symvol.

This is serious. This minister has misled this house. She stated in a response to a question, “I have not been advised which companies submitted a proposal.” Wrong! I have a briefing note that the minister approved on 5 October. It has a list of the companies. This minister has misled this house. She has misled this house and, yet again, she is up to her neck in this thing with Carnegie. When she scoffs at all this stuff and says it is smoke and mirrors, it is not.

We all know that Carnegie has had its issues. It is nothing to do with the conflict of interest, but it has had its issues. Its long-term chief executive officer resigned, Energy Made Clean was sold, as was Carnegie’s Northam solar farm, and the share price collapsed. It is a real shame. Hon Donna Faragher and I have put money into this company and the one on Garden Island is working well—the CETO 6 company. Why the decision was made to continue to fund the project down in Albany is beyond me. It might have something to do with Hon Alannah MacTiernan being up to her neck in this thing. There is an evident perceived conflict of interest. What happened is that Carnegie did not meet its first milestone. The minister made an announcement that she was going to give Carnegie half the money for reaching its first milestone—half of \$5.2 million. She said that she was going to give Carnegie \$2.6 million. Why could Carnegie not meet its first milestone? Do members know what happened? The minister blamed the federal government over and over again. She made a ministerial statement and a media statement, and Carnegie even put the minister’s comment on its ASX announcement. On each and every occasion she blamed the changes to the research and development funds from the federal government. The fact that Carnegie may have had some issues seems to have gone by the wayside. It was all about the federal government. The minister used crass politics and yet again showed a complete lack of understanding of and respect for the integrity of this place by providing an excuse. She is quoted in *The West Australian* of 24 November as saying —

... changes ... had upended the business plan for Carnegie’s Albany project by slashing the value of ... credits from \$16 million to \$4 million.

She stated that, so I did a bit of investigation. That is rubbish. I asked Hon Alannah MacTiernan a number of questions about it—six questions over the last two weeks. She was vague and all over the place, as usual—not responsive. She refused to agree that it was changed from \$16 million to \$4 million. I wonder why? It is because there is absolutely no integrity behind those figures. She just used them to make a cheap political point. That is all this was—a cheap political point. As opposed to saying yes, she does not want to go down with the ship. I hope Carnegie does not go down. I hope that it can somehow resurrect itself, but it has problems. It does not help that this minister continues to make this political. It is not us; it is the minister. She is directly involved in this company and she should not have been involved. She should have vacated the space, declared a conflict of interest and had nothing to do with this contract.

Let us have a look at what effects the changes to R&D would have. On 27 November 2018, the minister stated that the proposed scaling back of the tax break would slash Carnegie’s expected credits from \$16 million to \$4 million. I asked how this could happen and the minister said that the advice she received was in confidence. We can just have a look at the annual report. It highlights that Carnegie Clean Energy received federal research and development grants totalling \$2.6 million in 2018. That is a long way from the \$16 million to which Hon Alannah MacTiernan referred; it is even below the \$4 million threshold. What the minister has been saying is rubbish—absolute garbage! Let me make perfectly clear that the changes that have been drafted have not yet been adopted by the Senate, and anything can happen in Canberra; it changes on a daily basis. When we look at the Albany wave energy project as a standalone project, the only impact would be if the project does not hit the \$4 million cap, when there would be a reduction in the R&D rebate from 43.5 per cent to 41 per cent in 2018–19, 39 per cent in 2020–21 and 38.5 per cent in 2021–22. It does not hit the \$4 million cap so how can it be captured by it? This equates to a loss of \$477 500 in R&D grants over four years. This is still well below the two amounts of \$12 million that this minister told the public of Western Australia, trying to —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** What is the document that you are quoting from?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** This is a key political point. The minister will get her chance in a minute.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! There is actually quite a bit of noise in the chamber. I know that the member speaks quite quickly anyway, so he is quite difficult to follow sometimes. Could members just keep the noise down. I am sure that people will have an opportunity to have their say in due course.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** We will take things a step further. If Carnegie maintained R&D expenditure at a similar level to previous years—approximately \$6 million per annum—as well as the additional \$15 million in

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expenditure on the Albany wave energy project, then it would hit the \$4 million cap. However, under this scenario, the impact would be a \$2.8 million loss falling from \$17.3 million in grants to \$14.5 million over a four-year period. What I am saying —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** What is that document?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** They are my notes. The minister should have a look at the annual report; that is where my information came from. She should go and have a look at Carnegie's annual report; that is where it comes from. A person does not need a PhD to do this—just do not throw political hand grenades out there.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Can I say, Madam President —

**Hon Sue Ellery:** He is getting hysterical.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! There is a bit of that happening.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** This minister is up to her neck in this thing. I have tried relentlessly to get to the bottom of it and every single time I have been battered. I can tell her that that is not going to work. I have tried using freedom of information processes. The very first FOI request I made for documents from 17 March to 17 November was fine. I got all the documents. I put another request in for documents from 17 November to 26 October. They came back to me and asked if I could reduce the scope because it related to about 1 000 documents. We reduced the scope to three months. I got a response last week. Can members guess what it said? It asked whether I could reduce the scope further because it related to 1 000 documents! But there were 1 000 documents for the 12-month request; now there are 1 000 documents for three months! I can tell the minister that on this matter, I am not going to go away. This minister should have distanced herself.

The Premier said on 18 June 2016 that the public interest, transparency and openness must come first. Apparently, that applies to everyone apart from Hon Alannah MacTiernan. I will make this perfectly clear yet again, and I will emphasise it: my issue is not with Carnegie—it has its financial issues and I hope it gets through them; I really do—but with Hon Alannah MacTiernan because she made the announcement with Carnegie. She had a clear, unambiguous connection with Carnegie. Even if she did sell her shares and donated them to charity afterwards, so be it; that has nothing to do with this. The minister has a perceived conflict of interest without a shadow of a doubt. If not, the standards of this government amount to naught—they amount to absolutely nothing. It means that a person can be a board member of a company and then sit in cabinet a month later and not have a conflict of interest. For goodness sake, Hon Donna Faragher's husband worked at Woodside and members opposite wanted to tar and feather her! Members opposite should not come in here with their self-righteous indignation.

This minister organised a meeting with Carnegie one month after the election. Five companies had put in for the tender process. How many companies did Hon Alannah MacTiernan meet with? One, and it was the company that got the contract. She did not even meet with any of the other four. She did not meet with them! She said in answer to one question she was asked that that was part of the procurement process—one engages. But a minister should never engage with companies as part of a procurement process. Again, if it happens, it shows the diminished standards of this company. The minister held a round-table conference in Albany and three renewable energy companies turned up. One applied for the tender process and the other two were not even part of it. The minister claimed that she did not know who put in submissions—she most definitely did know! A briefing note clearly shows that she knew the five that had provided submissions. This minister has misled the house, her standards are appalling and she had a clear conflict of interest in this project. Quite frankly, she owes this house an apology for misleading it.

**HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Leader of the House) [10.35 am]:** I need to let the opposition know that if its aim by the end of this year was to unite the government team more than I thought was actually possible, it has done it. Congratulations for uniting us more than I thought was possible. Its attempted attack on Hon Alannah MacTiernan this morning resulted in me having to tell all our members of Parliament that they could not all get the call to stand in her defence. That is what they wanted to do. I had to tell them that I was sorry that they would not all get the call.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The last speaker was heard virtually in silence. I think you should apply that to the speaker who is on her feet at the moment.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thank you, Madam President. I had to tell members this morning that they were not all going to get the opportunity to speak. That is what they wanted to do. I had to deal with two things this morning.

**Extract from *Hansard***

[COUNCIL — Thursday, 6 December 2018]

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The actions of one of your members in starting the dogs on Hon Pierre Yang is one of the lowest acts I have seen in my time in politics. The article in *The Australian* today was a disgrace, but that was started by someone on your side. *The Australian* is a disgrace.

*Point of Order*

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** Madam President, this member has been here long enough to know that she needs to be relevant to the motion. The situation with respect to Hon Pierre Yang has nothing to do whatsoever with the discharge of responsibilities of the Minister for Regional Development. That is my first point. My second point is that the honourable member is also experienced enough to know that it is unparliamentary to just broadbrush slur the opposition —

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! If you want this debate to continue, you will be quiet.

**Hon NICK GOIRAN:** As I was saying, this member is experienced enough to know that it is inappropriate to broadbrush slur the opposition without naming a name. I ask her to withdraw that comment. The first point of order is plainly the unfortunate circumstances in which Hon Pierre Yang finds himself, which is irrelevant to this motion.

**The PRESIDENT:** There is no point of order on either count. The member knows himself that when somebody is responding to a motion, the debate can be wideranging and extremely broad. The Leader of the House did not actually reference which member she was referring to in those latter comments and so I am going to allow her to continue.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Thank you, Madam President. Nevertheless, the outcome this morning was that the opposition has made us more united at the end of the year than we were when we started. I did not think that was possible but the opposition has done that, so thanks very much. Let us talk about the honourable member.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Members, there is limited debate time. The first speaker was heard in comparative silence. This speaker has eight minutes to go and I suggest that you let the Leader of the House have her say and you listen to her.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Let us talk about the agricultural portfolio inherited by Hon Alannah MacTiernan.

**Hon Peter Collier:** What about Carnegie!

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** I am talking about the motion. Let us talk about the portfolio she inherited. Let us talk about the two hapless, hopeless ministers for agriculture from whom she took over and who, during their time, saw the Department of Agriculture and Food absolutely gutted financially. That is what those two ministers for agriculture oversaw, one of whom is still in the chamber with us. Research and development in the agricultural ministry was gutted. The budget of the Department of Agriculture and Food was gutted. Hon Alannah MacTiernan has built that portfolio back up from the mess in which it was left.

The real thing that members on the other side do not like about Hon Alannah MacTiernan is that she is effective, she is hardworking, she takes the fight right up to them, she is innovative and she delivers on the things she says she is going to do. That is what they do not like. She is in their face with it; that is what they actually do not like about her. She does not take a backward step; that is what they do not like about her. It is too confronting for them to deal with the fact that she is such an effective minister.

I want to refer to some quite succinct points that the Premier made in the other place when he was asked about the minister. This is what he said —

She is a much-loved Western Australian. She can go out and mix it with anyone. She has been on the national stage. She has been on the local stage. She has been in this house. She has been in the upper house. She has worked in private industry. She has worked in government. She is an extraordinary Western Australian. We are very proud of her ... She is a great advocate for our state locally, internationally and interstate. I —

This is the Premier, and I join with him —

have the utmost confidence in Alannah MacTiernan. She is someone who is known by Prime Ministers and federal opposition leaders. She is known internationally. She is a great Western Australian.

The Premier also said —

... she can walk down any street in Western Australia and everyone knows who she is.

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The Premier said that the minister is a great Western Australian and she is doing a great job. That was from *Hansard* of 20 June this year in the Legislative Assembly.

I want to touch on some of the things Hon Alannah MacTiernan has achieved in her portfolio in the short 20 months in which she has held it. She is building back up the Department of Agriculture and Food, which was left decimated by the so-called traditional defenders of that portfolio, the conservatives. She is building it back up after it was left decimated. The minister has provided new funding for research and development to drive growth and to keep the state's grain industry internationally competitive, and is rebuilding research and development in the agricultural sector. Under this minister, pastoralists can now register for more than \$45 million worth of carbon-farming projects, funding has been provided for the Transforming Agriculture in the Pilbara project, and the lease agreement with Kimberley Agricultural Investment Pty Ltd has been finalised for the Ord development after two years of negotiation. She launched the \$1.5 million value add agribusiness investment attraction fund and the \$18.6 million investment fund for wild dog control, and established the North Wanneroo Agriculture and Water Taskforce. She has progressed pastoral land reform, amended the Animal Welfare Act, and secured ongoing funding for the natural resource management program and additional funding over three years to support the activities of the Southern Forests Food Council. In the area of digital technology, \$5 million has been provided for the first round of digital farm grants. That list is already 10 times more than the last two ministers for agriculture achieved in the whole 8.5 years of the previous government.

In terms of regional innovation, the minister has established the \$4.5 million regional new industries fund to drive innovation across Western Australia. Up to \$2.7 million will be spent across regional WA for initiatives that build a regional innovation pipeline and drive job creation at a local level. A further \$1.4 million is to be invested in inter-regional projects that drive collaboration between innovators across the state.

On the issue of regional jobs and economic growth, the minister established dedicated local content advisers in each regional development commission and online portals to maximise tender and job opportunities, provided \$22.5 million in regional economic development grants, and led the redesign and development of the Port Hedland Spoilbank marina.

In terms of Aboriginal economic development, the minister has provided \$4.4 million. Remember, the mover of the motion was the Minister for Indigenous Affairs when the then Premier randomly announced the most controversial thing to happen in an Aboriginal affairs portfolio—that he would close remote communities. The then Premier left the Minister for Indigenous Affairs isolated, and he had to clean up the mess. This Minister for Regional Development is enabling Aboriginal economic development.

The other thing to bear in mind, because this is a time-limited debate and many people on my side want to speak —

**Hon Peter Collier:** They can't.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** They will give it a good shot.

Does anybody remember the disaster that was Muja A and B coal power station? Who was the minister who presided over that? For those who are new to the chamber, it was Hon Peter Collier. Who was the minister at the time of the solar tariff scheme blowout? For those who are new to the chamber, it was Hon Peter Collier. Who was the Minister for Education who went on the radio and said there would be no job cuts in education, but within days there were hundreds? Who did that?

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** That was Hon Peter Collier. On this side we have a minister who is well respected. In whichever bit of her portfolio members choose to pick, she is well respected and well known. She is well known because she is a hard —

**Hon Peter Collier:** You need to get out more.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Does the member know what? When members are in government, they do get out. I know what it is like in opposition. I know it is hard. I know that opposition members do not get the invitations they would like to get. But our members, as members of government, are out and about every day, working with communities to deliver on our election commitments. We get feedback directly. The member knows what it is like in government. Not all members opposite do, but Hon Peter Collier does. Western Australians are not shy in speaking up. Do members know what they say about this minister? They love her. They think she is effective and hardworking. They know that she delivers on the things she promises. She is innovative and collegiate. She is an outstanding minister of the state.

**Hon Tjorn Sibma:** One of you has to be!

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**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Don't you start, honourable member! Do not start with me today!

Several members interjected.

**Hon SUE ELLERY:** Do not start!

This minister is effective and hardworking. She is achieving outstanding things in cleaning up the mess left behind by the previous government.

**HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural)** [10.47 am]: I congratulate Hon Peter Collier on his motion today, which is targeted at Hon Alannah MacTiernan and the discharge of her duties as Minister for Regional Development. We have just heard the Leader of the House go through a whole list of things the minister has implemented from an agricultural perspective. I do not think the money attributed to that list would accumulate to more than \$15 million or \$20 million. Of course, a lot of that list was nothing more than committees and paper shuffling, which actually will not —

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! The speaker is on his feet. If you want the call, seek it later.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** That list will achieve very little in the agriculture portfolio, other than be a headline. We have just heard the headlines. Let us look back on the last 8.5 years of the Barnett government and what was spent on regional development and agriculture through royalties for regions. I am sure one of the Nationals WA members will get up and go line by line through what the previous government achieved on behalf of agriculture.

**Hon Colin Holt:** You worry about your speech, we'll worry about ours.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** I will not take the member's speech off him.

Regional development is essential for the financial wellbeing of the whole community of Western Australia. In regard to regional development, this government has achieved absolutely nothing.

I will refer back to what I believe were some of the greatest regional development initiatives, which have enhanced the state for the last hundred years. I am talking about developments such as the goldfields water system—the Kalgoorlie pipeline—which was started by a government in 1896 or 1897 under Sir John Forrest against massive opposition. We are talking about the expenditure of a whole state budget, which is equivalent to \$1.5 billion today. The opposition was a mess over that initiative. Members on the opposite benches may laugh, but these sorts of regional developments are essential for the benefit of this state.

**Hon Darren West:** What was it like in those days?

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Is Hon Darren West sniggering?

That particular regional development initiative was opposed by virtually every member of the opposition. I am sure that if the Greens were active in those days, they would have rallied and protested against the initiative despite the fact that it enhanced Western Australia not only at the time, but also for the next 100-odd years. Indeed, it is still operating today. We need to bear in mind that at that stage there were only 180 000 people in Western Australia; today we have a population of 2.6 million, which is a massive increase. Prior to that particular state development project, in the early 1890s, C.Y. O'Connor built Fremantle port, which, today, is still active and servicing Western Australia.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** I will get to you, Minister MacTiernan. Just give me time.

C.Y. O'Connor built that port over 100 years ago and it continues to serve WA today with 15.3 million tonnes of input and 19.5 million tonnes of exports. Most of those exports, which service regional Western Australia, arrive at that port by road.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan:** Member, can I just make an interjection? Do you remember another great achievement of C.Y. O'Connor was the Midland railway workshops, which a conservative government closed down in more recent times in the 1990s?

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Yes, I will take that interjection, minister. That is true. It was closed down because it was commercially unviable. All the rail lines et cetera were not carrying the tonnage that was required due to the new configuration of heavy transport throughout Western Australia—an issue that remains today. It is cheaper by road —

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Order!

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**Hon JIM CHOWN:** It is cheaper to move commodities by road than it is by rail, unless they are bulk commodities of large tonnages. The minister knows that. Minister, I will get to you in a minute; do not worry about that.

One of the great regional and state developments that this government has put in the bin is the Roe 8 and 9 initiative, which would have allowed for the smooth transition of hundreds of trucks a day—up to 700 trucks off Leach Highway—that originate in regional Western Australia from as far away as Kununurra and all points south, east and west. This government and Hon Alannah MacTiernan, when she was the minister for transport —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister! It is really hard sometimes to hear the speaker. It is really difficult for Hansard if people are yelling across the chamber, so I ask you not to do it.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Thank you, Madam President.

The Roe 8 and 9 initiative was developed by the Barnett government. Had we won government at the last election, it would have been under construction today and it would have provided a regional development initiative to the rural community that I represent especially and regional WA as a whole, with equivalent benefits for the next 100 years to those from the Kalgoorlie pipeline. The Minister for Regional Development, who was the minister for transport under a previous Labor government and a former federal member for Perth, is the most senior minister and has the most experience in the McGowan Labor government, sits back and does not say a word about the intention of the McGowan Labor government to stop the development of Roe 8 and 9.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! I thank Hon Jacqui Boydell for that advice about yelling across the chamber. Follow your own advice. Hon Jim Chown.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Thank you, Madam President. I am sorry; I missed the interjection, so my apologies.

**The PRESIDENT:** That is all right; I heard it.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Hon Alannah MacTiernan is the Minister for Regional Development; Agriculture and Food and just for her information, in the last calendar year, 108 992 containers with agriculture products went to the port of Fremantle by road. That is —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Madam President.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Hon Jim Chown.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** Thank you, Madam President. That is 280 000 heavy vehicle movements into and out of the port of Fremantle in a highly inefficient manner due to the fact that the construction of Roe 8 and 9 is not underway. The minister has done nothing and said nothing about that. She complied with the requirements —

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order, order! Which part of “Please do not raise your voice while the speaker is on their feet” do people not understand? If members want to get the call after Hon Jim Chown, I suggest they be quiet.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** The only solution that the minister has to these inefficiencies is to heavily subsidise rail containers to Kewdale. At this stage, millions of dollars of public moneys are going to be spent on subsidising this rail freight from the port of Fremantle to Kewdale. The best the government can do with the 769 000 containers that move into and out of Fremantle port is to have 16.1 per cent on rail. When Hon Alannah MacTiernan was the federal member for Perth, she had the audacity to say in a press release that by 2021, there would be a 40 per cent achievement. World’s best practice is 30 per cent and, at this stage, the government is not even halfway. Regional Western Australia and its mining, agriculture and fishing industries that use Fremantle port require efficiencies in transport. Transport makes up 30 per cent of costs to regional WA. We compete in an international marketplace. The minister’s lack of intention, support and commitment for this particular matter in her regional development portfolio, in addition to her commitment as Minister for Agriculture and Food, is abysmal. As I said before, she is the most senior minister and she is representing a very important industry of this state—an industry that year in, year out accumulates between \$10 billion and \$12 billion for the community at large. That the industry has inefficient access to its major port is beyond belief. I ask the minister—I am sure that she will give a response at some stage in the debate on this motion; I certainly hope she does—how she will achieve transport efficiencies from regional WA to the port of Fremantle, given that she will not support any intention to have Roe 8 and 9 re-implemented, and why she will not take the \$1.2 billion on offer from the commonwealth government. If we

**Extract from Hansard**

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are to remain competitive, it is absolutely essential that we have efficiencies in the transport chain. This government is doing the opposite. All we hear is some myth about an outer harbour at some stage in the future. It is a myth that will never come to fruition.

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**Hon JIM CHOWN:** The minister knows that it will never come to fruition. She knows that at this stage, Fremantle port is probably only at 50 to 60 per cent capacity. If it were operated in the correct manner, it would have the ability to move at least double the number of containers. The outer harbour was going to cost between \$7 billion and \$8 billion of public money. If the government is serious about building an outer harbour, let us see it as a budgeted figure with some planning underway. Let us see whether it can be accomplished in the next 30 to 40 years. Fremantle Harbour has proved to be operational into the future.

**The PRESIDENT:** Hon Diane Evers.

**HON DIANE EVERS (South West)** [10.57 am]: Thank you, Madam President.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! Hon Diane Evers has been given the call.

**Hon DIANE EVERS:** I would like to say that I am disappointed but I find this too amusing. I cannot believe this display of childish behaviour. It is phenomenal, and I hope everyone out there is watching this live as we do this. It feels worse than any muck-up day that I have been to on the last day of school. I am appalled, amused and perplexed, but I will get to the statements that I would like to make about this motion.

Unfortunately, I do not have all the detail about wave energy that other members have gone through today, but I have lived in Albany since this proposal first came forward, and I have been looking forward to it since 2008. Carnegie Clean Energy was there at the time. It was working well in Cockburn Sound. I do not know why the government at that time did not take the opportunity to develop this source of energy. It is a display of living in the Dark Ages, which members of the former government continue to do. Any advance we had in renewable energy during the two terms of the previous government was really done with reluctance by the government, with very little opportunity for others to get into the market and develop things. Carnegie had to do it on its own without the backing and support of the then government. What a useless waste of time that was. As I said, by 2012 it was already going well. It should have happened then. When this government came in and said that it would introduce wave energy, was that not great? Let us help that to happen rather than just try to stop the whole thing by sticking our heads in the sand, saying that we will sort climate change out some other day and wait until it is way too late. We have to do something, so let us look forward to try to get something happening with renewable energy. I was delighted to see in the news this morning that there is, I think, another \$1 billion worth of investment in renewable energy happening in the south west alone. The companies out there are getting onto this without us. That is a really good thing to see, because that is where we need to go. We have just opened up fracking in the north and that will just release a lot more gas for burning and a lot more emissions for climate change. We have to do something. As I have talked about before, agriculture is one of the areas in which we can do it. That is something that this minister is doing. Unfortunately, many members have had to leave the chamber on urgent parliamentary business.

I turn to what happened to the Department of Agriculture and Food over the last two terms of the previous government. In the south west alone, not only did four offices close completely, but also Albany lost 25 staff and Bunbury lost 18 staff. Overall, 80 staff were lost in the agriculture department in the south west. This is on top of the decreases in funding during that time from 2008 to 2017. It could be said that it decreased from around \$178 million to \$163 million, but that is being generous, because of course royalties for regions was not supposed to be used to replace funding. The amount of funding for the agriculture department in 2008 was \$177 million and that dropped to \$116 million by 2017. That drop was made up with \$46 million of royalties for regions funding, which, of course, was not meant to be used to replace this regular funding. That is the only reason that the department survived, but unfortunately the survival of the agriculture department during that time meant that the government did anything that the GM promoters and agrochemical industry wanted it to do—that is, make sure that we continue farming by killing everything in the soil and that everything we grow has as little nutrition in it as possible. It did not do that much for our farmers. It kept them afloat and kept them going—we still have the farms—but our soil and climate are getting worse and worse. The difference from one year to the next are just incredible. I was talking to a farmer just yesterday down in Wellstead. He had his highest rainfall on record last year, but the lowest on record this year. Because he has adopted some new practices and is learning to keep moisture in his soil, he has bush on his farmland that still has moisture and fungi growing on it, even now when they are experiencing a drought down there.

There are things we can do to change that, and that is what our agriculture department needs to do. That is what it is beginning to do. It is starting to look to the various forms of agriculture that people want to do and is starting to put in place, or at least research, some of these options so we can get the data that shows this stuff is working.

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Hopefully, along the way the department will also talk to farmers who have been doing regenerative agriculture and have shown that it works for them. That is what we need to do. We need to move forward. We do not need to say how bad it was in the past; we need to make a move now. We need to change. We need to address climate change by not only reducing our emissions and not fracking more gas, but also getting carbon back into the soil, growing more forests and looking at what we can do to make this a better place.

I turn to a couple of other issues. One of the things this minister worked on was live animal export in order to meet the needs of the community, which had taken away the social licence from the industry and said that it was not happy with what was happening and that it did not like seeing sheep die on ships in the Middle East in the summertime. What did we get a couple of days ago? The live export industry said that it would not ship animals during the three months of the summertime. That is the sort of change we need. We need to move forward; we need to have positive change. I would like to see it happen. I would like to see wave energy. We need renewable energy. We need it on many different counts. We need as much of it as we possibly can have so we can get away from these continuing emissions and climate change affecting us so broadly. I request that the government continue to do some of the good work it is doing and also get an energy policy in place.

Let us look at 50 per cent renewables by 2030. I have been told it could even be 100 per cent by 2030. It can happen if the governments at both state and federal levels do something about it now. I have just heard that a car manufacturer is about to release an electric vehicle it has been ready to release here for some time. It has been used around the world and is doing really well. The company has basically said that until it gets some direction from the federal government that it will support this industry and encourage people to move to electric vehicles charged with renewable energy, it is not going to continue trying to get into the Australian market. We are just hopeless at addressing these issues that other countries around the world are figuring out they need to do something about. We have the resources to do it. We are a lucky country. Why do we not get up and do something—do the things that will make this place a better place?

**HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Agriculture and Food)** [11.05 am]: I thank Hon Diane Evers for that support.

*Point of Order*

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** The Leader of the House has had 15 minutes in response. According to the standing orders, the lead speaker gets 20 minutes and the government in response gets 15 minutes. I cannot work out why there are two ministers speaking in response. Surely, the second minister is entitled to only 10 minutes.

**The PRESIDENT:** I think you will find there is no point of order. I understand where you are going. I imagine that the minister is not responding as a minister. Given that she is the point of this debate, I imagine she has sought the call as a member to provide a response on her own behalf to what you put in your motion. There is enough time left today for the other two members who have already indicated they wish to speak, and it is my intention that after she finishes, they will also get the call.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** That is not my point. My point is that the government has already had its 15 minutes.

**The PRESIDENT:** Yes, that is right. The Leader of the House responded with her 15 minutes, as she normally would. This member has 10 minutes.

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** There are 15 minutes on the clock.

**The PRESIDENT:** Are there?

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Yes, that is my point.

**The PRESIDENT:** That was not my understanding. It was done in a different way. The Leader of the House got 10 minutes. I thought she was going to get 15 minutes because I understood she was replying on behalf of the government. This member should be getting 15 minutes, as it turns out. It has been done incorrectly. I understand what you are saying, Hon Peter Collier. There has been a slight misunderstanding about who the lead speaker responding on behalf of the government was today. When the Leader of the House spoke, she should have received 15 minutes, but she received only 10 minutes. Hon Alannah MacTiernan will now get 15 minutes to respond and each other member after her will complete the time. I appreciate that is not how it should have happened, but that is the way it has happened today.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** I can understand Hon Peter Collier being concerned —

**The PRESIDENT:** Minister, order! You have the call; there is no need for you to be yelling across the chamber.

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**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** I can understand Hon Peter Collier being concerned that I might have some time to answer many of these spurious allegations. The contribution of Hon Jim Chown was just so extraordinary today. He was promoting C.Y. O'Connor. I often felt like C.Y. O'Connor when I was building the Mandurah rail line. I had the opposition out there daily criticising that decision, which of course has now been greatly accepted. I just say to the member that he is the one who is unable to learn the lesson of C.Y. O'Connor. That lesson was that people had to think for the future and think boldly. I am proud to say that not only will I not object to the development of a new port in Kwinana, I am absolutely rusted on. Indeed, in 2008, our government committed to building that port because we, like eminent farmers such as Dale Park, understood that it would be needed in the future. We committed to that and, when there was a change in government, the subsequent government continued the planning in its own lukewarm way until that great day when Jamie Briggs, the disgraced ex-federal minister; Mathias Cormann; and Mike Nahan met in an office and decided that they would chuck all that aside to build the great big dud called Perth Freight Link. As a federal member, I was proud to lead the charge against the Perth Freight Link to get good long-term planning for this state. I am a great enthusiast for the development of a new port. It is absolutely the right way to go. I urge members opposite to get into the twenty-first century. I know they are obsessed with the nineteenth century, but C.Y. O'Connor's good solution in 1900 is not the answer today. We have moved on and our city has grown massively.

I turn to the comments of Hon Peter Collier. Hon Peter Collier is right. I owe an apology. I have, in one regard, misled the house and I genuinely apologise for that. When the question was asked the other day about what other companies had submitted a proposal, I responded that I had not been advised. I now know—the member was quite correct when he quoted that document—that the other companies are in a footnote. I am sorry, but I was not aware of that. There is no doubt that I would have read the footnote at the time, but it did not stick in my mind. They were not companies of which I had any knowledge. I was not involved in any way, shape or form with the selection criteria. However, I made an error and I apologise to the house. I find it incredibly ironic for Hon Peter Collier to get up as the person talking about standards. He arguably came to this house on the back of some very dodgy branch stacking. I have gone through the contributions of Hon Graham Giffard and the former member Martin Whitely in which they set out all the incidents when people said that they did not apply to be members of the Liberal Party and that it was not them who had signed those forms. Some people call him the undertaker; I prefer to call him the calligrapher. He is obviously very talented in that regard. I make that point —

**The PRESIDENT:** Member, you are not helping with the debate today by making those types of comments. Perhaps you might just adhere to the motion.

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** Thank you, Madam President.

I would have appreciated it—the Leader of the Opposition was making some pretty personal comments.

*Point of Order*

**Hon PETER COLLIER:** Madam President, you have made a ruling and, quite frankly, the response to the ruling is dissent. Can I say to you that the honourable member needs to respect your ruling.

**The PRESIDENT:** There is no point of order. The member is making comments defending herself. I am asking her to frame them in an appropriate way.

*Debate Resumed*

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** Thank you. I respect that, Madam President, but some pretty vicious attacks were made on me and I do not apologise for defending myself.

Last night, I made some comments about cultural differences between the two houses to try to explain why we had those very robust —

**Hon Donna Faragher** interjected.

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** Members opposite sought to criticise me for doing it and trying to explain to some of the members who have never been in the other place how different a place it is.

**Hon Donna Faragher:** The poor behaviour by your ministers!

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** You call that poor behaviour. I am saying it is robust debate.

There is a different culture of debate in that place. As I pointed out, those people have fought for their seats in the lower house in hand-to-hand combat. They have not just been on a list. That creates a different culture and a different style. I sought not to criticise members of this house, but merely to explain why stronger expressions of concern emanated from the other place.

**Hon Donna Faragher** interjected.

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**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** If members opposite do not accept it, they do not accept it. However, it was not done in bad faith. I simply sought to share with members the experience of how different it feels in the different houses.

I have been outed by Hon Peter Collier. I have long been an enthusiast for renewable energy and renewable energy in regional Western Australia. I have seen the potential for it to transform industry and give regional areas an opportunity to get in on the ground floor of the twenty-first century economy. Since about 2006, I have consistently supported Western Australian wave technology as a state minister, when I was out of Parliament and when I was in federal Parliament. In federal Parliament I saw a variety of different companies. I saw the work of Carnegie Wave Energy, Bombora Wave Power and Protean Wave Energy because I was genuinely interested in those companies. At no stage did I ever have any shares in Carnegie. In 2011 and 2012, I was a director of Energy Made Clean because I was keen to be involved in renewable energy. At the time, I was not in Parliament. Of course, when I became a federal member, I resigned from that position. In 2011 and 2012, I was a director of EMC, which was a completely separate company from Carnegie at that time. I was also on the board of the Sustainable Energy Association. When I was in federal Parliament, I kept involved and in touch with all the renewable energy companies in Western Australia. I promoted their work and supported the work done by the previous government to take Carnegie on its CETO 5 journey. Towards the end—I think it was December—Carnegie and EMC merged. That had nothing to do with any support that I was giving wave energy. That support totally predated the merger. By that stage, I had no active involvement in EMC. Indeed, the class of shareholdings I had were not in any way involved in that merger with Carnegie. At no time did I have any financial interest in Carnegie. I was aware there would be a perception of an interest because I had that other class of EMC shares, so when we won government and the Premier contacted me to invite me into the ministry, I immediately divested myself of those shares. I divested by way of giving those shares to charity so there could be no suggestion at any time that I had profited—even though, quite clearly, this class of shares was completely separate. I was absolutely determined that I was not going to sell them and that I was going to give them away, because my support for wave energy has been clearly demonstrated, over more than a decade, to have absolutely nothing to do with my personal interest. I continue to say that this is a project we would love to get up.

The member is quite right that Carnegie Clean Energy is having struggles and that it is a complex time for that company. Part of the destabilisation of that company has indeed been the fact that a very, very considerable change to the R&D tax rebate has been mooted. It is true that that has not actually happened yet, but, of course, because it is on the books, companies cannot go ahead and act as if they will get that rebate. The previous government used to budget on the basis of, “We might get a change to the GST floor, so we’ll just write that into the budget.” Honestly, this company, like many other companies, has been in hiatus from May, when this announcement was made, until now and going into next year, and it does not know what the situation will be over 2018–19. Of course that will affect how it structures its activity. If a company thinks that it will only be able to get one-third or one-quarter of what it was anticipating, it will have to pull back on the work that it does. A company cannot prudently go into and make commitments on the premise that it is going to get this R&D tax concession, when the federal government has a piece of legislation stuck in the Parliament that it cannot move on and no-one knows what is going to happen in that regard. Of course that will negatively affect these companies. I urge the member to read the letters written by Hon Mike Nahan and Hon Mia Davies, who actually set this out in respect of its impact on another very excellent Western Australian company, Northern Minerals.

**Hon Peter Collier:** How much will they lose?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** What does the member mean by “How much will they lose?”

**Hon Peter Collier:** You said \$12 million. How much will they actually lose?

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** My understanding is that it was proposing to spend considerably more than that \$4 million. If the member tables these documents—I asked him to table the documents he is quoting and he just said —

**Hon Peter Collier:** It’s in their report!

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** The annual reports are actually —

**Hon Peter Collier:** You should go and have a look at the legislation and have a look at the report and you will see that what I said is correct.

**Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN:** Show us the document! Member, the advice that we have had from many Western Australian companies is that the change in this R&D tax provision is changing what companies are able to do; they are having to slow down their projects because there is complete and utter uncertainty about the tax

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regime. All members opposite have proved today is that they are completely hopeless, they do not know what they are talking about and they have nothing of substance and, moreover, they have absolutely no vision for this state!

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**HON JACQUI BOYDELL (Mining and Pastoral — Deputy Leader of the Nationals WA)** [11.24 am]: I rise to speak very briefly because I know that other members want to speak on this very important issue. Given that another regional member wants to speak, I look forward to their contribution.

I am exceptionally disappointed that the Minister for Regional Development's whole contribution was simply about herself. There was no communication about regional development —

**Hon Alanna Clohesy:** What was the motion about?

**The PRESIDENT:** Order!

**Hon JACQUI BOYDELL:** I have read the motion, member. It actually refers to regional development, agriculture and food. From my perspective, the Minister for Regional Development said nothing about her aspirations for regional development. That is an exceptionally disappointing, but expected, response given that —

**Hon Alannah MacTiernan** interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! No more yelling; we only have a few more minutes.

**Hon JACQUI BOYDELL:** Thank you, Madam President. It is to be expected, given that the royalties for regions fund and development commissions are in disarray, and community organisations, hospitals, education facilities et cetera are really struggling in regional Western Australia —

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! There is only one speaker on her feet. Hon Jacqui Boydell has the call.

**Hon JACQUI BOYDELL:** It is about how regional communities interact with this government. It is not only me saying that, it is also people I get out and speak to. Many, many people in regional Western Australia, in the Mining and Pastoral Region, feel the same way.

I indicate to members of this house—this underpins the Minister for Regional Development's ideology—that in 2009, during debate on the introduction of the royalties for regions legislation in the other place to establish the royalties for regions fund to provide infrastructure and services, to develop and broaden the economic base and to maximise job creation and improve career opportunities in regional WA, the current Minister for Regional Development, Hon Alannah MacTiernan, at that point, during consideration in detail of the bill, said —

... how this bill gives any assurance that royalties for regions will continue as an amount of money additional to that which is routinely spent on regional areas? ... What would prevent a future government from simply creating accounts to fund routine infrastructure and service delivery in the regions?

I suggest to members that that is exactly what the Minister for Regional Development has now done. I find that exceptionally disappointing, as do the people of the Mining and Pastoral Region. We have asked the minister and the Premier many times to come clean on their plans to dismantle the regional development commissions, to no avail.

Several members interjected.

**The PRESIDENT:** Order! It is very hard to hear Hon Jacqui Boydell over that.

**Hon JACQUI BOYDELL:** Thank you, Madam President. One person who professes to be a regional member is the member for Bunbury, Don Punch. He was the chief executive officer of the South West Development Commission for 18 years. Mr Punch's Labor Party bio lists his successes during his time at the head of the South West Development Commission, including supporting the development of aged-care services, youth services, town centre programs and tourism development—just to name a few. Thank you, Mr Punch, member for Bunbury. The expansion of and investment in all those areas is exactly what Mr Punch oversaw as the chief executive officer of the South West Development Commission, but he now sits within a government that has ripped funding from those programs.

The super departments have really buried regional development in terms of the Department of Regional Development. Also in my electorate, the Ministers for Health and Regional Development have paid lip-service to places like Laverton Hospital, which they have said is subpar. The government has pulled funding from that project, which had been promised, and the project has not seen any further government commitment. I look forward to that becoming a commitment. The Shire of Wiluna has had to hand back money, as have many other local governments.

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I am trying to wrap up quickly. The Local Projects, Local Jobs program continues to be an issue for regional communities, particularly because no Local Projects, Local Jobs funding was promised in any Nationals WA or safe Liberal Party seats during the election campaign. We have seen the government roll that out. I look forward to the inquiry into this program so that we can understand how royalties for regions funds could have been ripped from regional communities to fund Perth election promises.

**HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West)** [11.29 am]: I wish to make a contribution in the short time remaining. The Leader of the House mentioned projects, and I find that very interesting. Particular comments were made about the Carnegie project. Unfortunately for Hon Alannah MacTiernan, being Minister for Regional Development makes her the de facto minister for dodgy regional Labor election commitments. I am interested to know how involved she was in the decision-making process or whether she simply inherited that dodgy process from the Premier. I think the debate about Carnegie has missed a critical, critical point, and Hon Diane Evers may have missed the questions and answers given in the chamber in recent months. That project was first announced as an energy project. It was a trial to produce one megawatt of energy, increasing to 10 megawatts, but it has suddenly fallen apart. The answers of the Treasurer; Minister for Energy in *Hansard* tell us that it is now a trial—a research project—not an energy delivery project. The parameters have been changed. More importantly, a critical point has been missed in the debate for all those who like wave energy. I cannot find out how many full-time equivalent jobs this project has created in Albany. The best I can discover is that there might be one. This \$20 million regional energy project—which is no longer a regional energy project—is as far as I can tell employing one person in the regional area in which it is supposed to be operating. If that is regional development, it does not appear to be working too well.

The same is true for another project. The Minister for Regional Development also inherited and oversees \$30 million, in theory, for a Collie solar farm. The project that was mooted has been put together, but guess how many FTE jobs there will be in Collie as a result of the \$30 million investment in a Collie solar farm managed by the Department of Regional Development. The answer is that it looks like none. It will not even achieve the Albany level of one job. There will be zero jobs. If at the end of the process it ever gets up, it will be operated remotely out of Perth. Regional development? We are up to \$50 million and so far \$50 million of regional development funding has resulted in one job in the regions, and the rest will go into Perth.

They are not the only ones. A \$30 million biomass plant has also been mooted for Collie. If we ever get there, maybe there will be a couple of jobs in Collie for that—maybe someone will be sweeping up around the corner. The reality is that \$80 million of regional development funding will not provide a lot of regional development. Whether the minister made those decisions or they were part of the cabinet process or the opposition process that promised them, in the end it is her job to deliver, unfortunately for her, projects that have become the regional development dud Labor election commitment process. The minister will have to face that significant problem for many, many years to come.

The Leader of the House made a couple of comments about what was said before and after the election. In the minute and a half left, I will talk about a key issue in regional development. I refer to the line item for Lake Kepwari on page 178 of the budget papers. I will read some comments about the development of Lake Kepwari in Collie by the Labor Party before and after the election because they are very interesting. On 6 December 2016, an article attributed these comments to the member for Collie–Preston —

Lake Kepwari could soon become a premium water skiing and wakeboarding destination ...

He said no action had been taken for eight years to develop the lake and it “was about time something was done”.

...

“This project has only been held up by a lack of political will from the Liberal–National Government and a refusal to cut through the red tape,” Mr Murray said.

He then listed all the things that the Labor Party would do. After the election, in October 2017—the member for Collie–Preston promised it within six months—he said —

“Lake Kepwari is close to opening and the people of Collie can be confident that they will be skiing on the lake by the time the weather has properly warmed up,” ...

That was 14 months ago. Let us have a look at what has been said recently, because this motion is about a problem with the Labor Party’s regional development program. I quote from an article of 21 August 2018 —

Premier Mark McGowan said the plan to open Lake Kepwari for public use was still an ongoing process ... one year after it was promised.

...

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“It’s a complex issue, it involves a whole range of technical matters and they’re not easy to resolve.  
Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.