

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from an earlier stage of the sitting on the following motion moved by Hon Sally Talbot —

That the following address be presented to Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson, Companion of the Order of Australia, Governor in and over the state of Western Australia and its dependencies in the commonwealth of Australia —

May it please Your Excellency: We, the members of the Legislative Council of the Parliament of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express our loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to deliver to Parliament.

HON BILL LEADBETTER (East Metropolitan) [5.12 pm]: Who has not awakened on a warm spring morning to the siren song of the cicada? For years it gestates, grows and matures deep underground until finally it emerges and for six weeks sings to the skies, and then it is gone. I joined the Labor Party 19 years ago, and I have done what active party members do. I have been active in branches, I have convened policy bodies and I have run as a candidate in state and federal elections. My political self has gestated, grown and matured, and here I am today as a member of the Legislative Council, and I am here to sing, at least metaphorically. I will not trouble my parliamentary colleagues with my often inaccurate tenor–baritone, but I will speak my words with the zeal of a 19-year-old locust. This is my first speech in this chamber. It is also, formally, my last speech in this chamber. It is a hail and a farewell—in Latin, a language with which I am familiar, *ave atque vale*. One of my friends, who is present here, called it my “inaugudictory”. Such is my time in this Parliament, it is a mere shadow, a breath that goes out and is gone.

I begin with an acknowledgement. We stand in this house, in the city, on land that was once entrusted to the charge of the Whadjuk Noongar people. I acknowledge the survivors and descendants of that great nation as the traditional owners of this land, and I pay my respects to their elders—those who have passed by, those who are with us, and those who are yet to come.

With all of us, there is a deep substratum of people who have assisted us in becoming who we are, and what we bring to this place. We all stand on the shoulders of others, rather like that famous woodcut by Abraham Bosse that serves as the frontispiece of the original edition of Thomas Hobbes’ *Leviathan*. We are all people comprised of many other people—those who have raised us, taught us, encouraged us, laughed and mourned with us, struggled with us, and triumphed with us.

I have had, by a great many measures, a fortunate life. I grew up in Sydney, the son of Ruby, who was a teacher, and Arch, who was a policeman and then a social worker. Both my parents worked to meet the needs of others—to create possibilities for them and to keep them safe. After he left the police, my father became a social worker and worked amongst some of the most disadvantaged and marginalised members of our community, again working to give hope, possibility and security. Our house was full of books, music and vigorous conversations. My parents believed in the value of education, and sacrificed much to give me the best education they could, and I was always expected to go to university. In this, I did not disappoint them, although I might have, in my chosen course of study. They hoped that I would do law, but I chose history. If they were disappointed in that, they did not show it for very long.

I was fortunate, too, to have been born at a time when universities were free. That meant not only that I could go, but also that there were a whole lot of people at Macquarie University, my alma mater, who otherwise might not have been there. Universities were beginning a process—unfortunately reversed over the past two decades—of opening themselves up to working people, midlife women and retirees, all of whom went seeking an education rather than job training. I was a beneficiary of this, as was my wife, who was enabled to attend the University of Western Australia and study medicine, as was her sister, and her brothers who were also able to go to university. My wife’s family, the Norman family—the four children of a policeman who was later an ambulance officer—were all given that possibility once denied to their parents and previous generation. How those people have enriched our community.

I share my parents’ faith in education as a means of personal, social and intellectual improvement. That is one of the key reasons I am in the Labor Party. It is a party of education—the party that opened up universities to people beyond elite private schools and selective state schools; the party that consistently seeks equity in education by establishing transparency and driving reform in funding models. It is to be regretted that the Abbott government trashed the original Gonski funding package pretty much at the first chance it had, and that the Turnbull government has only recently announced that it is developing a new version that still serves, while talking about equity and fairness, to cut overall funding for education. In this context, it is always the poorest who suffer most. The Barnett government prided itself on being a reform government in education through the

introduction of independent public schools. But education reform consists of a great deal more than rebadging schools and devolving to them the management of funds.

Actual education reform puts the needs of students first, and that includes a commitment to those most in need of individual attention. Actual education reform ensures that teachers are well prepared for their profession, well supported with resources and assistants, and well respected by students, parents and the broader community.

I was fortunate to have had a mother who was an exceptional teacher with an abiding love for literature—for Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Andrew Marvell and Gerard Manley Hopkins. I had wonderful teachers, too, at primary school and secondary school and at tertiary level. They opened my eyes to the wonders of the world and the glory of the humanities. Above all, they taught me to learn and became the models for my life as a teacher. It has been my privilege, as some members may know, to spend a lot of time in ancient Rome. I was led there by Richard Rowling and Margaret Beattie, Ted Nixon and Edwin Judge. With such excellent guides, I met some truly fascinating people who remain my intellectual friends to this day.

When I was contemplating running for office a couple of years ago, I consulted the Roman expert on this: Cicero. In his study of the Roman state, imaginatively called *On the Commonwealth*, or, more romantically in Latin, *De republica*, he makes a familiar observation: no-one likes a politician. So, colleagues, take comfort that even in the years of the Roman republic 2 100 years ago, politics had a bad reputation. Cicero asked the question: why would a sensible person involve themselves in politics? Why would anyone put themselves through that, when integrity, honesty, and motivation are consistently questioned and impugned? Cicero's answer was simple: someone has to do it, and it is better that it is someone of integrity, honesty and good motives. We cannot help what people say about us; we can only be true to ourselves. As someone who is a deep believer in the value of a tertiary education, whether trade training or education in a profession, I have a hope, and I cling on to this hope—a dream—that young people in Perth's eastern suburbs might aspire to attend a university in their own backyard.

In the recent state election campaign, and, indeed, the campaign before that, the Liberals in Midland sought to make much of the establishment of Curtin University's medical school on the site of the former Midland railway workshops. "Look," it was stated and trumpeted in the press, "we have brought a university to Midland"—only if a rind is a cheese or a peel is a fruit. That was a shadow and a shell of a university and will continue to be until real investment is made. We need, and continue to need, a real tertiary institution for Midland, centrally located in the eastern suburbs, to which all young people can aspire and which offers hope to all those who wish to retrain, requalify, or simply grow through learning, and not have to commute long distances to do so. But there is not much point in the foundation of such institutions if students are priced out of their aspirations. One reason that my parents could aspire for me to go to university in a full-fee environment was that Menzies Liberals supported universities through a generous commonwealth scholarships scheme. Now no such scheme exists—just more fees and debt.

Here in Western Australia, the previous state government increased TAFE fees by 510 per cent; that is, they more than quintupled what students were expected to pay for their professional training. Unfortunately, given the parlous state of the budget with which we were left, it will be a long time before those fees can be reduced sufficiently to make TAFE education as affordable as it should be for young people. In the same way, the commonwealth's new round of university funding cuts will price out of the market not only the poorest people, but also people who otherwise could have attended—people who are quite important and gain from universities in a special way, such as mature age people, and many are women. I do not accept that universities can afford these cuts because the cost of course delivery has fallen below the income generated. For the most part, those costs have fallen because universities have increasingly casualised their academic workforce, which has led to both a hollowing out of the academic profession in Australia and a migration of many academics to better supported tertiary education systems in the United States, Canada and Great Britain. For many years, universities were punished for being prodigal; now they are punished for being frugal.

My parents did not just give me a belief in the inherent value of education. When I was a teenager, about to start my first job, my mother said something that has always stayed with me: "Always join the union, my son. It was the union that fought for your wages and your conditions, and it is only the union that will watch out for you." This, I remind my parliamentary colleagues, was from a Menzies Liberal: "Always join the union", and so I always have. When I was a university student, I was an active member of my students' union and was heavily involved in reforming what was then the Australian Union of Students. When I edited the student newspaper *Arena* at Macquarie University, I joined what was then the Printing and Kindred Industries Union, the PKIU. When I became a teacher, I joined the Australian Education Union. When I became an academic, I joined the National Tertiary Education Union—a union of which I am still a proud member.

I am grateful for the work of all those unions and all those like them. I am offended by the trash-talking and demonisation of unions by conservatives in our community. I do not accept any proposition that employers

create jobs to benefit the people whom they employ; they create jobs in order to derive a profit from their business. That is not criticism; it is observation. The point of a business is to generate a profit, and that is done by maximising income and minimising costs. Unions protect workers from the dangers that are inherent in that and stand up for safety on worksites, and they should be applauded for that rather than castigated by a conservative commentariat as obstacles to economic growth or fined for doing their job. Not so long ago we witnessed in this country a deliberate judicial attack on the union movement through the Heydon royal commission. There were genuine issues to be addressed, and they were addressed. There were real rorters and thieves to be identified and about 40 of them were identified from the entire union movement across the entire nation. About 40 people were referred to relevant authorities and to this point there has been one conviction, and still the conservatives, the defenders of bank rorters and tax evaders, continue to pillory the union movement for being self-serving and corrupt. In this respect, a few unions have come in for some pretty heavy treatment. No union, for example, has been more criticised than the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union. We regularly heard, especially during the debate on the reinstatement of the Australian Building and Construction Commission, that the CFMEU was a bunch of thugs and bullies who needed to be brought into line, yet it is the CFMEU that is there when people die or are seriously injured in the workplace. When people die on building sites—and they do—it is CFMEU members who bear the brunt of those terrible tragedies, as witnesses, as first responders and as campaigners for justice. I do not condemn the CFMEU for being robust in seeking to protect its members, because it is safeguarding not just the livelihoods of those members but their very lives.

In the same way, we are often told what a bunch of uncompromising militants the Maritime Union of Australia is. Well, of course it is. The MUA has to be militant. The Howard government tried to wipe out that union. I well remember that national assault on a trade union. It happened not long after I came to Perth in 1998. I remember just how militant the commonwealth government was in seeking to crush that union. I remember the dogs and the riot police and the constant attempts to provoke violence. However, I also know that the MUA stands for something more than good wages and conditions. It stands up—it stands up for Australian jobs and for Australian workers.

This is a talk that Prime Minister Turnbull talks, most recently in his pea-and-thimble trick with 457 visas. Yet his government persists in the deregulation of the maritime industry, which encourages the growth of flag of convenience shipping and the export of Australian maritime jobs. At a time when security is tightening internationally in the transport sector, the commonwealth is lifting security requirements. At a time when we need a trained and proficient merchant marine, the commonwealth is exporting those jobs to the Philippines. Who is really doing the job of standing up for the country here? Is it the commonwealth, whose members are sworn to do so, or it is the MUA, whose members are, more frequently, simply sworn at? I applaud the MUA, and I understand its militancy. This is not a sector in which moderation will serve, since it has not been offered either by employers or by their political allies.

It is not very long since the appalling employment rorts in the 7-Eleven franchise were laid bare by the media. For this, we have to thank the tireless efforts of members of United Voice and the SDA. We have here a demonstrated case in which, across a franchised operation, employers have systematically exploited their workers and underpaid them—in effect, stealing their labour. United Voice and the SDA are to be commended, not condemned, for standing up for those workers, and for workers like them who are still vulnerable and subject to abuse.

These are not historic cases. I am not delving into the depths of history here. These are examples from contemporary Australia and recent memory. These stories tell me that the dark satanic mills of William Blake's poem, the age of the workhouse, the sweatshop, piecework and day labour, could so easily return without the steady vigilance of the sentinels of the union movement. My mother was right when she said to always join the union. I am proud to be a unionist, just as I am proud to be Labor. As I have said, mum and dad were both Menzies Liberals, but not so partisan that they would not have set that aside for me. They have both been gone for 25 years, but I feel them with me every day, and I feel, too, their swelling pride in this moment.

I came to Western Australia 19 years ago to teach history at Edith Cowan University. My education in Western Australian politics began almost immediately. Harry Phillips was my office neighbour and I learned much from snatched or long conversations with him, either with me standing in his doorway, cup of coffee in hand, or Harry standing in my doorway, cup of coffee in hand. I also came to know a former member of this place, Bob Hetherington, now sadly departed. It was Bob who first brought me to Parliament House for lunch. It was Bob who first brought me into this chamber to walk through it surreptitiously. I did not think 19 years ago when I first entered this chamber that I would return to it in a different capacity.

Not long after I arrived in Western Australia, I joined the Labor Party. I joined to make friends and to settle into my Western Australian life. My inquiries were welcomed by one of the assistant state secretaries of the WA Labor Party at that time, Bill Johnston, who is well known to members of this place and I am honoured to say is now the Minister for Mines and Petroleum; Commerce and Industrial Relations; Electoral Affairs;

Asian Engagement. I am glad he has found time to pop in and listen to this debate. Bill sent me to a meeting of the Perth sub-branch to have my membership approved. The president of that sub-branch was Greg Roberts. Greg Roberts has been my firm friend and supporter ever since in matters both personal and political. It was Greg who initiated me into the ways of the Labor Party and encouraged my entry into politics every step of the way. Together, Greg and I have walked on Roman bridges in France, fished unsuccessfully off Ocean Beach in Denmark, pruned fruit trees, driven the hills of Perth, and, I have to say, eaten countless lunches. It was Greg who stood at my side when I married my wife, Margo. It was Greg who managed me with great diligence—and probably some frustration—during the long campaign for the seat of Hasluck. It is Greg who still keeps me going. If this honourable member seems to be sailing serenely along, it is because Greg is somewhere in the background, making it all happen.

Greg is not, of course, a solo act. He is, for his wife, Michelle, the model of the loyal, supportive and ever-present political spouse. It is along with Greg that I came to know Hon Michelle Roberts. I have had two phone calls that have been life altering, in a good way. Both those phone calls were from Michelle. The first was in 2007, inviting me to join her ministerial office as speechwriter and principal policy officer for heritage. In that office I learned ways to transform political ideals and ideas into the daily reality of helping people and how to seek consistently to make their lives better. In this I could hope for no better role model, mentor and friend than Hon Michelle Roberts. I have now worked for, and beside her, for 10 years. Michelle is a person of deep belief, unwavering principle and profound personal loyalty. She is also immensely generous. I remember when I worked in her ministerial office celebrating a certain birthday with a zero in it. She marked the occasion by baking the most delicious lemon meringue tarts. They remain the best I have ever tasted. At my wedding, Michelle arranged the buttonholes for the groom, best man and groomsmen, and, in a delightful surprise, ensured that every table at the reception was decorated with flowers. The second phone call was in November 2015. I was on Rottneest, about to begin a weekend's retreat, and the phone rang. It was Michelle, suggesting that I put my name forward for preselection for Hasluck. And so a great adventure began that is not wholly over. Throughout that time, she has been stalwart in support, sagacious in counsel, and always ready to help. I am honoured to have her as my friend.

I have made other friends too in that time. One is Margaret Quirk, MLA. Margaret is passionate, compassionate, smart, frank—members know how frank!—and consistently underestimated, and also, I now discover, a great pal to share an office with. Others include Hon Kate Doust, for whom I once briefly worked and with whom I am privileged to serve in this chamber, and likewise Hon Sally Talbot, whose Denmark hospitality is, I think, proverbial.

Elsewhere in the party and in the great cloud of witnesses who surround me, I would add, in the federal sphere, Matt Keogh and Tim Hammond, who have been consistent friends and supporters; locally, Steve Wainwright, who ran my 2010 Pearce campaign; Jean Wainwright, who is a constant source of pragmatic wisdom; and Julie Wainwright, who tried to staff every polling booth in Pearce. If members know the federal seat of Pearce, they will know how hard that is. I also mention John Gangell, who is a tireless grassroots campaigner; Emi Barzotto, my boss first and then my friend, who has a very clear vision and a long memory; Elizabeth Roberts, my style consultant; Mark and Geoff, who put their lives on hold for a time to work in my office; and Luke, Frank, Angela, Sally-Ann, Rachel, Jacob, Leesa, Aimee, Damian and Mikaela and so many others. The list is long and it grows longer the more I think about it.

When I came to Perth, WA Labor was not the only family that I found. After a time, I also became a member of the cathedral congregation of St George. I am an Anglican and I take my faith seriously. It has been the deepest part of me for most of my life, and it is one of the reasons that I stand here in this place and speak. Since I was 19 years old, I have been impelled to work, in all the ways that I have been able, for justice in our community. I find the reason for this best expressed by Dietrich Bonhoeffer in his book *Ethics*; a book he was still writing when he was executed by the Nazis in the dying days of World War II. He wrote —

The hungry man needs bread and the homeless man needs a roof; the dispossessed need justice and the lonely need fellowship; the undisciplined need order and the slave needs freedom. To allow the hungry man to remain hungry would be blasphemy against God and one's neighbour, for what is nearest to God is precisely the need of one's neighbour.

I have learned much from the cathedral, firstly from both of the deans I have known, Rev Dr John Shepherd, AM, and the Very Reverend Richard Pengelley, and from the many good friends that I have made there and, I have to say, continue to make. It was Peter Bedford, now a professor in the United States, who introduced me to the cathedral community, and Catherine Arends who suggested that I make it my home. I shall always be grateful to them for that, and for many other things.

The final two people I wish to acknowledge this afternoon are those souls who make my life complete—my wife, Margo, and my daughter, Maia. Margo is a formidable person and it is a constant source of wonder to me that she chose me to be her husband. Not only does she run a demanding obstetric practice that sometimes

requires she leave the warmth of bed at home at 2.00 am for a delivery, but she is also loyal, forthright, generous and, above all, kind. Kindness is a virtue that we are all too short of, especially in public life when there is a craving for the instant critique, the kneejerk cheap shot or the zinger of a put-down. That is not her nature. Her nature is the patience and kindness that she has shown in supporting her aberrant husband's political adventures, whether with wise counsel, financial support or the simple and deeply faithful act, which members will appreciate, of staffing a polling booth all day!

My daughter, Maia, is the most powerful reason I have for doing anything. Although we have lived in different cities since she was five years of age, she remains a vital part of my life. She is now on the cusp of adulthood. I want to ensure in whatever ways that I can that the world in which she lives and moves is morally and materially better than the difficult and cluttered "now" that we currently experience.

It is worth remembering, amid all of the words, that what we do in this place and what is done in every Parliament has a genuine consequence for the material wellbeing of a great many people. It is worth remembering, too, that the opposing sides that we take in any debate here might, in other communities, in other lands, in other times or in other contexts be the entrenched positions in a more violent conflict. I believe that the first gift that we can give to the future is to preserve and enhance parliamentary democracy, which is what we do instead of civil war and what Westminster Parliaments have done since the restoration of Charles II in 1660. I want the next generation to believe in this funny, wonky and quirky system as much as I do. One challenge for the fortieth Parliament will be the constitution of this chamber since it remains gerrymandered in favour of rural constituencies. I am pleased to see that this matter has already been raised by Hon Bill Johnston in his role as Minister for Electoral Affairs.

Parliaments and governments do good work, but that is obscured by a hyperactive and scandal-hungry media. The problem, for which there is no easy answer, is to build a degree of public trust in the integrity of our institutions. We cannot function as a community if we do not trust the things that are there for our benefit—the police, the legal profession, the justice system, the schools, the teaching profession, the hospitals, and the nursing and medical professions. I want a future for my daughter in which those institutions are naturally trusted and in which corrupt behaviour is regarded as unusual and aberrant. I want a future for my daughter in which she can be whomever she can be, marry whomever her heart beats for, embrace whatever religion she wishes, or none, because no matter how powerful the nostalgia for a past that never was remains, amongst both the mainstream and marginal conservative movements, the multicultural boat sailed a long time ago and it is not turning around. I bless the fact we have a multicultural community. I love its depth and I revel in its joy. One thing I have been able to do in my short time as an MP is attend a number of cultural festivals, and what a boon they are to our broader community. Multiculturalism is about so much more than a wider range of food in food halls. It is about the depth to our shared culture as each community, from our first Australians to our latest arrivals, adds their own history to our common experience, and what we are often accustomed to thinking of as a young country turns out to be very ancient indeed.

For this to continue to work as well as it has, we need to be so much better than merely tolerant. Tolerance is ambiguous and insipid. We need to go higher—to acceptance and to celebration—and we need to remember something that our teachers tried to teach us in school: we need to remember to listen to one another. That is the wonderful thing about this place. It is a place for speaking—in French, parlement—and if for speaking, then for listening. In Parliament, we get our best work done in committees when we are actively listening to one another. If we spend all of our time sitting in our quarantined silos, shouting slogans at one another, then neither our political life nor our public institutions will prosper. Rather, they and we will fragment and our community will become a society of competing truths, forever seeking to trump one another rather than learning from one another.

The temptation to open our mouths and close our ears is deep and perennial, and it has become more and more enticing as extremists have flourished and moderation has been spurned. When my daughter Maia was 18 months old the world in which we live changed suddenly and dramatically. The images of aeroplanes flying into the twin towers in New York remain with me, as they do with many people—and I am sure many of you in this chamber. It was an event that changed our world profoundly. It led to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, to the emergence of Daesh, to the collapse of dictatorships in Libya and Syria, to the stifling of Turkish pluralism, and to acts of random terror, even here in Australia, and even to the tightening of security in this chamber. Make no mistake: the enemy that we face is the enemy of moderation, secularism, pluralism, multiculturalism and human rights. It is the enemy of not only Christians, Jews and secularists, but also Muslims the world over. The best form of resistance to such a foe is to be ourselves; to celebrate a society in which many cultures can form a single community and people of many faiths can pray together for peace. That is the world I want for my daughter, her friends, her sister and her generation.

Mr President, 11 March marked a new stage in the life of our state. Labor's decisive victory heralds, dare I say it, a fresh approach to government in this state. One of the hallmarks of the previous government was that, while it was prepared to put an enormous amount of resources and energy into legacy projects like Elizabeth Quay, Perth Stadium or the rolling disaster that is Perth Children's Hospital, it was not prepared to devote a similar

amount of energy to actually running the state. One of the key issues that the McGowan government is delivering on, and doing so early, is to commence the long process of reforming the public sector, a sector that has been permitted by a practice, which I can only describe as maligned neglect, to balloon out of control.

I have to say that I am really excited and impressed by the policy by which Perth Modern School will be taken into the twenty-first century. I know many will feel nostalgic for wood panelling—I can see in this chamber the reasons for doing so—but wood panelling and heritage are not in themselves things that make a great school. Just ask the governors of Hale School who have moved that school twice in its history. What makes a great school is not real estate, but community; that is just as possible in a CBD high-rise as it is in an Edwardian grammar school. I commend the McGowan Labor government and the Minister for Education and Training, my parliamentary colleague Hon Sue Ellery, for this far-sighted policy, and I look forward to the day when Perth Modern will actually be modern.

Moreover, as someone who lives on the fringe of the urban fringe, right at the edge of the city at Bullsbrook, I also eagerly anticipate the day when I can park and ride into the city from Ellenbrook railway station. These are the projects that matter far more to people than a riverfront development with a toxic water park at its heart. I am honoured that even for this brief and shining moment I am a member of a government that will do these things.

Mr President, it only remains for me to wish you well. You have served this Parliament and this state honourably and diligently. You are an adornment to this Parliament and your presence in this chamber has been a steadying influence as governments have come and gone. You have been an outstanding servant of the people of Western Australia and upon your retirement you shall be missed.

This Legislative Council is as old as the colony of Western Australia. Great ones have sat here—indeed, still sit here. It has been my honour to have become one of that number. By next week it shall all be gone; this moment, a treasured memory. Many of my Parliamentary colleagues here will still be here and they will be joined by others. Certainly, this Council will still be here, carrying on the work that was begun in 1829, and so will the need to represent the people of Western Australia in this place. It is a weighty task, but I am sure that the incoming members of the fortieth parliament will be up to it. I thank the house.

[Applause.]

Sitting suspended from 5.57 to 7.30 pm

HON LYNN MacLAREN (South Metropolitan) [7.30 pm]: Tonight, I rise to respond to the Governor and, more importantly, to say farewell. I acknowledge that we meet on Aboriginal land of the Whadjuk Noongar people and first off I pay my respects to their elders, past, present and emerging. There are many people in the public gallery whom I wish to welcome—kaya—and acknowledge. I will do so throughout my valedictory comments tonight.

One person who is not here—already with the water!—but who is listening on the internet in the early morning in Oregon is my mother. I will get this over with in the beginning; I want to acknowledge her at the outset. She has been a wonderful role model of independence, strength and compassion. To Madeleine and her partner Scotty in Medford, I want to say thank you for your support, your love and your encouragement. When my mother, father and I set out in the family car through the snow covered San Bernardino mountains towards Los Angeles International Airport in January 1979, there was no way of knowing that the journey would lead to this teary farewell from the first American-born representative in Western Australian Parliament in 2017. My home in the Californian Mojave Desert, which would see the trial of the first concentrated solar plant in 1981, was a long, long way from the Swan coastal plain—almost exactly half a globe away. But like any journey, it began with a spark of an idea, a rough plan and, in my case, the courage to improvise.

It has been an honour and a privilege to represent the South Metropolitan Region of Western Australia for the past eight years. The region has a great many Aboriginal elders who carry its stories and share a wisdom of the oldest living culture on the planet with all who are ready to hear it. I want to thank those leaders in our communities who shared their knowledge and sought to educate me. In my 20 years in Greens politics in this region, I feel like I have only begun to connect to the land and its people. I have been humbled to bring a voice to many issues of the traditional owners. I want to express my appreciation to the elders of this region whom I have come to know just a little bit during my time in Parliament: Reverend Sealin Garlett and Marilyn Garlett, Marie Taylor, Noel Nannup and Shaun Nannup, Trevor Walley and Dr Richard Walley—who was just here for the opening—Charlie Kickett, whom I met only recently down in Rockingham, Len Collard, and Matthew and Barry McGuire. I also acknowledge some of the emerging elders and wise women in our region, many of whom I hope will remain my friends and some of whom are with us today: Della Rae Morrison, Karla Hart, Ingrid Cumming, Corina Abraham Howard, Dorinda Cox, Marianne Mackay and Tammy Solonec. There are so many more I cannot list them all here, but I want all to know how I respect them greatly. I am in awe of their resilience in the face of seemingly insurmountable challenges.

For the past four years, serving as one of only two Greens in Parliament, I have extended my reach to help people throughout the state wherever possible. I have a long list of portfolios for which I was responsible to keep abreast of parliamentary actions and to maintain relationships with people and organisations. I note that many people joining us in the public gallery tonight are from some of these organisations. Thank you for your support. I just want to mention a couple of groups because I saw them earlier. I have worked with FOODwatch for a long time. People are also here from Point Peron for the People, Hands Off Point Peron, Safe Schools Coalition Australia and the No WA Shark Cull coalition, as well as members of social justice movements, animal rights organisations, wildlife carers and local councils. This parliamentary term has been incredibly rewarding and rich with experiences. I want to share some of the highlights of the 2013 to 2017 term.

It should come as no surprise to anyone that the first thing I am going to mention is saving Beelihar wetlands. At great environmental cost and what I imagine has wielded a terrible impact on the spiritual, cultural and historical sites in the area near Bibra Lake, North Lake and Coolbellup bushland in the weeks leading up to the election, we saved Beelihar wetlands from the construction of the Roe Highway stage 8 extension. Thousands of people took part in almost daily demonstrations, rallies and protest actions. The local wetland protectors, wildlife carers and spiritual custodians were generous in sharing their knowledge. We learnt about nonviolent direct action. We formed affinity groups. Mums became liaison officers, musicians became organisers and individuals became a community. Several people were arrested and charged. Many people were fined and some charges were subsequently dropped or lessened. The actions of the police have been subject to complaint and an inquiry has been requested. The wheels of bureaucracy are much slower than the courts. Although the new government has announced running a fine toothcomb through the previous Treasurer's accounts, it has been silent about the use of force by the police—the charging horses and the unmuzzled dogs that patrolled the fences, the loss of trust in Her Majesty's finest. Tears fell today, months after the machines were silenced, when I passed by the scars of the land ripped by dozers, the mounds of soil in place of a biodiversity bonanza and the trees shredded, reduced to steaming mulch piles. The animals—the fortunate few animals—were relocated, but many, many more were massacred. The crawling, creeping, hopping, slinking ones who could not fly away would not be caught in traps. On Sunday, I planted a Tuart tree in what would have been the shadow of the tall Rottneest Island pines at the corner of Hope and Progress Roads. It would have been in the shadow of those ancient pines had the contractor not chopped off the tops, leaving stumps that still tower over the now barren landscape, a stone's throw from the riverbank where the Beelihar people once camped. Hundreds—perhaps thousands—of people will plant and weed and nurture the soil until the scars burst back into life now that the election has been won.

Bitterly, I reminisce over the rally in 2005 when Labor candidates said that they would stop the highway. Like marriage equality, it is well past time for them to deliver. From little things, big things grow. How long ago was it? It was 2004 and I worked for Hon Jim Scott when Mark Hingston, Joe Branco, Professor Phil Jennings and Felicity McGeorge—now Bairstow—with a handful of others alongside the Noongar people defended this patch from the Stephenson–Hepburn planned highway so long ago. I recall Joe holding an Environmental Protection Authority report from 2004 that concluded Roe 8 should never be. They knew it then, and the Liberal Party in government knew it before; in 2016, when the Liberal Party's pollsters reported its demise, before the bulldozers and the police were deployed to destroy and to defend the destroyers. I have to say it. This is my last parliamentary speech, and I have to say it: shame on you! I have looked into the eyes of those very young girls and boys who came to their beloved bushland and wonderland nature playground to watch the machines rip it apart. They hoped it would stop because their parents were protesting. I know the cost of the former government's policy, the lack of vision, the alternatives, the respect for nature, and now perhaps it, too, knows it. Perhaps because the Liberal Party so comprehensively lost the election it will rethink the link. The lost boys: the once-Liberal members for Jandakot, Southern River and now Bicton are among those who paid the price. I am reminded of a verse —

They would not listen, they did not know how
Perhaps they'll listen now.

Over my time in Parliament I have been an ardent advocate for planning with environment at its heart. Because of the significance of the Roe 8 campaign in the state election I wanted to outline our tireless work. Since 2005 I have asked questions about the Environmental Protection Authority, the environmental approvals, the land acquisition, the Aboriginal Cultural Material Committee, the metropolitan region scheme amendments, the federal funding, the implementation conditions, the business case and the contracts. Much work is still to be done in this term of Parliament, and I regret not being here to see it through.

In March 2012 I moved a motion to initiate an amendment to the metropolitan region scheme to delete the zoning of the road reserve of the area proposed for Roe 8. I asked a question yesterday about this government's plan for that, and we did not get a decent answer. As I leave this chamber I implore members who have this responsibility to ensure that work is done with haste. That unfinished business needs to be completed, and a great

cost has been paid. Please, do that. If members have learned anything from this election, they should do that, because the people have spoken in their numbers.

In August 2015 I presented a petition calling for a Legislative Council inquiry to investigate the alternative proposal for an outer harbour. That was unsuccessful in this chamber. I have since written to the Auditor General requesting that his office undertakes an investigation into the government's decision-making processes for Perth Freight Link. I actively supported the Aboriginal heritage legal case, as members know, by asking questions month after month and waiting for papers to be tabled on the very last day; eventually we got those papers.

I put forward alternatives; I was not just complaining. I wanted to put forward alternatives because that is what the Greens are here to do. I put forward an alternative for the outer harbour and the transport solutions. I worked in partnership with those communities—the Save Beeliar Wetlands people and the Rethink the Link people. I attended numerous community events and I spoke at many rallies. If anyone was following me on Facebook, every morning I was broadcasting live directly from the area so that Australians knew what was at risk and how people were prepared to stand up for it.

Most recently, during the election campaign, I called for a parliamentary inquiry with one of the terms of reference being the decision to invest more half a billion dollars of taxpayer funds without conducting any business case or other stage of a gateway review. I think maybe the Labor government is onto this now; maybe this review into the Treasurer's decision-making processes will reveal something. This inquiry was also to look into the traffic modelling and noise pollution; the breaches of environmental conditions, including adequate offsets; and, the failure to follow the management plans, including and in relation to fauna. What happened to that fauna is well documented. There was also the destruction of known spiritual and archaeological sites, and the handling of serious health concerns around asbestos. Members, this mask was on my wardrobe. When we went down to Beeliar wetlands to protest we were in fear of asbestos; we were given masks because it was a serious concern. That has yet to be investigated. Please, please, do that for me. Look into that and make sure that WorkSafe Western Australia did its job; and, if it did not, why not, who was at risk and why is there asbestos still covered there? What is going on down there? The Minister for Environment is in this chamber. We are delighted to have a new environment minister, and I really do ask him to take up this call.

In the aftermath of this destruction there is even more work to be done. I lament not being here, and I could not help but use part of my valedictory remarks to set this to-do list for the government. It is hard for a Greens activist to be in a position like this—to be able to voice concerns and bring issues to Parliament—and then no longer be here and silenced. Next week I will be silenced. It will be up to the former opposition; the current opposition made this decision, so, really, I depend on the current government to do this.

A total of 213 arrests were made. Let us think about that: 213 people were arrested trying to stop something from happening that the new government, as soon as it got in, said it would not do. What justice is there for those 213 people who acted in the public good and whose actions were vindicated, I would argue, in the end? Each one of them has a record for assault or trespass. What happened? Let us think about those 213 people who were courageous in their activism. The legal team supporting the arrested people is calling for a minority of the police who they believe acted unlawfully to be investigated. More importantly, there needs to be a thorough investigation into the systemic issues raised, such as the culture of policing and the hostility towards nonviolent protesters and the way people were targeted and vilified. I saw that myself. No police force is perfect, but let us not look away. If people made errors, mistakes or acted wrongly, let us get it out in the open. We would like an inquiry into the actions of the police.

I think back to when I was working for Hon Giz Watson and we wrote a letter to the police about the training provided for nonviolent direct action. What kind of training do police have to deal with nonviolent direct action? It is a thing. Ever since the 1960s—possibly before; I think I mentioned it in my peaceful protest speech—people have been practising nonviolent direct action, maybe for centuries. Our police should know how to deal with that without going over the top with horses in people's faces. That is not asking much. I see that the former Minister for Police from the other place is here. I know she is listening intently, and I hope that in opposition she will maybe have an opportunity to look at this.

I have a list of the charges. One person was arrested for obstructing police officers; 73 people were arrested for trespass; there were 63 charges for trespass and obstructing public officers; and there were 14 arrest warrants. The rest of the charges were of disorderly behaviour, one breach of a violence restraining order, criminal damage and no authority to drive. If members had watched the news they would think it was the Mafia out there: these people are mums and dads, students and public servants, and they were all just trying to protect this little piece of bushland. The response was well over the top. Enough said; I just wanted to put on the parliamentary record that there is business to be done and that part of my career has been to try to protect the Beeliar wetlands. On reflection, in spite of everything that we tried, we did not get anything achieved until the eleventh hour. Let us

not wait for the eleventh hour the next time a member brings up something this critical. Maybe we could avoid that next time, and that is why I am sharing my reflections.

The other big thing that I have to talk about is stopping the drum lines. This term kicked off with a summer of shark killing on the government agenda. We defeated its drum line program by working with the community and exposing the irrationality of shark culling. It was a hot summer morning at Scarborough Beach in the auditorium where Missy Higgins would later perform when I laid out our terms for what we called Barnett's surrender: respect existence or expect resistance. It was a cry I repeated at the Cockburn Wetlands Education Centre three summers later as the campaign to stop Roe 8 heated up. In true Australian style, we met them on the beaches in 2014, first at Cottesloe, where thousands gathered in the largest protest rally we have seen since the 1998 rallies to save old-growth forests, and then, when at first the government refused to back down, dozens took direct action by monitoring those drum lines, by documenting the deaths and by publicising the irrationality of the program. In December 2013, the government announced its intention to use lethal drum lines, surprising most community and marine stakeholders. The first rally at Cottesloe Beach on 4 January 2014 was organised in days by concerned scuba enthusiasts and other ocean users. Six thousand protesters were at the rally on Cottesloe Beach on 1 February 2014. That was an amazing time; I was so blessed to be there. Early in 2014, Sea Shepherd attempted to secure a court injunction to force the government to suspend its policy, and the Greens called for a motion to revoke the exemption to kill protected sharks given to WA. The Environmental Protection Authority received hundreds of submissions asking it to assess or reject the EPA drum line trial. To his credit, the chair, Paul Vogel, who is no longer with the EPA, first said that the drum line trial would not be investigated as the environmental impact would be negligible, but then he had to do it. He eventually did it and he said that shark culling was environmentally unacceptable. The drum lines were removed at the end of April 2014 after 172 sharks, including some mako sharks and other species, but mainly tiger sharks, had been captured. About half were released because they were too small and the rest were shot or expired on the drum lines. In July 2014, 30 000 people—with 6 751 submissions and two petitions signed by 25 000 people—responded to the EPA about the government's plan to continue using drum lines for another three years. Intense lobbying and awareness raising by community groups, the Greens, and state and federal politicians included an excellent forum on more effective alternatives to mitigate shark hazards. In September 2014 the EPA recommended that shark drum lines not be implemented in WA. The Premier conceded defeat. The Greens challenged the effectiveness of the so-called imminent threat guidelines that were rebranded as serious threat guidelines. These are the guidelines under which after a shark bite incident, the shark is found and killed. Thankfully, that, too, with this new government, is a policy of the past, but at what cost? Governments need to listen, and not just at elections. Since 2000, 15 people have died as a result of a shark bite off the WA coast. There is general recognition by both the ALP and the Liberals now that killing sharks does nothing to make people safer. Instead, a range of other measures, including real-time alerts, improved emergency responses, shark education and awareness, and personal and area-based protective technology to suit different coastal locations and ocean users are the way to go. I just shook the hand of the new Minister for Fisheries and I really do think he gets it, but we need to make sure, because the law is not good enough.

Other successes of this past term include the defeat of forced local government amalgamations. We also protected peaceful protests by stymieing the related bill in the upper house for 18 months. I want to thank Irma Lachmund and the people who formed a coalition of groups to oppose criminalisation of dramatic protest—I mean democratic protest, although it could be dramatic as well! But yes, we did a good job there. I notice the former police minister is at the back of the chamber again! We did feel that that legislation was a bridge too far and we were not alone. In the end we had United Nations human rights experts quoted in this house. Obviously, governments try things, do they not? There needs to be a strong opposition. People need to be alert and experienced—people who have been here and done that, and who care.

Another thing I want to mention today—I notice that the former Minister for Road Safety is also here—is the “one metre matters” bill. There were several deaths on the road of people riding bicycles. What did we do? I put a bill up and said that we need to be clear about the law. I did that because a national campaign was calling for it. I said that we could do that in WA. We want to protect people on the roads; let us do that. Now, after the election, the government is interested in doing it. Why did it take all that time? I introduced that bill in 2012 and several people have died on our roads in that time. Let us just think about that. I want to thank Toby Hodgson, Matt Fulton, Sarah, Craig and all those who backed this campaign, including the Over 55 Cycling Club. Maybe now I can join them on a bike ride!

The other thing I need to mention, of course—I have already mentioned this today—is genetically modified organisms. We heard a speech today honouring the memory of the former agriculture minister, Kim Chance. That gave us an idea that this issue has gone on for years over successive governments. The Liberals, the Nationals and Labor have all been involved in this, as well as the Greens, thank goodness. The Greens, having the balance of power, did a great job in holding off GMOs in this state for many, many years. This, too, is

a campaign that I worked on for many years. It is hard to let go of these campaigns. I would love to continue working with this. Many campaigns are still waiting for that moment when they finally meet their goals, such as the food and farmers' rights movements, which are still toiling to make a GM-free WA possible. I worked on this for years and I want to thank Steve and Sue Marsh, Janet Grogan, Maggie Lilith and Shirley Collins, and in particular Bob Phelps from Gene Ethics, Mothers are Demystifying Genetic Engineering and Bee Winfield. There is another long list of dedicated farmers we have stood beside. For people who are keen on this, a march is coming up on the weekend, I think. Many thanks to my former research officer, the multitalented Louise Sales. She supported me very well during that campaign. We have lost her now to Tasmania, I think, but I want to thank her.

It should come as no surprise to any members that in many of these earth-protecting campaigns, women are front and centre, driving and steering at the very heart of those campaigns. From the days of the late Mary Jenkins, an indefatigable feminist in the South Metropolitan Region, to the ever-present former Senator Jo Vallentine, women have seen what needs to be done. They have rolled up their sleeves, they have crafted a new phone tree and they have got the party started.

Natalie Banks, of the No WA Shark Cull alliance, is one such woman. She left her government media position to join Sea Shepherd. Today, from Dubai, she wrote —

When I first thought of rallying to stop the WA shark cull, never in my wildest dreams did I imagine the outpouring of support for one of the most misunderstood creature. I have never experienced anything like it and I feel that I may not ever again. But shark lovers; every day you give me hope for the future, your words and actions compel me to move forward for a better world.

The recent Rethink the Link and Save Beeliiar Wetlands campaigns brought Kim Dravnieks and Kate Kelly into the limelight, and they were surrounded by powerful women, including Felicity Bairstow and a very long list of others, going back decades and stretching long into the future, as the wounded land is healed. At one point in the campaign, we pitched a photo idea to *The West Australian* to photograph all the women at the campaign's heart. The list grew so long, it may have been the reason that *The West* declined; it would need to be a broadsheet for that!

I do not mean to diminish the activism of men in Western Australia, who are also tireless in their efforts. In particular, I want to single out Robert McLean, John Lawson and Sean van Alphen—a group of mates who formed the Numbat Task Force. Over many years of tracking and photographing their favourite woodland animal, they have grown to be the state's most successful wild numbat protectors. They were instrumental in the intervention that halted a landfill that threatened some of the last remaining numbats in the wild across Australia, so good on you, guys.

That is one of the highlights of my long time in Parliament—to know that we played a role in highlighting that problem. My staff worked tirelessly to figure out how we could appeal to the minister to make this end. There are so many campaigns, and so many women at the heart of them, I cannot possibly do justice to a list of them all, but I want to make mention of the animal justice campaigners: Katrina Love and Sandie Rawnsley of Stop Live Exports, who I have worked with for years; Amy Wilks of Animal Amnesty; and Alanna and Andrea of Free the Hounds, who today were on the steps of Parliament, giving us a petition. The list goes on and on. I want to now express my thanks to them for working with us, for having faith in us and for trying to make this a better place for creatures that do not have a voice. I also want to acknowledge the many, many people across the state who have tried to save mature trees, including Leisha Jack, who I met at her activist debut at a rally for the campaign to save the trees at Charles Riley Memorial Reserve.

Working in my electorate has also given me an opportunity to help many of my constituents. Among the individuals we helped was a public housing tenant who was bullied, possibly by her neighbours. I saw the scorched entry to her small apartment and listened as she recounted the trouble she experienced getting someone to listen and someone to help. We did help; we got her new accommodation. Everyone who is a member of Parliament has had these issues, and it makes us feel like we are worth it. It makes us realise, "This is what it's about; it's not just arguing about words on a page. I've got somebody into secure, safe accommodation." I am so grateful for those opportunities. We do not get many opportunities in life to help people directly like that, and being members of Parliament gives us that opportunity.

I recall many hours of debate on the residential tenancies legislation, during which I tried—unsuccessfully—again and again to amend the legislation, and then for years afterwards, speaking up for the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people who were evicted as a result of that Housing Authority policy. I did everything I could as a member of Parliament; I had the best research and I had help drafting the amendments, but the will was not there on the part of the government to change that legislation. That is frustrating when, time and time again, one cannot change legislation. One then has to deal with the consequences of it because somebody did not agree.

There is much work to be done for the homeless. Every single member of Parliament has a responsibility to provide help and, I would argue, to actually end homelessness. This is not pie in the sky; this is something we can do. There is an action plan. Why not just do it? During the last election campaign, the Greens launched a policy to end homelessness. I met with a roundtable of groups that are serious about this issue. This is serious; this is not some sketchy plan. This can actually be done, and all we have to do is set our minds to it. We have to have the will to do it, and we have to pursue that goal, and put people in charge to do it. It is possible, we can do it; why not? The benefits of housing the homeless, of ending homelessness, and of reaching in and solving the problems that keep people homeless are exponential. We can do it, but we have to have that will.

Because of the inadequate laws for the protection of our green infrastructure and biodiversity, people turn to their members of Parliament to help save their much-loved urban bushland and trees, and that happened for me. I have an amazing photo of that ancient jarrah tree; if members have not visited it, they still can. It is lying on the ground. It was cut down because somebody apparently complained about bees. There is a simple solution for that, as most people would know, but somehow, somebody got permission to cut down this tree that was 200 years old and that provided habitat in a place in which it was desperately needed, not far from Roe 8. They just chopped it down, and it broke my heart. I still remember that time, and think that it is time for me to go visit that tree.

Stories like that are rife throughout our area, particularly in the metropolitan area, where people love their local trees and they are knocked down. The law needs to be changed. We have to be able to protect these trees; we have to find some way to protect mature trees on a grand scale because our biodiversity is being destroyed right before our eyes. I remember saying it in 2009 when I first got elected. We have talked about it a lot over the last eight years, but nothing has changed. I would like a model local law that protects mature trees; I am no longer here to fight for it, so please. Thankfully, Hon Robin Chapple will be here; it is on his list.

Hon Robin Chapple: It is now!

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: There are lots of other local issues with trees. There was a campaign for a tree in Healy Road, Hamilton Hill. I made such good friends saving this tree that was being hacked away and was going to be lost; a big branch was taken off. It is a community coming together to protect an asset, to protect amenity, and to protect something they value. It is a wonderful thing, and it happens everywhere. It does not matter if one is a Labor member or a Liberal member; it is happening in one's area. The next big thing is probably going to be Underwood Avenue.

I have to also just mention Lathlain Oval. Victoria Park is the electorate of one of the most senior members in cabinet, and Lathlain is also in South Metropolitan Region. The West Coast Eagles Football Club expanded the oval and knocked down some trees, and it is a tremendous loss to the community in that area that has not been addressed. It is death by a thousand cuts.

I hope members are getting some sense that the journey I talked about at the beginning of my speech is a marathon; it is not a sprint. There are times when we sprint, but we have to be able to go with the issues that are in front of us, such as greyhound racing. Who knew about that? There was an exposé in New South Wales and then it became an issue.

Being flexible and able to be impromptu and address issues as they arise is very important because that is the opportunity for change. They have asked us in our valedictories to try to give members ideas for how to approach the new term. I would say that was my most successful strategy in that I was able to retool and address the issue that was the hottest issue of the day at the time. The issue of sharks is a perfect example. Who knew that I would be a champion for sharks? It is important that we respond to the issues of the day.

I want to thank the Greens in other states because throughout the last eight years I have worked collaboratively with them. I have truly enjoyed working alongside them on campaigns to improve our society, to protect the planet and to be a voice for the voiceless. Thank you to my friends and colleagues in the Senate, in other state Parliaments and in Greens groups. I particularly want to acknowledge some of the Greens MPs I have worked with over the years who have stood up for animals—Christine Milne, Lee Rhiannon, Tammy Franks, Mehreen Faruqi, the late John Kaye and Sue Pennicuik. They have all been my comrades who have shared my pain and private members' bills and worked across state boundaries to collaborate. Being in a minor party with only a few of us working together across state boundaries was a successful strategy. It was only because of our common bond and our common goals in green politics that made that possible.

I acknowledge Hon Rick Mazza behind me because he was the chair of the committee that examined the operations of the RSPCA. I do not want to go into detail because we have debated it at length over a very long period. However, for me the take-home message is that the animal laws in this state need to be updated. I am hoping that the Animal Welfare Act will be reviewed this term and that it is not weakened but strengthened

across the board. I hope that I will read in the paper or possibly online that the Animal Welfare Act has been reviewed. It has been my solemn responsibility as well as my great joy to be a voice for animals over the last eight years. It is one of the areas in politics that is growing in significance across Australia and is long overdue. I have already reflected on the success we had in protecting sharks. It was a hard-fought victory over many months with a range of powerful and creative advocates in several areas, backed by experts both here and abroad; but if only the law had been strong enough in the first place to protect them. I tried to protect free-range farming from the watering down of the labelling laws so that consumers could help to improve the welfare of laying hens. If only the law had been strong enough in the first place to protect them. I tried to stop the overbreeding of greyhounds and the use of them in a sport that causes traumatic injury leading to euthanasia on a regular basis. If only the law had been strong enough in the first place to protect them. By appealing to the minister, I was successful in helping to save a small population of wild numbats near Dryandra. But the law should have been strong enough in the first place to protect them. This is the work left undone—reform of the law that is supposed to protect animals and to ensure their welfare.

I want to thank you, Mr President, for your wisdom and leadership over these years. There were times when you saved me. I am thinking of the time when the first reading of a bill was challenged. It was quite a moment for me because I was afraid that I was not going to be able to read in the bill, which was really important to me. In your wisdom you took it offline, had a good look at it and came back with a very measured ruling. I have felt safe in your hands and I want to thank you for that. I am outgoing too, so that is nice.

I want to express my appreciation to the members of the opposition who worked with us over eight years, gave me fulsome briefings when required, and sometimes when our values crossed, which they did on the Biodiversity Conservation Bill, were willing to work with me. I appreciated that. Another member has already mentioned that when we come from a position of respect, anything is possible. I offered that respect. I worked with Hon Kim Chance—maybe that is why; he taught me that. When we start from a position of respect, we can go places. Even if we disagreed on many policies, we worked together collaboratively in many ways. I will mention some of those as I go on.

I want to thank also members of the Nationals, particularly Colin Holt. It has been a pleasure to work with you over these eight years—tearing up. Why is that? I knew Colin before. I met him when I was working at the Western Australian Council of Social Service, so I knew we had this common understanding about community services and how difficult they were in the regions. We were on a committee together and I always enjoyed working with you. If I miss you, I will call you.

Hon Col Holt: You've got my number.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I do have your number. I might give you a few questions to ask!

The work we do is mostly determined by the government of the day, which controls the agenda and sets its legislative priorities. In Parliament this term I debated 92 bills.

Hon Peter Collier: We know.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: I am glad you are paying attention.

I debated 38 bills in the previous term. That was a bit light on because there were four of us. I dealt with a total of 130 bills. I moved several amendments, and in the last term, two of them were passed. That was exciting. I developed four bills of my own and I had carriage of the Greens' biodiversity bill introduced by former member Hon Giz Watson, so I have had quite a workload. I will mention it here: I am looking forward to a break. I have thoroughly applied myself to the task at hand. It has given me an energy to approach it but it was a lot of work, especially when it was on a million crime bills and one or two environment bills. It was a hard slog but I enjoyed it and I tried to apply myself to it as the now Leader of the Opposition has acknowledged. My ability to assess and consult with stakeholders about legislation and debate it relied very heavily on my research team, who are also tired. I want to thank Leigh Sinclair, who I know is here tonight, for her tremendous wisdom, organisational skills and unflappable way of being. We need someone like that around us. Leigh makes deadlines look easy to me while managing to keep a young family in school and at sporting events. I even felt supported by Darren, her partner. Leigh kept all the balls in the air and has been my supportive friend in difficult times. I am so glad we shared that office at WACOSS way back when. I also acknowledge and thank research officers Caroline Perks and Dinny Lawrence for their expertise and the wonderful contributions they made this term and the previous term. Many others helped to ensure that I was ready and well briefed for legislation. Most recently in a voluntary capacity Jennifer Gardiner helped us. Although I cannot name each of you at this time, your assistance to me in my role and your generosity have been deeply appreciated. We scrutinised the government in every way possible. We asked 660 questions without notice, 431 in the most recent term.

I want to thank the parliamentary staff. Janice Shaw, who has probably gone home by now, is awesome. I worked with Janice even when I worked for Jim Scott. She has very rarely dropped the ball. The volume of work and the deadlines that she meets on a daily basis are amazing. Janice, you have my long-term respect.

Chris Hunt manages the questions on notice. Chris took us through the transition to be online. I do not know how you did it, mate, but thank you very much. I am so glad that my staff know how to do that.

I also want to thank the very professional officers who assist us with the business in this chamber. I want to thank the Clerk, Nigel. I want to thank Paul Grant, Grant Hitchcock, Renae Jewell, Paul Lobban, Brian Conn, Lisa Parrella, Jackie and Hayley. There is no way that I could have done this volume of work unless there was support at every turn—the little things such as making sure that there is water and that I have a lectern. They also make sure that we feel respected, because sometimes there is argy-bargy in here, and they are a great neutralising impact—we can just look at someone and say, “Can you please give me a piece of paper?”

I served on the Standing Committee on Legislation this term and Hon Robyn McSweeney was our chair. Thank you very much; it was a pleasure. It was tough being on Hon Robyn McSweeney’s committee because we had a lot of work to do. We did 15 reports. I think I managed to substitute out for a couple of them. But that was a lot of very, very detailed work—the demise of the Crown. Members can talk to me later about that.

Hon Donna Faragher: That was serious.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Hon Donna Faragher was on the committee as well.

Hon Donna Faragher: I took that very seriously.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: Yes. I also served on the Select Committee into the Operations of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Western Australia (Inc), thanks to Hon Rick Mazza. I thank the committee officers who supported all those committees, including Mark Warner, Samantha Parsons, Alex Hickman, Suzanne Veletta, Niamh Corbett and Denise Wong. There are so many people in the background. I have felt over the last eight years that the professionalism in this place is outstanding. I just checked that *Hansard* got that, because if it is not in *Hansard*, it never happened. *Hansard* has been tremendous for me. Some of them have problems with my accent, but they have managed to make most things read even better than how I am saying them, which is nice. Thank you and I appreciate that.

Over this time, I have hosted three Celebrating Pride at Parliament events, which have been supported by every party here. Hon Martin Aldridge is nodding; thank you very much for co-hosting. Hon Jacqui Boydell and Hon Michael Mischin also co-hosted. Hon Helen Morton co-hosted; that was a wonderful year that she co-hosted. It made a big difference to the community. I am here to tell members that they really like it. They really want members to keep doing it. Hon Stephen Dawson was also a consistent co-host. It is a way to bring the significance and importance of legislators into a cultural month of pride and to build relationships. I hope that all members have managed to continue to keep those communication lines open. We invite the media and it is a great opportunity. It has been my absolute pleasure, one of the highlights of my eight years, to host a cross-party party for the community to which I feel very connected. I want to thank all those members who found it in their heart to be generous and co-host those events.

I also initiated a Parliamentary Friends of Bandyup group, which did not go down very well. I would really love the rest of you to pick that up! That was a stretch too far. It is a great idea. The Parliamentary Friends of Bandyup would be a great thing and I can put my people in touch with you.

Hon Liz Behjat: You are saying the building or the people in there?

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: The women who are there. Yes, if Hon Liz Behjat is interested, it might be a good thing.

Hon Liz Behjat: I will not be here.

Hon LYNN MacLAREN: That is a great opportunity. I see in the President’s gallery Alison Xamon, who I feel will make such a great contribution. I congratulate her on her election—again! That proves it can be done. The Bandyup group is the kind of thing I would see Alison taking to like a duck to water. If people can find it in their hearts to think of the women in Bandyup, who really need that kind of boost, I would really implore members to join the group. I know that Simone McGurk is interested. If we can get some more people interested, please take that over. I could give the original list of people to invite, but take it over and do with it what you will.

I thank all the Parliament House staff, and there are so many we depend upon. I think I will get the chance to do that on Thursday when we wrap up, so I will not list them now. Know that I thought about you in my valedictory speech and I will mention you later.

It has been my pleasure to bear witness to the pledges of thousands of those who have come across the seas to share our boundless gifts. Like me, their journeys to Australian citizenship were layered with farewells and blows, losses and gains, and always hope. I have met people from every continent, from Afghanistan to Zambia, and young families from Nepal and older couples from Scotland. One of the joys of my role has been to meet these new citizens and to welcome them to Australia. South Metropolitan Region, possibly more than any other

region, has just boomed in the last eight years with people from other countries. We have had a huge increase in population. I have welcomed them and I enjoy the multiculturalism that ensues.

Over two terms I have seen Willetton Senior High School transform. I have been to several openings of new schools in Tuart Grove, Baldivis, Golden Bay and more. I have visited some of the oldest schools from Victoria Park to Attadale. I have spoken at school graduations from Fremantle Primary School to the Octagon Theatre. I have been inspired by young people and educators at all levels.

My team has expanded and contracted over the years. I want to thank all those people who have come in, particularly of late. Elliot Sawers joined us and lifted our game on so many levels and then, because he was so good, Senator Ludlam took him. Connor Slight, who we stole from Hon Robin Chapple on his day off, helped us with amazing audiovisuals and great work on our social media. I want to thank Nadine Walker. Nadine came to my team early in the term and she really made a big difference during the shark cull and through our marriage equality work. Of course, Senator Siewert took her because she was awesome. So now Nadine is working with the Senate team and she is doing an outstanding job. I want to thank Wanjiku, who was with us a short time. I still see her; she made a big difference to our team and I really miss her. In particular I want to thank Nina Jurak, who Robin has working in his office. Nina helps us to keep in touch with Robin and makes sure that we are all working together. She has helped me in my selection of staff and she has long experience that goes back to Hon Giz Watson. I am going to miss these people so much, but maybe we will have coffee with each other sometime.

I want to say that there is nothing like winning an election, but I am here to tell members that the converse is also true. Losing an election is a uniquely unwelcome experience. To those 32 100 South Metropolitan Region voters who put the Greens first above and below the line, I thank you. I know you did it. You do not have to apologise.

I appreciate it but we did not get over the line. We increased the percentage of voters who chose to put the Greens first. To get over the line we needed 49 384 votes. Can you believe it! We needed nearly 50 000 votes for a quota in the South Metropolitan Region, more by far than any other region—except the North Metropolitan Region. That seems even more unfair when we look at the first preference voters in other regions who delivered their Greens representatives. So, 33 448 people in north metro, with a quota of 47 782, have a voice in Parliament, and 29 810 are about to have their Greens voice heard in Hon Tim Clifford who was recently elected to the East Metropolitan Region. There are 13 179 south west voters who will have a voice in this Parliament as of next week in Hon Diane Evers, who, again, joins us in the President's gallery. She will bring, once again, a rural voice into this chamber. Again, the never-say-die Hon Robin Chapple will be representing the Greens in the Mining and Pastoral Region. The system may not be quite perfect but it has resulted in the Greens doubling its numbers, which is the result we would get if we had true proportional representation statewide. Personally it is a bit gutting, but on balance it is a great result for the Greens.

That is not the only problem with our electoral system—the number of people who elect us—and this was revealed in the cold stark light of that day on 25 March, the day after my birthday, when the results were declared for the South Metro. In South Metro, unlike in any other region in which the Liberal Democrats fielded a candidate, the higher than expected vote for the Liberal Democrats seemed to be due solely to its position on the ballot, which confused voters who may have been looking for the Liberal Party instead. Preferences flowed to the Liberal Democrats from a starting position of just 13 000 first preferences. It is fair enough that those 32 100 Greens voters in south metro feel bereft this week as I leave the Parliament. There is, alas, nothing I can do about it. That is the system we have. Electoral reform should be on our agenda.

I want to congratulate Hon Sue Ellery for Labor's comprehensive victory. Never before has Labor won so overwhelmingly—other than in 1955. It was an awesome win and an awesome vote for Labor. I warmly wish the Labor government well. I would have loved to be in this chamber with the Labor government—I am now for only a short time, but I like it already! I would have loved to serve in a Parliament with a Labor government, but every time Labor gets in, they push me out. In 2005, the same thing happened. That is a bummer!

I congratulate all incoming members, especially the four Greens and the never-say-die returning Hon Robin Chapple. In the weeks since the election I have been handing over a wealth of material to this awe-inspiring team. I look forward to listening to their inaugural speeches. It is with great sadness that I make my valedictory speech at this close of term. However, as I have packed up my office I have been reminded of the colossal privilege to serve as a Greens member of Parliament. The Greens campaigned well in all the regions in the election and we continued to increase our vote, even in the Agricultural Region under the leadership of wheat and sheep farmer Ian James. I look forward to seeing him in the Parliament one day soon. In the South Metropolitan Region there are three new members in the lower house who relied on second preferences from Greens voters to claim their seats. The government should well remember this. No doubt the members for Bicton, Jandakot and Southern River will remember. I guess they have to respect the Greens' interests, because I ain't going to be here!

I want to thank the south metropolitan candidates who campaigned so well. I loved the team: Dorinda Cox; Thor Kerr; Mark Brogan; Louise Dickmann; Martin Spencer; Ryan Quinn; Jody Freeman; Shannon Hewitt, who is here tonight; Toni Pkos-Sallie, who I hope made it tonight; Jordan Steele-John; and James Mumme. I also thank the team that supported them: Pete Best, Luke Edmonds and Kate Davis, and Liam Carter, my campaign manager. Look out for him; he is an awesome dude. He is really on the up and coming. Thank you, Liam. I would also like to thank the south metropolitan Greens in Robert Delves, Kim Dravnieks, Sunny Miller, Dawn Jecks, Christine Cunningham and Scott Ryan, all of whom have been my comrades and supporters over the years and who I hope will pick me up off the floor once I depart this place and give me something useful to do with my life. I also thank The Greens co-conveners and election campaign committee, the fundraisers, the media team and the policy group. I cannot name them all, but hopefully some of my colleagues can name them as they come in. I want to thank them all. It has been my absolute pleasure to be a Green in Parliament and to carry that mantle on behalf of all of them. We may never pass this way again.

My most important role—drink water—will now be to care for my partner who is being treated for metastatic breast cancer. She says an unwelcome visitor has taken a permanent place in our lives. I look forward to sharing sunsets and pottering around at home on the weekends. Sarah and I were married late last year—it is a bit too quiet—because we do not have the right to marry here. In 2012 I introduced a bill that would have established same-sex marriage in WA by amending state laws including the Family Court Act and the Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act. Since 2004 we have waited politely for the Australian Parliament to pass marriage equality laws. It is incredible that the Australian government is still baulking at making this long overdue reform. We could have it tomorrow in WA if the McGowan government would simply support my bill. That is it—no more conversation: equality. Be brave for marriage equality. Your constituents are asking you for equal rights. It is not hard. I have drafted the bill. I did not personally do it; I had parliamentary counsel do it, so it should be good. Please do that for me and for my partner and for everyone else who just wants equality. It is not a lot to ask. It is 2017. Again, it is long past time.

I think I may have skipped a page and did not mention a couple of really important people: Arran Morton, who has been in my office for the last year and who has brought life, warmth and true gentleness into our office. It has been a pleasure to have you in the office. I want to thank you particularly for your work organising Pride at Parliament. Arran trusted that we would win the election, so she left her career and came into politics. I really hope that she finds her feet in a new exciting challenge and continues to blossom in new skills. It is been great to have her in the team.

I should have mentioned Eloise Dortch when I talked at length about the shark cull. She has also been a tireless worker in my office. The team that I have now is like family, and I will really miss them. I cannot say it enough: it has just been very lovely. We have all gone through tough times together and I appreciate that you were there for me to not only make sure that I did my job well, but also to keep me human, reminding me that sometimes I had to have a break and spend time with Sarah. I really appreciate the team that I have had and how they have supported me. I see Kyle in the gallery. I appreciate you, too, Kyle. It has been great to be in your life these last five years. It is great to see you in the gallery. I hope that you get an opportunity one day to be down here. Hopefully, by then we would already have marriage equality and we could be looking after mature trees and all those things. I will do a lot of that work for you. Whether you have been a friend or a colleague or just someone who I have encountered in my office and who we have been able to help, I want you to know you have played a great role in my life and helped me to become a fuller human being and given me an opportunity to be compassionate, to be understanding of difference, to learn new things and to respect people even if they have a different way of thinking and a different value system to me. I think that is such a great opportunity. I can hear my father telling me that that is a really important skill to have in life and it is a good opportunity to have it as a member of Parliament and as a public servant.

I could not have done this job without Hon Robin Chapple by my side. He has been such a lovely man to work with. He has been a friend to me. He has been my dinner companion when I have been grumpy. He has been very, very kind to me as I have navigated these waters. I know that being successful in Parliament relies upon having a good buddy, and Robin has been that to me. I now bestow that gift upon my Greens colleagues. He can now look after them and make sure that they navigate these waters well.

In concluding my remarks, Mr President, it is been a journey that has been rewarding for me. I feel sad going, but I have every faith that there is something on the horizon and there is a reason for this change in my career path. I will find a way to use the skills and knowledge that I have built up for the good of Western Australians. Hopefully, I will continue to enjoy doing it, and, maybe, I will have a little bit more sleep. That would be really good. I will hopefully find some way to repay the citizens of Western Australia for the faith that they have put in me and the tremendous opportunity that they have given me to represent them in this place.

[Applause.]

The PRESIDENT: I indicate that the next speech will be an inaugural speech and I request that everyone in the chamber and gallery respect that situation and convey the usual courtesies.

HON ELISE IRWIN (North Metropolitan) [8.45pm]: I thank the President for this opportunity to address the members of this place. It gives me great pleasure to speak with members tonight. I would like to congratulate members opposite on their success in the recent state election. I am sure that they are looking forward to welcoming their colleagues on 22 May, which is also the date that my short tenure will end.

I am very fortunate to be here filling the casual vacancy that was created in the North Metropolitan Region when my Liberal colleague Hon Peter Katsambanis resigned and subsequently won the seat of Hillarys to continue representing the people of Western Australia in the other place. It is a vagary of our political system that affords me this short but very sweet opportunity. I wish Hon Peter Katsambanis all the best and I am sure that he will continue to represent the people of Hillarys in the same manner that he has represented the whole of the North Metropolitan Region, alongside Hon Peter Collier, Hon Michael Mischin and Hon Liz Behjat. Of course, I will not be the only member leaving this place on 21 May. I recognise all members for the contributions they have made during their service to our great state and I wish all members leaving the very best in their next chapters, including Mr President.

Members may know me as a policy advisor for the previous government, a small business owner, a surf lifesaver, a community volunteer and a Liberal Party member, or as a friend, wife and mother. I grew up in a close-knit working class family. Like others in this place, I am a fifth generation Australian. My forebears on both sides immigrated to South Australia from the United Kingdom as free settlers with the first fleets. My parents' background was farming in the mid north of South Australia before migrating to WA in 1956 and farming around the south west. I say migrating because my older sister, who was about eight years old at the time, thought that Western Australians must speak another language, because it seemed so far from where she had spent her early years in the Clare Valley. That is how people in the east think of Western Australians as well—over there in the west.

Dad returned from World War II, having served in Borneo and New Guinea, to his parents' property at Farrell's Flat with his two brothers. After having two sons of his own, he and mum were looking for a new start and heard of land on offer for returned servicemen in WA, so mum and dad boarded the train in Port Pirie and started the trek to WA with their three young children and all their belongings strapped onto a 1952 Holden FX coupe ute. They disembarked in Kalgoorlie two days later, just on sunset. My mother's very proper South Australian Methodist upbringing had not prepared her for Kalgoorlie at night in the 1950s. Needless to say, their stay there did not last too long. Dad's experiences serving in the army served him well in this new frontier. He had purchased acreage at Hillman, near Darkan. He and mum and my brothers and sister had the back-breaking job of clearing the farm completely of bush by hand before they could start the real job of farming.

My story starts about 10 years after all that. I was born in Subiaco, after mum and dad decided to leave the farm and come to Perth, in 1966. My three siblings were all in high school or working by that stage and I think it was a bit of a shock to have a baby around the house again.

My memories of my childhood are full of dad working in his shed and turning our entire backyard into a veggie patch. Mum bottled and preserved madly to keep up with produce that just kept coming. You can take the farmer off the land but never take away the will to keep producing. My parents grew up in the Depression era and were ever mindful of wastage, not running up debts and—heaven forbid!—buying anything on credit. However, dad also brought home some demons from the war. He never spoke of his experiences to our mother or us kids but he would never commemorate Anzac Day by going to the march. That was a day he would go to the pub and not come home until we were all in bed. Mum knew better than us what dad was going through and it was a frustration of their marriage that he would not talk about what he had seen or done during that terrible time. I speak of this now because it is topical. We are hearing more in the media about what our veterans suffer and the suicide rates are truly shocking.

I acknowledge my very dear friend Dr Lisa Wood, who is here tonight with her husband and our friend Rod, and her recent work with the federal government on researching the effects of depression on our Defence Force personnel. I hope that the recent funding announcements will go some way to assisting them through their dark days. On that note, I also acknowledge my good friend Wendy Kehoe, who is here tonight, and her willingness to talk of her own and her colleagues' experiences in our modern-day army.

I remember it used to cost mum \$2 to fill up the EH Holden she drove, and dad sitting out on the verandah in the summer with Johnny Cash playing on the record player. I grew up with a freedom that I think some of our children lack. We rode our bikes to school or walked. We all wore school uniform and if children were naughty, they were dealt with quickly, no questions asked. Our parents always backed up the teacher. We respected our teachers and loved our parents. Summer holidays were spent with friends in the street, under the lawn sprinklers or riding bikes. Dinner was eaten at the dining room table with the family. The television was turned off. We sat

together and talked about our day. Invariably, mum would turn the conversation to current affairs. She loved nothing better than a good debate on what was going on in the world. Mum and dad were staunch, dyed-in-the-wool Liberals but one of my brothers leant a little to the left, so some pretty lively discussions would erupt on occasion. Both my parents worked full time. I was expected to be resilient, resourceful and independent. I was the original latchkey kid but, of course, they had not come up with that label in those days. Parents just did what they had to do and we all helped where we could. Growing up in a family where hard work and a can-do attitude was expected and celebrated has had a great influence on how I have conducted my life and how I have raised my children.

When I met my husband, Mark, he introduced me to surf lifesaving. His passion was and still is Scarborough Surf Life Saving Club. I learnt fairly quickly that there was no way to beat it, so I had to join too. Little did I know what a great part the club would play in my life and the life of our family. Some club members are here tonight supporting me and I thank them for their friendship over many years, especially Nick and Kathy Stewart, who have been with us through the good and the more challenging times. I cannot imagine what not being part of this great organisation would be like. It has taught us all the value of community service. What we have put in has been repaid tenfold in the skills we have learnt, the friendships created and the sense of belonging we all hold dear. It has given our family a core sense of purpose within our community. I was honoured to be president of Scarborough Surf Life Saving Club for four years after holding various committee positions for the previous 10 years. Amongst those positions, I am most proud that I coached junior lifesavers for nine years in their required qualifications. I was also on the Australian Surf Life Saving Championships committee for four years. I liaised with national, state and local bodies and corporations to negotiate the successful staging of the Australian championships at Scarborough in 2007, 2008 and 2009, and again in 2014. This event has more competitors than the Commonwealth Games and it is held annually. The championships will return to Scarborough in 2018 and we are looking forward to showing off a revitalised Scarborough to the rest of Australia.

The Scarborough revitalisation project, initiated by the former Liberal government in association with the City of Stirling, is a massive achievement for both the electorate of Scarborough and the state of Western Australia. I was pleased to play a small part in that and to have been able to represent our club in the negotiations and early planning stages. Scarborough was languishing as a tired and decrepit beachfront precinct. The Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority created a vision for Scarborough that will see the area flourish and become a place of pride for all Western Australians. I will put on record here tonight that I am concerned about one aspect of the project that has since been scrapped by our new Minister for Transport: the extension of the egress points for the area. It is imperative that these road connections be implemented or an alternative be created for visitors and residents to be able to safely leave the area. Presently and for some time, the congestion of egress from the Scarborough foreshore area has been such that it can take over 45 minutes from exiting a car bay to reaching West Coast Highway either at Scarborough Beach Road or Brighton Road—a distance of approximately 200 to 500 metres. This is absurd for the general road user and dangerous for emergency vehicles. A small but vocal group that opposed the road extensions are claiming a victory of sorts at the minister's decision. Let us hope this does not result in an unwarranted fatality due to an ambulance not being able to leave the area with a priority 1 patient who our surf lifesaving volunteers have managed to rescue from drowning.

I take this opportunity to acknowledge Tanya Channell, Rob Mason, Tenneille and Glenn Ross, Dave Thompson, Bob Welch, Rod Dalziel, Tim Schifferli and David Irwin. They are all club members who I relied on for advice and guidance during my term as president of Scarborough surf club. Our children, Jack, Kate and Henry, all participate in surf sports and patrols. They assist with community events in water safety and have taken on leadership roles within the club and their respective schools. They are confident and hardworking peer group leaders. All three of our children have been involved in actively saving lives on our beach and we are very happy to have given them that opportunity. Our eldest son Jack has been recognised at state level for his contribution to youth development, of which we are very proud. The value of surf lifesaving in Western Australia as a community organisation cannot be overplayed. Last summer, 66 lives were saved by volunteer patrolling lifesavers on Scarborough Beach alone and almost 1 000 lives were saved statewide. Imagine if we were talking about 1 000 people drowning at our beaches last summer. Imagine the heartache and loss that would mean, not to mention the economic consequences for those families affected. Volunteers undertake to keep our beaches safe so that we can all enjoy our beautiful Western Australian summers. Surf lifesaving is an amazing organisation and one that I am proud to be associated with.

In 2010, an opportunity arose for me to work in a parliamentarian's office. I worked for Hon Liza Harvey, MLA, for seven years, firstly in her electorate office and then in her ministerial office as a policy adviser. I sincerely thank her for the opportunity and support she has given me. I truly believe that if people want to make a worthwhile contribution or be a part of shaping society for future generations, then they simply must become involved. I enjoyed my time in Liza's offices immensely and—wow!—what a learning curve. I had exposure to grassroots, local, state and federal issues. The most important of those was the exposure to a side of life I have

never, thankfully, personally experienced. Like most electorate offices, state housing is one of our biggest issues. This can be both extremely frustrating and wonderfully rewarding. We really get criticism from both sides—from home owners who are not happy that their taxes are paying welfare and from tenants who feel they have no avenues to escape the welfare cycle. I saw generational reliance on welfare, which was devastating. These issues need long-term strategies and analysis with a view to reducing the welfare burden on taxpayers while looking after our legitimately disadvantaged and disenfranchised people.

In the ministerial office, I also worked in the portfolio areas of small business, tourism, women's interests and training and workforce development. I acknowledge the wonderful and innovative work done by the departments I had the pleasure of working with, and the directors general and chief executive officers David Eaton, Stephanie Buckland, Jennifer Mathews and Ruth Shean. Being involved in the development of policy across these sectors was very personally fulfilling and worthwhile. Researching and implementing decisive change and influencing the way Western Australians conduct their daily lives was truly enriching and I feel very privileged to have been given that opportunity.

Currently, we are seeing a downturn in the Western Australian economy. This is a blow to our small business owners in particular. Small business owners are expected to be experts in all levels of their business including accounting, economics, law and industrial relations.

This often creates unforeseen costs and stress when they become entangled in the red tape that is associated with statutory bodies, local regulations and tenancy agreements. A small business operator may be forced to seek expensive specialist advice. It takes hard work, persistence, resilience, independence, resourcefulness and courage to stick with it. A small business owner is also at the mercy of outside forces; a government not aligned to small business will be disastrous. Over-regulatory government policy will spell the end for many small business owners. Payroll tax is a burden that prevents growth of business and promotes disincentive for employment. Every day we hear how small business operators are struggling with these issues. It may be with the Australian Taxation Office, creditors or landlords. With the introduction by the previous Liberal government, of the Small Business Commissioner, small business has a voice and a real avenue to seek help with legal issues. Small business now has a mechanism to effectively seek low-cost mediation through the Small Business Development Corporation, and I congratulate our former state Liberal government for assessing and meeting this need; however, this agency needs greater funding and acknowledgement of the important part it plays in this vital sector of our economy.

Tourism continues to be a vibrant component of the economy of Western Australia. It will continue to provide employment for our jobseekers, and enriching experiences for our visitors. It is a large and encompassing sector, with new and innovative businesses consistently coming online. It is an exciting area to be a part of.

As the construction phase of the mining sector has wound down, tourism and other areas of our economy such as agriculture will have an opportunity for growth. With guidance and support I believe these sectors will shine and offer our economy resilience into the future. Alongside these opportunities for sectors, we must also consider how some of our more marginalised participants will be able to take advantage of opportunities going forward. Research demonstrates that better business and community service outcomes can be achieved with a diverse workforce and a diverse leadership group. Unconscious bias has a devastating effect on career opportunities for women, people aged over 55, people with disability and jobseekers with English as a second language. An area I have worked in over the last four years has been women's interests, and, undoubtedly, supporting women's economic independence will not only improve choices for women, but also contribute to their financial security in later life. The gender pay gap in Western Australia is around 25 per cent. The World Economic Forum predicts it will take until 2133 to achieve global gender parity. I am not sure about my female colleagues, but I am not prepared to wait that long; I certainly do not think my daughter, Kate, should have to wait that long either.

Various factors contribute to the gap, including workforce segregation; women taking time out of work to attend to caring responsibilities; higher numbers of men than women in senior positions across almost all occupations; and gender-based discrimination, including unconscious bias in recruitment practices. Females have represented around 60 per cent of Australian university graduates for at least two decades, but make up about only three per cent of chief executive officer positions. Leaders across government, academia and industry have identified unconscious bias in recruitment and promotion processes as one of the factors that can affect women's engagement in the workforce. Inclusive organisational policies and practices are needed to facilitate positive changes in attitude and behaviour towards women's return to, and retention in, the workforce. Superannuation is the key to security in retirement. Recent research shows a woman's average balance of \$68 600 is just over 60 per cent of the average balance for men. Lower average salaries, taking time out of work for caring duties or working part time are some of the contributing factors to women having less superannuation than men. Consider that in the context of a single woman who has not earned enough money over her lifetime to pay off a mortgage but wishes to retire. What will her options be in retirement? Will she need to go on a five-year waiting list with the Department of Housing to be placed in an area not of her choosing? How will she support herself while on

that waiting list, and where will she live? Economic security is the benchmark to personal security, as well as an enabler to improve circumstances. Retirement options improve, health care improves, workforce participation choices improve, participation in society improves, as well as the ability to leave a bad relationship or living situation.

The former Liberal-led state government sponsored the Filling the Pool research project, which championed more women in leadership roles. Working with leading Western Australian employers, organisations and renowned academics, the Committee for Perth identified ways to address the gender imbalance at senior levels in Western Australian organisations. Lack of childcare options and gender bias were both identified as disablers to women seeking to improve their career options. Access to child care is fundamental to women's increased workforce participation and attainment of leadership roles. Quality child care also impacts positively on children's early development. For some parents, child care located close to work best suits their needs. For other parents, child care close to home or transport links works best. To better meet these needs, opportunities to locate more childcare centres along our rail and road corridors is imperative. Readily accessible information about childcare locations, availability and quality still remains a challenge for many parents. More work will be required to market options to parents and to stay abreast of changing requirements as well as eliminating red tape where possible.

Finally, I would like to touch on training and workforce development simply to say that if the vocational education and training area does not continue to develop as it has, we are doing our community a disservice, especially our school leavers and those who may seek an alternative to university entrance. I know from personal experience with my own children that an academic career does not suit everyone, and the options a vocational education offers some in our community can instil a passion for learning that no schoolroom ever will. My son Henry is testament to that. The smile on his face when he gets home from work every day is in stark contrast to the moody and tired teenager he was after a school day.

In conclusion, Mr President, I thank all the members and parliamentary staff, especially yourself; our Whip, Hon Alyssa Hayden; and Hon Liz Behjat. You have all made me feel very welcome for my short but sweet stay here in this place and I wish you all well. I understand the importance of our system of government that has afforded me this privilege and I hope to continue serving the community of the North Metropolitan Region in some other capacity when my tenure is complete. I thank my parents Maxine and Don l'Anson, who unfortunately are no longer with us but whom I think of often, as well as my sister, Leonie, and brothers, Chris and Steven, and all our extended family of in-laws and outlaws. I especially thank my husband Mark and children, Jack, Kate and Henry—without your support and love I would not be here today.

[Applause.]

HON LAINE McDONALD (North Metropolitan) [9.07 pm]: I thank the house for its indulgence and I recognise the traditional owners of the land on which we meet. I also acknowledge their elders, past, present and emerging. As I rise to make my valedictory speech, I do so with some sense of melancholy, given that my tenure in this place has been fairly brief. However, this sadness is tempered with an overriding sense of pride. I am proud to have represented the people of the North Metropolitan Region and I am honoured to be here tonight as a parliamentary member of the McGowan Labor government, a government that has a progressive, innovative and forward-thinking agenda; a government that will put the needs of people front and centre and that will be grounded in the values of fairness, equality and compassion; a government that will be confronted with a huge set of challenges given the state of Western Australia's finances, but that can be trusted to carry on its business in an economically responsible and sensible way; a government that will focus on job creation and that will diversify and innovate in order to help insulate the economy from mining industry shocks; a government that will not sell off major public assets such as Western Power and that will be accountable, honest and transparent.

Though my tenure in this place has been only about eight months in length, it certainly has been a short and intense journey. Being a member of Parliament is a unique and sometimes strange position, and each day has been filled with eclectic duties and varied tasks. From walking the hallowed halls of Parliament, to doorknocking in the blistering heat, to attending community morning teas, to meeting with international and state dignitaries, each and every day as a member of Parliament has been challenging, rewarding and diverse. I have had the great pleasure of welcoming our newest citizens to this country by speaking at numerous citizenship ceremonies. I have been delighted to meet so many bright students, parents and teachers by attending school graduations, Anzac Day ceremonies, and openings. I have met with constituents and attended community events to celebrate cultural festivals and to lend my support to various causes.

In my time as a member of Parliament, I have served as a member of the Standing Committee on Uniform Legislation and Statutes Review. I have asked many questions of the previous government and have participated in debate. Of course, there are many reforms and objectives I would have liked to have achieved as a member of

Parliament, but have failed to do so whilst being in opposition. The reality is that many of these reforms can only practically be achieved whilst in government. That is why I am proud of the role I played in supporting the 2017 Western Australian Labor state election campaign, particularly in the northern suburbs seats. I would especially like to recognise the newly elected members in these seats and congratulate the member for Joondalup, Emily Hamilton, who joins us in the chamber; the member for Burns Beach, Mark Folkard; the member for Wanneroo, Sabine Winton; and the member for Kingsley, Jessica Stojkovski. I would also like to congratulate the member for Balcatta, David Michael, and my good friend and former City of Vincent colleague, John Carey, as the new and funky member for Perth!

Working alongside each of these impressive people during the campaign, I saw at first-hand their dedication to their respective communities and their unwavering ability to work hard and for long hours under immense pressure. It was also humbling to see the diverse range of skill sets each of them bring, with varied backgrounds ranging from teaching, policing, local government, community work and town planning.

Over the past few months I have also had the immense pleasure of working with a member for North Metropolitan Region, Hon Martin Pritchard. I thank him for his kindness and generosity. Martin is a true gentleman, and I wish him the very best in his new role as government Whip.

I also congratulate the incoming member for North Metropolitan Region, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. Undoubtedly, her experience, energy and ability to get things done will be an asset to the people of the North Metropolitan Region.

In preparing for this valedictory speech tonight, I took the time to read over my inaugural speech for inspiration and for quiet reflection on the expectations and goals I had coming into this role; this appears to be the customary practice. I spoke on many issues in my inaugural speech. I acknowledge my predecessor, Hon Ken Travers, and pledged to take up the mantle he left by being a champion of job creation in the northern corridor and for the need for a Joondalup train line extension to Yanchep. Whilst I have been driving against traffic from Perth to my electorate office in Joondalup each day, I have seen across the lanes of the freeway the clogged traffic, at a gruelling standstill, of people commuting from the northern suburbs.

Most pleasingly, this government has already made positive announcements with regard to job-creating, congestion-busting projects in the northern suburbs. This government has announced a \$186 million investment in four northern suburb road projects to create jobs and ease congestion. These four projects will help reduce traffic around Wanneroo Road and the Mitchell Freeway, creating more than a thousand jobs in the process. Federal funding for Metronet has also been secured, with \$1.2 billion allocated to its delivery, including the extension of the Joondalup train line to Yanchep.

In my inaugural speech, I also recognised the importance of having well-resourced state schools to ensure that all children have the opportunity to receive a quality education, regardless of their background or family's wealth. Investment in our schools, including in the areas of innovation and new technologies, is vital to prepare our kids for the jobs of the future. Investment in education was central to Labor's election campaign. I am so proud that this government will return education assistants into classrooms, as well as increase the number of Aboriginal and Islander education specialists. This government will build a new academically selective school in Perth city in a centrally located education precinct so that all students will be able to access the school easily no matter where they live. I am also particularly proud of the election commitments made by Labor to invest in schools in the North Metropolitan Region. That includes Ocean Reef Senior High School, Balga Secondary College, Wanneroo Secondary College and Balcatta Senior High School, as well as the new primary schools that this government will be building.

Given my background as an asbestos litigation lawyer, in my inaugural speech I took the time to speak at length about the desperate need for asbestos compensation law reform in Western Australia. Asbestos law reform is needed to assist people suffering from asbestos-related diseases or dying from mesothelioma to access compensation fairly. I have spoken and written about the need for asbestos compensation law reform many times both in this place and in the wider community, and I will continue to do so until justice is achieved. At a minimum, legislative reform is needed in two important areas of law—provisional damages, and *Sullivan v Gordon*-type damages. Regrettably, I was unable to achieve this law reform during my short time in the previous Parliament, but I am most optimistic that this reform will be an initiative of the Labor government in the future.

In my inaugural speech, like so many women before me, I spoke about the gender pay gap and the uneven division of unpaid labour in the home. I championed the need for greater access to flexible working options, for greater access to paid maternity leave, including superannuation, and for greater access to affordable child care, including after school and vacation care. We still have a long way to go in this regard.

Just recently, it was announced that only 8.7 per cent of the directors on WA ASX 100 boards are women. Given that the Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act was passed more than three decades ago, this is truly disappointing. However, I am heartened that this government has announced that it will lead by example and ensure that 50 per cent of members on government boards are women.

Among all of the important issues I raised in my inaugural speech, I also raised the need for Parliament to be more family friendly, and in particular the need to allow members of Parliament to breastfeed their babies in the chamber. This issue was of particular importance to me given the unique circumstances I found myself in when I entered Parliament. I was on maternity leave and the full-time primary carer of my then five-month-old daughter, Matilda, when I found out that I would be entering state Parliament to fill a casual vacancy. At the time, I was breastfeeding my baby exclusively and she was 100 per cent reliant on breast milk as her food source. Being a mother entering Parliament, with a partner who also worked full time, presented a particular set of challenges. That included the need to arrange child care, the need for facilities to express and store milk, the need to have access to sterilising and expressing equipment, and options to breast and bottle feed. I therefore made the call for the Western Australian Parliament to modernise its standing orders to allow nursing parents to bring their infants into the chamber. Parliaments in other jurisdictions in Australia have amended their standing orders to provide for the admission to the floor of the house of an infant being cared for by a member. These are the federal Parliament and the Parliaments of New South Wales, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory, just to name a few. Other jurisdictions have also gone further to allow for proxy voting and increased facilities for nursing parents. Therefore, to my mind, the suggestion to amend our standing orders was in no way revolutionary or controversial given other Parliaments, both in Australia and around the world, have done so already. Little did I realise—perhaps showing some naivety and newness to life as an MP—that I would wake up the morning after my inaugural speech to a barrage of missed calls and a flurry of interest from the media. The topic of breastfeeding in Parliament was suddenly again the subject of print, radio and TV media interest. I thank Hon Amber-Jade Sanderson and Rita Saffioti for their support on this issue, who, of course, have had to navigate the same challenges of balancing the duties of an MP with having young children. Whilst unfortunately family-friendly parliamentary reforms have not yet been enacted, with the swearing in of many newly elected members with young children and babies, I hope that they will be agitators of this small but important and symbolic change.

I turn now to the future. Whilst I will serve as a member of this government for only a few more days, I am very proud of what it has achieved and what it will achieve in the future. With such a decisive election win comes the weight of high expectations from the community. The Western Australian people have put their trust in a Labor government and quite rightly deserve that these expectations be strived for, met and surpassed. The challenges this new government will face over the next four years will undoubtedly be immense given the dire economic situation that it has inherited. Nevertheless, the achievements of this government have already been notable, which is remarkable given the election was held only 66 days ago.

This government has prevented the sale of Western Power. The sale of Western Power was a central policy that was put to the Western Australian people during the election campaign, and a resounding mandate was achieved to keep this monopoly state asset in public hands. By retaining Western Power, we have the opportunity to prevent the reduction of quality of services and undue increases in costs to the consumer. By keeping Western Power in public hands, new policies and technologies can be explored to ensure outcomes for the greater public good.

This government has successfully secured federal funding and transferred \$2.3 billion in funds from the Perth Freight Link to the visionary Metronet project and other infrastructure projects. During the election, commentators and detractors said that it could not be done. However, the recent announcement means more jobs for Western Australians and less congestion on our roads. It means that Western Australia will have transport infrastructure to meet future needs and that people will spend more time with their families and less time in cars. A central tenet of the Metronet project will be the focus on local job creation by ensuring the local manufacture of carriages. By halting Roe 8, attention can now be turned to the rehabilitation and recovery of the Beelihar wetlands.

Protection of the environment should be front and centre of any government that cares about preserving our lands, air and water for generations to come. I am hopeful that new and innovative solutions can be found for protecting our pristine environment in Western Australia, such as looking to renewable energy sources, to ban or minimise plastic bag usage and to incentivise recycling schemes.

A key Labor value is access to universal health care and this government has signalled loudly and clearly that it will put patients first. It will build more urgent care clinics to relieve pressure on emergency departments and provide timely and quality health care closer to home. It will build medihotels to support patients who have been discharged from hospital but are still recovering and require further support. This will take pressure off our

public hospitals and allow patients to be treated quicker. This government will expand mental health services and rehabilitation facilities. In the north metropolitan region it will upgrade and expand the Joondalup Health Campus and address issues with the Perth Children's Hospital to ensure that it can be opened safely.

By freezing TAFE fees, this government will support young people and those wanting to undertake training. This will allow more Western Australians to develop necessary skills to be job-ready and it will grow and diversify our state's economy. Shockingly, and as pointed out by Hon Bill Leadbetter, the previous Liberal government increased TAFE fees by up to 510 per cent. This has meant TAFE has become out of reach for many young and struggling Western Australians. The cost of this fee freeze is expected to be paid for by a foreign buyers surcharge. The introduction of this surcharge will bring Western Australia in line with measures applied successfully in Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria.

Western Australia's first female Director of Public Prosecutions has been appointed and this government has created WA's first Minister for Prevention of Family and Domestic Violence.

Finally, and perhaps most pertinently relevant to being able to achieve each of these commitments, this government has openly and transparently publicised the reality of the state's current finances. The inequity in Western Australia's GST share is a national disgrace. In a recent determination by the Commonwealth Grants Commission, Western Australia currently stands to get only 34c for every GST dollar. This is the lowest of all states. To highlight this unfairness, Queensland's population is less than double WA's, yet it will receive around six times as much GST revenue. Advocating on behalf of Western Australia's interest in respect to its GST share will continue to be an important task for this government in the coming months and years.

With the house's indulgence, I turn now to some thankyou's. I thank the President of the Legislative Council, parliamentary staff and my parliamentary colleagues on all sides of this place for their professionalism, warmth and good humour. In particular I thank Hon Samantha Rowe with whom I shared an office, and Hon Sue Ellery for her mentorship and guidance. I also congratulate Sue for being the first ever female leader of the Legislative Council.

Thank you to my electorate office staff, both past and present, Prue, Alex and, more recently, Kayleigh. I also thank Emily Hamilton who worked in my office for a brief period and congratulate her again as the new member for Joondalup. It has been a pleasure to work with such confident, capable and intelligent women in what we fondly refer to as the "Joondy" office. You all have bright futures ahead.

I thank WA Labor, especially Patrick Gorman and Lenda Oshalem, for their ongoing guidance, sanity and willingness to answer my phone calls at all times of the day. Their wise counsel has been truly appreciated.

Finally, I thank my family for their support over the past eight months. I thank them for encouraging me with gusto to take up this position and for providing me with the emotional and practical support to enable me to do so. To my mum, Ileana and Katie, thank you for helping to looking after Matilda, and also all staff at her day care who provide her with love, nourishment and care. I want, of course, to make special mention of my partner, Patrick, and daughter, Matilda. They make every single day a joy and I am thankful for our small family. Patrick could not be here this evening because he is at home taking care of Matilda. However, I hope Matilda is safely tucked away in bed and I am sure Patrick is watching online. Patrick, thank you for your kindness, love and encouragement to just say yes to opportunities that arise, and Matilda. Since entering Parliament, Matilda has grown from a baby to a resourceful, resilient and clever toddler with a wicked sense of humour. Matilda's smile and confident swagger when she enters a room lights up my life and I burst with pride seeing her development and growth each day. Matilda will be too young to remember my time as a member of the thirty-ninth Parliament, but I hope one day she will read *Hansard* and realise how much her mum cherishes and adores her.

My parliamentary position will soon come to an end but many things will remain unchanged. I will continue to be an advocate for those in need and champion justice through my role as a lawyer. I will continue to be an active member of my local community and of the Labor Party. As I take my seat tonight knowing that there are only a few short days left in my term as a member for North Metropolitan Region, I do so with a sense of optimism and hope for the future. I do so knowing that I have fulfilled my twin goals of representing the people of the North Metropolitan Region to the best of my ability and having taken a seat in the historic McGowan Labor government.

[Applause.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Hon Sue Ellery (Leader of the House)**.