

JIM THOMSON – NEW INVENTORS 2010 PEOPLE’S CHOICE SERIES AWARD

Statement

HON HELEN BULLOCK (Mining and Pastoral) [9.57 pm]: First of all I would like to thank Hon Ed Dermer for clearing my name!

Secondly, I rise tonight to congratulate Jim Thomson, a prominent resident of Kalgoorlie–Boulder, on winning the New Inventors 2010 People’s Choice Series Award for his solar and wind power pack especially designed for remote locations. The outback power pack is a solar and wind power system the size of a shipping container that can be delivered by truck to a site ready to go. The container holds conversion technology and can produce enough energy to power a house. This makes it suitable for remote areas with plenty of sunshine and wind but no energy infrastructure. Jim has been a tireless promoter of clean energy. For the past 11 years he has run an energy business in Kalgoorlie–Boulder. He created this power pack because he wanted to make it cheaper and easier for people to choose renewable energy.

After watching the documentary *An Inconvenient Truth*, Jim’s first move was to spread the reach of Mr Al Gore’s film. *An Inconvenient Truth* was not slated for screening in Kalgoorlie, so Jim personally underwrote the expense of hiring a cinema to bring the film to the mining town. With no guarantee that he would recover his costs, he made arrangements to screen the film only to find that the one-off event was so well received and well attended that he had to arrange a second screening! By 2007, Jim was personally trained by Mr Gore to become a Climate Project presenter with Climate Project Australia, which is Al Gore’s climate change leadership program with the Australian Conservation Foundation. Jim’s chief motivation, as he said, was his desire to have the opportunity to raise the level of awareness about the impact of climate change and the need for us to take individual responsibility.

The Kalgoorlie–Boulder Chamber of Commerce and Industry has asked Jim to implement a business model to lower the carbon footprint of 453 businesses in the Goldfields. Jim’s campaign, in his words, is about giving people the tools so that they can start taking action straightaway at a personal, company or society level. He also said that his dream is to see society shift away from having to have the latest plasma TV to putting the eight grand that they spent on their home theatre system into something that will make their world a better place for generations to come.

In his working life, Jim is already behind efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through his company, Outback Energy Supply. The company is an ardent advocate of solar and wind power and heavily promotes renewable energy in the Goldfields. The Outback Power Pack is Jim’s contribution in the fight against climate change. To quote Jim —

The greatest job satisfaction I get out of this is driving into a station where they have a dirty old diesel generator banging away ... and I drive out and they’ve got 24-hour power and its silent and it’s clean. It’s just too good.

I wholeheartedly congratulate Jim for his personal contribution in the fight against climate change. He is an example to us all of what can be achieved if we follow our convictions.