

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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**APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2019–20) BILL 2019**  
**APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2019–20) BILL 2019**

*Declaration as Urgent*

On motion by **Mr B.S. Wyatt (Treasurer)**, resolved —

That in accordance with standing order 168(2), the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 be considered urgent bills.

*Cognate Debate*

Leave granted for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 to be considered cognately, and for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 to be the principal bill.

*Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from 9 May.

**MR A. KRSTICEVIC (Carine)** [3.11 pm]: On behalf of the constituents of Carine, it gives me great pleasure to stand and say a few words on the 2019–20 budget. Before I start, I want to raise a very serious matter before the house. In “Inside Cover” on 10 May 2019, an issue was raised about the members for Cannington and Balcatta, supposedly, deliberately trying to block the camera so that the member for Scarborough could not be recorded on the parliamentary record. I know that people play dirty tricks in Parliament, but, to be honest, it is an absolute disgrace to deny someone the right to speak in Parliament.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** It is disappointing to see the member for Southern River and others condone that behaviour. It was totally inappropriate for those two gentlemen to block the view of the camera while the member for Scarborough was trying to give a speech in Parliament. I hope that that behaviour does not happen in future. As we saw today, the member for West Swan looked at and spoke to the camera and nobody blocked it. If we did the same thing as the members for Cannington and Balcatta did, it would be an absolute disgrace. I just put that on the record. Hopefully, the Speaker will deal with that issue.

I note that during question time, the Premier indicated in answer to questions about the federal election on Saturday and Bill Shorten’s policies that he had no interest in those policies. Obviously, we know that the Premier is front and centre of Bill Shorten’s campaign. He is on Bill’s bus—the “Bill” we cannot afford. He is promoting Bill Shorten and the federal Labor Party, yet he does not know what his policies are, what he stands for or what he is campaigning side by side with Bill Shorten on. That is a bit of a concern for me. Of course, one can only assume that the Premier did not tell Bill Shorten the result of the Darling Range election and the fact that having the Premier front and centre will not help him because the Premier is not that popular. As members can see from today’s Newspann, since the Premier has been involved, the approval ratings in WA federal electorates have improved from 46 per cent for the Liberal–National government to 54 per cent for the ALP to 52 per cent for the Liberal–National government to 48 per cent for the ALP. I encourage the Premier to keep doing whatever he is doing to promote Bill Shorten and to get his face out there as much as he can and try to increase the lead for the Liberals and Nationals in Western Australia.

**Ms J.J. Shaw** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Swan Hills!

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** Madam Acting Speaker, I am not taking interjections.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, members!

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** We know that budgets are predicated on a whole lot of assumptions, and a lot of those assumptions come from federal government settings and policies, which, in a lot of cases, have an impact on what is happening in this state. We know that this budget that has been put together by the Treasurer is predicated on the settings in the Morrison government’s budget and the direction that he has set for Western Australia. One knows that Bill Shorten’s settings are going in a completely different direction; they will destroy the lives of many people in Western Australia and have a huge impact on this budget, which, in a lot of cases, cannot be predicated on facts that can be substantiated. There are lots of assumptions, a lot of smoke and mirrors, and, as we know from previous budgets delivered by this government, a huge number of backflips. We do not know which one of the line items in this budget the government will backflip on. We know that things have not been included in the budget and have been pushed out beyond the forward estimates. We know that the operating costs for Metronet, including for

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the Ellenbrook rail line and a range of other things, have not been included. There are a lot of concerns and issues. We also know that this government has a tendency to talk up all the projects of the previous government when it is cutting the ribbon. When it is cutting the ribbon, it says, "What a magnificent project. What a fantastic initiative we are delivering", but at the same time it criticises us for doing what we did to make sure that we built Western Australia into a great state that can support the people of Western Australia. The most recent example of that was when the Premier and the Minister for Transport announced that Chevron and Brookfield had signed a contract to build a massive building that will create 1 000 jobs at Elizabeth Quay. Elizabeth Quay would not be there without the former Liberal–National government. The previous government had no support for Elizabeth Quay and for the magic that it has brought to the city. It has been a magnificent investment by this state that has paid off in spades. There is no doubt about that.

When I listened to the Treasurer give his budget speech, he referred a lot to the previous government. It was all about the Liberal–National government. It was not really about him, the work he has done and the future direction that he sees the state going in. He expended a lot of energy on us. One would think that more than two years after the last state election, he would be looking forward rather than backwards. He is very big on looking backwards. How far backwards does he want to look? Does he want to go back to the Brian Burke years, when the Premier was his apprentice and was under his stewardship? We know what happened then. One cannot always look at the past and make the same assumptions that one thinks are appropriate at the time.

I want to quickly look at the period when we were in government to lead us to the point that we are at today. We were elected in September 2008. What was going on then? Do members remember? There was a global financial crisis. The whole world was in turmoil. Australia was in turmoil. An article in *The Australian* of 16 December 2008 is headed "Mine exports slashed by \$30bn". There was a massive reduction in mine exports that crippled the markets and the economy. An article in *The Australian Financial Review* of 18 December states —

Faced with dwindling revenue due to falling commodity prices and exports, and a stagnant property market, the government is expected to forecast a budget deficit of nearly \$500 million ...

Another article on 19 December states —

State governments have suffered a \$3 billion budget reversal over the past few months as the global financial crisis hit ...

That created massive results. Tourism was destroyed at the time. Perth experienced a domestic tourism slump as the global financial crisis took a grip and businesses and holiday-makers reined in their spending. Obviously, members will remember the cashed-up bogans. They were deemed to be extinct on 21 December 2008 by *The Sunday Times*. Of course, the figures were really bad. On 29 December 2008, oil had an intraday high of \$148 a barrel, and at one stage went down to \$36 a barrel. The Australian share market fell by 44 per cent; it was the lowest it had been since 1876. Massive amounts were written off.

When we came into government, we had to start boosting Western Australia and ultimately ended up supporting Australia as well. A huge job needed to be done, and it was undertaken really well by the then government. By 24 June 2010, building and construction was an issue and that sector had major problems. Cranes were disappearing from the radar after the height of the boom. On 24 June, an article stated that there was a fierce competition by developers for government contracts such as Fiona Stanley Hospital, the Joondalup Health Campus and others. That was on 24 June 2010. By 26 October 2010, we had a massive shortfall. There was a construction boom. The Gorgon project, the Pluto project and other projects started to take shape so people were coming from overseas and interstate to fill the jobs. There were massive write-downs in state revenue. On 1 September 2012, there was another budget shock, because the tumbling iron ore price punched a \$1.5 billion hole in the state budget. By 18 June 2014, two years later, there was another massive shock in the iron ore price, and another \$1 billion was taken from the state's revenues. Members can see that from 2008 to 2014 the headwinds were moving in all sorts of different directions. As a government we had to make swift decisions to try to get us into this situation. We were unlike this Labor government, which is sitting on the wave of a boom in iron ore prices; a GST solution, which has finally come on board; and a federal election with massive infrastructure funds being provided to the state government from the federal government.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Member for Armadale!

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** It is amazing that the government shows no appreciation or recognition of where its success has come from. One thing it can be credited with is introducing a wages freeze policy, but beyond that it has been a lot of luck.

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**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** The wages policy aligns with what is going on nationally.

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** It does—exactly! Wages are falling everywhere and people are struggling to get jobs, so it falls into line with that issue. It is very important to understand that.

In the midyear review in December last year, the Treasurer was still saying that the state would have a \$674 million deficit for 2018–19. He could not see that the GST problem would be fixed, iron ore prices would go through the roof, or that the federal government would throw infrastructure money towards him so there would be a \$1.2 billion turnaround in the budget position when the budget was produced. It is amazing. Some of those things were so obvious that they should have been predicted by the Treasurer. Obviously, the iron ore price rise is a result of Vale's issues in Brazil. It is disappointing that that occurred, but we are benefiting from that by the iron ore price being what it is now.

Let us look at the actual situation in the budget papers. On page 4 of budget paper No 3 is the net operating balance. There are operating surpluses leading to a total of \$9.352 billion over the forward estimates. If members look at the total public sector net debt before the Australian Accounting Standards Board accounting changes, they will see a debt reduction of only \$677 million. Is that not amazing? The Premier has consistently said that the government would pay off the debt like a mortgage. If members were to knock on people's doors and ask them how their mortgages were going, they would say that they were not getting ahead, but were going backwards. I guarantee members that this budget is also going backwards. The figures are presented in such a way that not everything is presented honestly. Things are pushed into the out years and there are operating costs that have not been included. The sale of the TAB and Landgate and other issues will generate some benefits in the future. Members should look at these figures and ask themselves whether we have an operating surplus in 2018–19 of \$553 million. If they look at the bottom line they will see the cash surplus deficit position. We are behind by \$1.4 billion. We are not going forwards; we are going backwards by \$1.4 billion. There is an operating surplus, but a lot of things have not been included in that figure. In 2019–20 there is an operating deficit of \$248 million. The first operating cash surplus will not occur until 2020–21, which is, lo and behold, the year of the next state election. It will be \$954 million, followed by \$747 million and \$729 million.

It is disappointing because the Treasurer has a great opportunity to be more transparent and honest with the people of Western Australia about the future and our actual position. The headwinds are there and there are blockers in the way. The people of Western Australia have a right to know about them. It is great to talk things up. We need to do that and to be positive, but we also need to be honest and truthful with the people of Western Australia, so they can put themselves in the best possible position to succeed, whatever may happen after Saturday.

Last week, members talked about the Premier giving financial advice to people a number of months ago. He told people to buy a property and invest in real estate because it would be the best thing they ever did. Of course, since the Premier spruiked it, property and real estate has gone backwards. People have negative equity and there are issues and concerns at many levels. The concern is not what is in the budget, but what has been left out, pushed to the out years, or not included. As I said before, we know that the King Edward Memorial Hospital, Joondalup Health Campus, the Ellenbrook rail line capital funding and the Metronet operating costs have been pushed out.

Who is the big loser? It is the people of Western Australia. Another two per cent will be added to their fees and charges at a time when they can least afford it! I looked at the story in *The West Australian* on 12 April 2019 titled "Why Premier must meet The Invisibles". It is about homeless people in the seat of Rockingham, who have yet to meet the Premier of Western Australia, who has been the member for Rockingham for over 20 years. There is a homeless village—a suburb almost—and they need his help as the local member. I cannot imagine a local member of Parliament not going to see people who are suffering and struggling in their electorate and need their help. The Premier of Western Australia has been called out and has people asking him to come and see them and to listen to their story, but he still has not done that. I challenge the Premier to go to the electorate of Rockingham—he knows where it is—and I am sure someone can show him where these people are if he does not know.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr A. KRSTICEVIC:** I think that is very important, but will the Premier do that? I doubt it. I do not think he cares about homeless people who are struggling. If members walk through the City of Perth on any night or morning they will see 30, 40 or 50 people sleeping in the street and in front of the shopping centres. I am sure we have all seen them in front of David Jones and Myers. We are told that we need to herald and applaud this budget, but all these people are sleeping on the streets, homeless. What will this budget do for them? What will it offer them and how will it help them get off the streets? I will tell members how—not at all! People are great at having meetings, strategising and coming up with policies about the homeless, but delivery on the ground is

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not happening. I have talked to a couple of service providers and people who are in that space. They want the government to step up and take some real action rather than just have summits and meetings. There have been plenty of those. I am sure it would take only a fraction of the \$9.3 billion surplus to help homeless people in Western Australia. They are the most vulnerable people, including victims of domestic violence, and so many young children are on the streets. For members in this Parliament to ignore that and walk over these people when they go to the city to go shopping—to walk past them as if they are not there or are even human—tells us how far this state and this Parliament has gone and how this budget does not help those people. That is a real disgrace. I hope that a minister—any minister, the Deputy Premier—will have some compassion for the homeless people who are suffering, whether it is with mental health issues, drug addiction or abuse in their homes. We hear stories about all the things that we are doing, but if we are doing all these things, why are so many people sleeping in the streets? It does not make sense. We are not doing enough. We are doing a lot of talking but not taking a lot of action. I recommend the Deputy Premier takes some of the surplus—do not worry about these figures; take some money out—to fix and help the homeless people of Western Australia. I can guarantee that the people of Western Australia would applaud the government for helping those people who are sleeping in the streets. When tourists come here and walk through our streets, they will not have to see all these homeless people and see the lack of compassion we have in this state for people suffering so badly. As I said, that is a very serious concern for me.

We know that the government is generally not serious about jobs for Western Australians. The government talks this up a lot and uses the right rhetoric, but there have been plenty of examples over the last few years of contracts going to overseas suppliers and firms. Obviously, the Western Australian Jobs Bill 2017 allows work to go to the eastern states or New Zealand. It is great for the government to say that it is going to do all these things, but its actions do not reflect its words. The Perth Stadium cutlery contract went to a French firm, the WA tourism contract was awarded to a Queensland company and the job to design and construct a frame to hold a 24-metre whale skeleton in the new Museum went to a Canadian company. I cannot believe that we cannot design a frame to hold a skeleton in Western Australia. That is unbelievable. With the number of fabrication firms in the southern suburbs, I could probably find someone in five minutes who would do that. They would probably be happy just to put their name on it and donate it. They would say, “Don’t worry about the \$553 000, I’m happy to donate it. Just put my name on it. It’s my contribution to the Museum and the people of Western Australia.”

I will touch base very quickly on some of the issues within my portfolio that I want to talk about. As members would be aware, the City of Perth inquiry has been going on for a long time. It is currently scheduled to be completed by January next year. It is interesting to note that the banking royal commission finished faster than the City of Perth inquiry will. It is amazing that it is taking so long. One can only assume that the inquiry has been starved of the resources required to do its job properly. Although, interestingly enough, looking at the 2019–20 budget papers, \$1.9 million is allocated to the City of Perth inquiry. I assume that is new money for the extension of the inquiry. If we look at 2018–19 in the 2019–20 budget, we see there is nothing there; it is blank. That is very strange because the 2018–19 budget allocated \$1.59 million for 2018–19 and, of course, there was \$250 000 for 2017–18. I do not know where that money has gone. It has just disappeared. It is not in the budget anymore. But then again, as I said, smoke and mirrors: the figures do not really mean what they say. They are in one minute and out the next. I look forward to the budget estimates process to try to find out: Was anyone paid in 2018–19? Were any costs incurred by the City of Perth inquiry? Supposedly they have all been working, unless they all took leave without pay for the whole year, and that is why the inquiry has been extended. I am sure that is not the case, but it would be interesting to see whether the minister can tell me why there are no funds in the estimated actual for 2018–19.

The minister would be aware that the local government sector is struggling. The lack of government support for the department is glaring. The funding and resourcing for the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries are not appropriate for the work that it is required to do for the reform process currently being undertaken, and people in the department are under stress. I would not be surprised if a number of vacant positions are sitting there that have not been filled for a while for the sake of the minister saving some money, or not being able to get the money from the Treasurer. As we know, local government is such an important area. Interestingly, a lot of things are brought to the minister’s attention either by myself through Parliament, through the media or through other avenues. I am surprised that the minister does not have his finger on the pulse to find out what is going on. Currently, there are issues at the Town of Port of Hedland that the minister needs to look into that have been brought to his attention. Again, issues at the Shire of Perenjori have been brought to the minister’s attention. I think I have mentioned it to him as well. There are some real concerns in the sector and if the minister does not step in early enough and offer the support required to those local governments, there will be some serious issues.

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Of course, a number of other inquiries are ongoing, which are under-resourced and not being supported. The inquiry into the City of Melville has been going since November 2017. Is the minister trying to set a world record or something? These examples reflect the department's lack of capacity. These are the inquiries we know about, but there are probably 100 inquiries going on that we do not know about that are being shuffled around, backwards and forwards, between part-time investigators and inspectors. Interestingly, when we ask the minister questions about inquiries, we have to be very careful with our words. Whether we ask about an "inspector" or an "investigator" determines which way the minister will answer our questions about resourcing issues or capacity. It is very, very interesting that that is the case.

I note that the budget appropriation for the Art Gallery of Western Australia has gone down. Less money is available for the Art Gallery. That is a concern. Members will remember that I raised in Parliament previously that the Auditor General looked at the conditions in which artworks were stored at the Art Gallery and identified that the Art Gallery of Western Australia's \$300 million collection is at risk of damage. We have \$300 million of artwork under stress because of a lack of storage, leaking cupboards, rain, dampness and other issues, and the budget allocation for the Art Gallery is not going up. In the budget papers there is no money for or reference to saving this artwork, and preserving the Western Australian and the Australian history attached to it. That is concerning. I will follow that up in the estimates process.

In the last financial year donations to the Art Gallery of Western Australia slumped by more than 70 per cent. Supposedly, there is a secret inquiry going on about amalgamating the Art Gallery, the WA Museum and the State Library of Western Australia. Of course, people in the sector are up in arms. An article in *The Australian* on 9 May 2019 referred to a secret inquiry exploring these options. Donors are prepared to walk away and not offer their support because they see this as a retrograde step by the minister to try to destroy what is going on there.

The Office of Multicultural Interests' community grants have not been increased. The community languages programs are stagnant. It does not matter which line item for agencies under my portfolios I look at, because nothing is growing; everything is staying as it is and there is no new revenue. With the consumer price index, we are actually going backwards. We are not even maintaining our current position.

The Chamber of Arts and Culture Western Australia issued a media release about the budget, saying how distressed it is about the low priority this government is giving to culture and the arts, and how it is hampering the future of the creative industries by not increasing funding, which is currently at its lowest point, at 0.64 per cent. That is an absolute travesty. Again, it indicates that the government is great at strategic direction, putting plans together and doing media releases, but it is not delivering anything on the ground. The contemporary music fund has also turned into a bit of a shemuzzle. Three million dollars was supposedly available to support music artists to grow and develop as individuals. Now, after many, many months and three announcements, I do not think one artist has received a cent out of the contemporary music fund. Two years on, we find that it is not \$3 million; it is \$1 million in grants and \$2 million in "discretionary funding" to whomever the minister wants to give it to. It has not gone to artists or towards helping to grow creative industries. It is only \$3 million and he is taking \$2 million off them. He is only giving them a million bucks.

He gave \$60 000 to VenuesWest and he also gave \$60 000 to the trust to develop the Fly by Night Musicians Club in Fremantle. The club got \$250 000 and VenuesWest got \$60 000. I am very supportive of what VenuesWest is trying to do. It got \$60 000 over three years—\$20 000 a year. The Minister for Women's Interests and the Minister for Local Government said there is a problem with the safety of women in our venues. They are giving them \$20 000 a year over three years: "We're not going to get the department of liquor licensing to make sure that venues are safe. We're not going to throw in the money and resources that are required to make sure that women are safe out there. We're just going to tell the opposition that they can't ask questions about why these people got \$60 000." I want the women in our venues to be safe. I want the government and the minister to give enough funding, whether it be to VenuesWest or the department, to make sure that the right job is done in that area. It is a disgrace when the minister politicises this. He tries to make out we are not interested in the safety of women. He is not interested in the safety of women because he is short-changing these people. Inspectors should be performing liquor licensing duties and venue operators should have the right facilities and processes in place. It should be part of their liquor licence. It should not be left to a volunteer organisation, which is looking for a general manager to work one day a week for free, to run this grants program and to be the custodians responsible for safer venues.

**MR V.A. CATANIA (North West Central)** [3.41 pm]: The 2019–20 budget clearly demonstrates the lack of investment and the lack of will to fix a lot of the health issues that exist, particularly in the Murchison area. I will read out a letter that came to me last night. I got a phone call from the CEO of the Shire of Cue about its nursing post. It is good to have the Minister for Health in the chamber at the moment. I quote —

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To Whom it May Concern

Today one of my staff suffered a suspected heart attack and another staff member took them to the Cue Nursing Post. On arrival, just before noon, they discovered that there was no nurse in attendance so they asked if an ambulance could be called. The Receptionist refused the request on the grounds that if the Nursing Post called for an ambulance they would have to pay for it. As the matter was clearly urgent and my staff members had no mobile phones on them, the Receptionist eventually relented and let them use the Nursing Post phone themselves to ring 000.

Assurances that Nursing Posts in this region would be staffed appropriately were given by your management as recently as 3 May 2019 at the Murchison Country Zone meeting ...

That was at Cue Parliament. I was in attendance with the Leader of the National Party. The CEO now questions whether what they were saying was to appease the group in front of them rather than ensuring that these nursing posts were covered. The first question the CEO posed was —

1. Why, after being assured that we would have a nursing presence in Cue, is there no nurse in attendance?
2. If it is known that there is going to be no nurse presence, why is the community not being kept informed?

That is a fair enough question to ask —

3. How many more instances of this type will occur before everybody's luck runs out and another person dies unnecessarily as was the case at the Yalgoo Nursing Post last year?

This situation is clearly unacceptable and should not be tolerated anywhere in this state. I know there will be a story behind this particular incident, but I don't want to hear the excuses any more as that is all we seem to get. What I do want is an adequate health service for my community, a basic right that everybody in WA should be entitled to.

Here we are, a couple of weeks after Cue Parliament and after being told that the Cue nursing post would be attended by a nurse, and an incident occurred that could have cost someone their life if there had been no response. I believe that person was flown out by the Royal Flying Doctor Service but there was no nurse at the nursing post.

A spate of events have occurred over the past two years. On 22 February 2019, I sent out a media statement stating, "The Yalgoo community was put at risk for three weeks with no nurse at post." For three weeks, the Yalgoo community did not have a nurse at its nursing post. That put at risk the lives of people who live in Yalgoo. A "nursing post" sign can be seen by people driving down the highway. People travelling on the highway rightfully assume that the nursing post will have a nurse. Clearly, that was not the case for three weeks. This is not new. This has been happening over a long period, but over the last two years the gaps in the nursing system in the Murchison have been growing.

As I said, I am glad the Minister for Health is in the chamber. I would like a nurse on call 24/7 in Cue, Yalgoo, Mt Magnet and Sandstone. They are basically on call 24/7 in a small country town. It puts a huge amount of pressure on a nurse to not only be on call, but also to be in demand by the community. Incidents do not just occur between nine and five. Incidents on the highway can occur at any time throughout the night and early morning. That puts pressure on a nurse and the ambulance volunteers who end up taking up the slack in having to transfer patients all the way from Cue to Meekatharra or Yalgoo to Geraldton.

There is also the pressure of a nurse being by themselves. Nurse practitioners, like in any other job, would like other people around to bounce issues off or, if a really traumatic event occurred, they would like to be assisted by another nurse. Years ago, police did away with single policing at police posts. That was due to fatigue, safety concerns and being responsible for communities 24/7 by themselves. Eight remote nursing posts around the state have one nurse. It is not ideal to have only one nurse based at a community nursing post on a very, very busy highway, whichever way one looks at it, whether it is in Yalgoo, Cue, Mt Magnet or Sandstone. Large volumes of traffic go up and down those highways, and incidents occur. To have only one nurse at a nursing post in this day and age is neglectful. This government, and previous governments, have not staffed nursing posts with at least two nurses. Two nurses would provide coverage over the week and provide support. We do not want nurses to burn out or be fearful about attending incidents without backup.

The nursing posts in Cue and Mt Magnet are dilapidated. In 2016, the previous government allocated \$5.6 million through royalties for regions for a new nursing post in Mt Magnet. That was taken away by this government when it came to power in 2017. The community is in desperate need of a new nursing post. However, that money was

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taken away. The Cue community is fighting to get even the basics of carpet and paint for their nursing post. The ageing infrastructure of the hospital, and the fact that only one nurse is based in these communities, is putting pressure on the volunteers. It is also putting pressure on the people who live and work in the region, because they know that from time to time they might be unsafe.

Last week, I brought a grievance to the Minister for Health about the major hospital in that region, Meekatharra Hospital. That hospital was built in 1955. The floor of the hospital has a nice slope—people do not need to be pushed in a wheelchair; they can start at the top and roll their way down to their room.

**Dr D.J. Honey:** It's a feature!

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is a feature. However, it is an unnecessary feature. It typifies the age of the building, which, as I said, was built in 1955. Gutters are falling off. The foundations are cracked. Patients at the hospital have shared bathrooms, and, until recently, tiles were coming off the walls of the bathrooms. The flooring has holes in it. The linoleum is coming away from the walls. Recently, about \$450 000 was spent on a coat of paint and some repairs to the tiles. Imagine the health implications for that hospital. I am not saying it is dirty, but there must be some health implications when the building is in such a state of disrepair that tiles are coming off the walls and there are holes in the floor. That is not to mention the fire risk. The building is unsafe. It is well past its use-by date. The facility was built for the 1950s, and it is still a facility for the 1950s. The staff are located at one end of the hospital, and the patients at the other, and they are unable to communicate and operate in a safe environment. Minister, in 2016, \$10 million was allocated by the previous government for the first stage of a new hospital. That was for a medical centre. That is because the hospital will need to be rebuilt on the existing site. Am I correct, minister?

**Mr R.H. Cook:** There was a business case for a primary health clinic, not the hospital.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Okay—for a primary health clinic, to enable everyone to be moved out of the hospital while the new hospital is built. Am I correct?

**Mr R.H. Cook:** No. The primary health clinic is what it says—it will basically have a general practitioner and nurses.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** As the first stage of a new hospital.

**Mr R.H. Cook:** That is not the hospital. But I take the point you are making.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** The point I am trying to make is that \$10 million was allocated. The information available to us at the time was that it would be a staged process, with \$10 million to build a primary health centre while the existing hospital was knocked down and rebuilt. I think it would cost about \$40 million or \$45 million to build a new hospital in Meekatharra.

Currently, for every dollar in iron ore produced in this state, there is a windfall of \$76 million. That is clearly enough money to build a new Meekatharra Hospital. The communities of Meekatharra, Cue, Mt Magnet and Wiluna, and the surrounding communities, utilise Meekatharra Hospital. The hospital is much needed, not only for those communities, but also for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, which is based in Meekatharra. Minister, we need a new hospital in Meekatharra. As I said, given the finances of the state and the budget surplus from the increase in mining royalties and the GST windfall, Meekatharra Hospital needs to be rebuilt for the benefit of Meekatharra and surrounding communities.

I turn now to other infrastructure needs in the Murchison. The Wiluna–Meekatharra road has also been snubbed in the budget. In 2016, I was in Meekatharra, along with the Leader of the National Party and then Minister for Sport and Recreation; Water, and the member for Warren-Blackwood and then Minister for Regional Development, when we announced \$60 million to finally seal that road. That road is owned by the state. That road is integral to the communities of Wiluna and Meekatharra. It is also integral to the resource sector, because it provides an easy way to come up from Kalgoorlie and cut north to Port Hedland. The sealing of that road would take half an hour to 40 minutes off that travelling time. That \$60 million of royalties for regions money was taken away by this mean Labor government—it disappeared when the Labor Party came to government in 2017. The community has been crying out for that work to be done forever and a day. The National Party in government put \$25 million of royalties for regions into sealing the most dangerous sections of that road. Talk about a track record on delivering on roads! The National Party in government, through royalties for regions, delivered to ensure that there was a safe pathway between the communities of Wiluna and Meekatharra.

Currently, liquor cannot be purchased in Wiluna, because there is no hotel or liquor store in that town. I understand that the police have refused a request for the general store to be granted a liquor licence. A couple of other people

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have also put forward their opinion about a liquor outlet in Wiluna. The thinking behind that was that it would reduce the amount of liquor that is consumed in the community. I can tell members that the incidence of domestic violence and other criminal activity has not decreased. The amount of alcohol that is being brought into that community through the post office has gone through the roof. I am talking about not just controlled liquor. When liquor was sold by the pub, it was possible to control the amount and type of liquor that was sold, and to whom. Hard liquor, such as spirits, is now being brought into the community through the post office. That liquor is often in glass bottles; previously, only cans could be sold. Kids are coming to school with cuts on their feet and hands because of the broken glass on the streets. In some cases, people who do not have a licence are getting into cars and driving along the Wiluna–Meekatharra road to get alcohol. That is an accident waiting to happen, which will cause not just one person to perish, but many others. Many of these people are driving to get full-strength alcohol. If Wiluna had an outlet that limited the amount of alcohol that people could buy, and if that alcohol was in cans, and mid-strength, people would choose that easy option, rather than drive to Sandstone or Meekatharra on an unsealed road. That would be a commonsense approach to ensure that the community is able to manage the amount of alcohol that comes into the town, rather than have thousands of dollars of alcohol come through the post office each week, or have people jump in a car and drive along an unsealed road to Meekatharra, Sandstone or Leinster to get alcohol.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** That is what is currently happening. That is why it is important that this road is sealed. That will not only increase public safety, but also provide a smarter and safer option for resource activity in the area and up to Port Hedland. It will also increase the number of tourists from the goldfields to Wiluna and across to Meekatharra, particularly if one day the road is sealed all the way to Mt Augustus and Carnarvon. The Wiluna–Meekatharra road has great potential for tourism, as well as providing much-needed sealing for the community and resource sector. This is something that the Shires of Wiluna and Meekatharra have been jumping up and down over for a very long time. The dollar a tonne extra for iron ore and the \$76 million windfall into the state's coffers have obviously helped this budget go into surplus, along with the federal coalition's GST payments and the high taxes that this mean Labor government put pressure on mums, dads and everyone in the state with increasing water and power bills.

Yet another issue is Tom Price and Paraburdoo. They are the engine room of not only the Western Australian economy, but also the nation's economy because that is where all the iron ore comes from. It comes out of Tom Price and Paraburdoo. This mean McGowan Labor government took away the money for a new hospital at Tom Price. The state gets \$1 extra a tonne for iron ore, plus a \$76 million windfall, yet this government—the Labor government—took away the \$45 million needed for a new hospital at Tom Price. The government took \$45 million from Tom Price, the engine room of the Western Australian and Australian economy. The previous government allocated \$5 million through royalties for regions for the Paraburdoo Nursing Post. That has disappeared. The hub of our economy is in that region, yet we are not seeing any return from that extra \$1 a tonne of iron ore and the \$76 million that the state has received. It is not being put back into the communities that are actually creating the wealth for our state. The budget has gone back into surplus, but there has been no recognition of those communities. Tom Price and Paraburdoo miss out yet again.

People travel and have a look around. The government has spoken a lot about tourism and its investment in tourism over the last two years. I have read the budget papers twice. Can I say that they are very thin budget papers; there is not a lot of detail in them. I looked for the words “Exmouth cruise ships” and “Exmouth boat ramps” and “Exmouth tourism”. I could not find Exmouth. We talk about our cruise line activity. We talk about the need for the state to have the facilities to attract cruise liners to Western Australia, yet there is nothing for Exmouth in the state budget. Exmouth is a premier tourism destination, yet it cannot cater for the growing cruise liner industry because the government is not investing in finding a way to have cruise liners berth at Exmouth. Rather than taking the punt and the community gearing up for an influx of 2 000 people, the community has found that it cannot use tenders far off the coast to bring in tourists if the weather turns sour, which happens from time to time, believe it or not.

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** Member, just out of interest, how much dredging would be involved in an Exmouth marina for cruise liners?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is needed, member. I know that the member for Thornlie does not want to touch the Exmouth Gulf, because in the member's previous life, he opposed anything that happened in the Exmouth Gulf. The member opposed all industry in Exmouth. Exmouth needs tourism and industry to coexist, making sure that the environment is looked after. But Exmouth needs a deepwater port to cater for cruise liners. I know that that member is against it. We talk about the need to cater for the resources and defence industries, but the defence industry could utilise an Exmouth deepwater port as a base. The level of activity that is occurring at Learmonth

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shows that we need a base in the north west of Western Australia to protect our much-needed assets, which protects our economy. There is no question about that.

Our senate candidate, “Big” Nick Fardell—we spoke about Nick at question time—understands how important it is, and that is why we need a Nationals WA senator in Canberra. Why is he called “Big” Nick? It is because he is twice the height of the member for Carine. Nick Fardell has twice the heart, twice the amount of vigour and twice the amount of passion of any senator in Canberra at the moment. That is why we need “Big” Nick to win on Saturday—to ensure that we have a voice in Canberra, to make sure that we can get a defence facilities base put in the north west of Western Australia, to diversify and protect our economy, and to grow our north through diversification. Exmouth is the perfect location. A deepwater port is something that the members opposite disagree with. They ask how deep the dredging will be. We will have to dredge but in a responsible manner. At the moment, Exmouth Gulf has ad hoc industry putting forward what it wants to do there. Exmouth needs a development plan by government to say that this is where they can go and this is where they cannot go so industry, people in the community and people who care deeply about the environment, like myself, are clear about where the no-go areas are in the gulf. It is absolutely critical.

The Exmouth economy is critical. Tourism Western Australia needs to be able to attract and retain the cruise liner industry in Western Australia. How do we do that? We have to make sure that cruise liners can come to Exmouth. Tantabiddi boat ramp was built under the previous Liberal–National government through royalties for regions.

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** Do you want the cruise liners to come in there?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** No. If the member listened, perhaps he would learn something. I know the member has been to Exmouth a couple of times. Tantabiddi boat ramp cannot cater for the growing tourism industry or recreational fishers. There is also the complexity of commercial whale shark boat charters and other charters competing for the same boat ramp. We need a separate boat ramp for commercial operators and recreational fishers and those people who want to recreate on Ningaloo Reef. We need a facility that can cater for the growth in tourism and industry in Exmouth. That is absolutely vital.

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** So, it’s already growing really well from what you’re saying, but you need an extra boat ramp just to cope with all the different activities.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Yes, that is what I am saying. Tourism is growing at an extremely rapid rate. What I am saying is that the government that the member for Thornlie is a part of is not investing in that community so it can keep growing tourism and cater for the pressure points that are occurring in Exmouth.

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** But you just presented evidence saying that it is growing well.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It is growing due to the investment of the previous government in the Exmouth marina expansion and the Tantabiddi boat ramp, which was built by the previous government through royalties for regions. The Ningaloo Centre, the town centre redevelopment and many other things were delivered in Exmouth by royalties for regions. The member for Thornlie’s government has not invested in Exmouth in this budget. Two areas that need a lot of work are, first, keeping cruise liners in and attracting them to Exmouth and, second, redeveloping the Tantabiddi boat ramp so it can cater for commercial and recreational activities.

We can have a look at other areas in which there has been a lack of investment. In Carnarvon, the fascine waterway is silted up. There has been no action by the state government on this waterway that it owns, which sends a clear message to the people of Carnarvon —

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** Where has the silt come from?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Jeez! Member, are you a Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Transport or something?

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** No; I am asking you where the silt is coming from.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** Because the member should know —

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** It has come from a misuse of the rangelands, which is something you guys never advocated on. You were happy to see those rangelands hacked to bits.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** I have two minutes left; I will tell the member where it came from. It came from a cyclone and a storm, which actually washed away Pelican Point into —

**Mr C.J. Tallentire:** Are you denying where the silt is coming from?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** It came from a weather event. There is also One Mile jetty. These two tourism sites are very important economic drivers.

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**Mr C.J. Tallentire** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, do you seek to take any further interjections?

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** No, not from him.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, he has indicated. Thank you very much. Please continue, member for North West Central.

**Mr V.A. CATANIA:** These two very important tourism icons, being the One Mile jetty and the fascine waterway, have been snubbed by this government. That is absolutely shameful.

When it comes to growing tourism in regional WA, the cost of flights under this government are the highest they have ever been. To fly to Karratha, it costs \$1 100 or \$1 200 one way. To fly to Carnarvon, people are sometimes looking at paying just under \$1 000 return. How do we grow tourism? How do we attract and retain people? Flights are still a problem under this government.

Small business obviously has not been looked after in this budget.

I want to end by saying that one highlight is Carnarvon aged care. I congratulate the Minister for Health and the Treasurer for putting back the money that they took out when they came to government in 2017 to ensure that we can build a 38-bed facility for our seniors. That is absolutely integral and vital. In those two years, 15 to 20 seniors have left town because the facility was not built. That is shameful. On the other hand, we are grateful that we can finally put politics aside and actually build a facility that is needed for our community. I thank the Minister for Health, who understood that. It is a great win for the people of Carnarvon.

**DR D.J. HONEY (Cottesloe)** [4.11 pm]: Just before I commence my contribution to the debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019, I want to briefly note the passing of Hon Max Evans on 30 April. Many members of this chamber would have known Max. There will be a condolence motion in the Legislative Council tomorrow, but I wanted to note what a tremendous contribution he made to the state, business, Parliament, government and the scout movement. I will not go on at length, but I certainly wish to express my gratitude to Max and my condolences to his family, and in particular his wife, Barbara, whom I know very well.

Just going through the budget, I want to focus initially on my electorate of Cottesloe and then move on to broader issues. As I mentioned in my last budget reply speech just on a year ago, traffic congestion is a major issue in my electorate. Unfortunately, nothing in this budget will do anything about it. Heavy vehicles are increasingly using back roads to avoid congestion on Stirling Highway. They are especially using Curtin Avenue, which is a single-lane road, between Tydeman Road and North Street. This road is used heavily by general commuters, especially school traffic. It is especially unsuitable for the large, heavy vehicles that are increasingly using it. Also, residents in North Fremantle are extremely concerned about the noise of large vehicles, especially trucks using their exhaust brakes at night-time. I may talk at length about this another time, but it appears to be completely unpoliced, certainly according to the locals. More generally, there is no solution by the government to traffic congestion on Leach Highway. That is one issue that is forcing traffic down Stirling Highway. There is nowhere else for it to go. The trucks find other routes, including taking a circuitous route south through my electorate, which, as everyone knows, is through a narrow piece of land between the river and the sea, which is causing those problems.

I recognise that the government has made at least some effort by putting more containers on trains—I heard the minister refer the other day to 23 per cent—but this is at considerable expense to the taxpayer. Those containers are subsidised to do that—\$50 for every twenty-foot equivalent unit. That will max out at 30 per cent. That is based on Fremantle Ports' own modelling. It is not what we can get out of the port or onto a train that limits it, but what can be handled in the surrounding marshalling yards. Unless there is major investment there, nothing will happen. The truth is that the moves made by the government are simply delaying the problem and not fixing it. The trains are not without their own problems. They impact on the community, especially given that there are level crossings to both the south and the north. That increased rail freight is causing major delays for vehicles, especially along Tydeman Road in my electorate. There needs to be detailed planning and money forecast to commence a long-term solution. The outer harbour is not going to arrive in time to do that. Although I know the government had a passion for opposing Roe 8, which was an effective solution to that traffic problem—I understand that it is not going ahead with it—it needs to come up with some other plan, because trains will not solve the problem.

I thank the government for the work being done on the public shared cyclepath from Grant Street to Victoria Street in Mosman Park. That is certainly very welcome by people both north and south, including by people in my electorate. I look forward to seeing the work that will complete the link through to the Fremantle Traffic Bridge.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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Given that the federal government has made an outstanding commitment to fund replacement of the old Fremantle Traffic Bridge, this is an ideal opportunity to plan an effective crossing there. However, an effective crossing at Tydeman Road also needs to be planned. That is an extremely dangerous road to cross, especially given all the heavy traffic that goes down it. A concern I have shared in correspondence with the minister on the public shared path is with the level crossings. There are a number of level crossings going north from Eric Street through to Victoria Street. I am really concerned that cyclists will be in the zone, travelling fast along that PSP, and they could interact with traffic at those level crossings. Those level crossings are highly congested. Because of the short distance between Curtin Avenue and Stirling Highway, cars are inclined to take all sorts of risks, especially around school start and finish times. I understand there are constraints on funding, but there really needs to be some grade separation in those areas.

One area that I am especially concerned about is Mosman Park Primary School. I am not sure how many members have been to Mosman Park Primary School, but I would say that it is the most poorly appointed school I have seen in Perth. I have visited a large number of schools, including schools in the electorate of the member for Baldivis, who I see is going to get three new schools in this budget. They are excellent schools. I go out to Darling Range and the schools look like something out of a set from *The Jetsons*—they are beautiful schools that are well laid out. The school in Mosman Park was built in 1909 or sometime around then, and it looks like it. It has barely changed, other than a few minor investments. I believe that the minister is aware of the issues at that school, but I cannot see any money in the budget for it. Student numbers at that school have gone from 200 to 400 in 10 years. The school also caters for 22 profoundly deaf students. These are students who have no hearing at all and require one-on-one assistance so that they can learn Auslan and participate in normal classes. I can see no money in the budget at all to deal with that issue. I think it is a critical issue. There is adequate land there to deal with the issue. The council is cooperating with the government on that.

The member for Baldivis would also know that there is a critical need to upgrade the Western Knights Soccer Club. With over 200 junior players and 300 senior players, this is the only regionally located soccer field for some considerable distance. People have to go to Nedlands or well south to Fremantle before they will find an equivalent facility. Again, I could see no money in the budget for that. That is a critical need that has not been met.

I have seen lots of self-congratulatory press generated by the government around its so-called fixing of the budget. I will give the government recognition for one thing: if spin were the measure of performance of government, this government would get the gold medal—it would be the world champion. I am happy for members to give me the exact number, but I understand that the state government is now the largest employer of journalists in Western Australia. It dwarfs the existing free-to-air media and other media in the state and I think they are in pretty well every office. Each office must have been given a key performance indicator that they had to have an ex-journalist in them. Can I say that they are certainly earning their money spinning stuff out. But anyone who cares to look at the detail in the budget can readily see that there are two sources for the so-called fix that have nothing to do with this government. There has been a massive windfall from the federal Liberal government, which did the hard yards. I especially recognise Senator Dean Smith, who did an outstanding job, and Senator Mathias Cormann, who carried the debate amongst his parliamentary colleagues to fix the GST disparity. That is something only a Liberal government could deliver. Why could it deliver it? It is because it fixed the appalling mess of the Rudd–Gillard–Rudd disaster that plunged our country from a massive surplus into a massive deficit. It did that and it was able to fix the GST issue.

The other source, as has been pointed out by the member for North West Central, is the massive windfall from iron ore royalties. Again, that has nothing to do with the government. Prices are soaring due to the dreadful dam failure at Vale's operations in Brazil and the subsequent ban on upstream lift dams by the Brazilian government. Iron ore prices have averaged about \$76 a tonne against the budget forecast of \$62 a tonne, and, in fact, the price is now running closer to \$92 a tonne. As has already been pointed out, given that a \$1 increase in iron ore price equates to something approaching \$76 million to \$78 million in additional state royalty revenue, it is easy to understand where the additional money is coming from. I find it absolutely fascinating when I look at the media and see the stern faces of the Premier and the Treasurer with sweat on their brows, as a witness to the hard work that they have been doing. But what absolute nonsense. The people who have been doing the hard yards are the people who have been trying to cope with the massive utility price hikes during the term of this Labor government, which average \$856 for every household in the state. These are people who are terrified of losing their homes, and 16.5 per cent of households in Western Australia now have negative equity. Many of those people sit in the electorates of members opposite. I can only imagine how that feels for those people, but I suspect that they are not sleeping well at night because they are absolutely terrified that they are going to lose their home and still have massive debt. People have to make dreadful, terrible choices. People are making the choice to send their kids to

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school without lunch because they simply cannot afford it and they are relying on the schools to provide lunch for their children. People are attending Foodbank in record and ever-increasing numbers. If members want to see a growth industry that the other side of this house, the Labor Party, has indeed grown, it is the number of people seeking food handouts because they cannot afford to feed themselves. People who have a house and have jobs cannot afford to feed themselves, so they are going to charity for food. The people who are unemployed can see the Treasurer patting himself on the back, and we saw it today. We have record unemployment at 6.1 per cent and I found it really upsetting to see a government patting itself on the back for the great job that it has done for the people of Western Australia. There are young people who are looking for jobs and cannot get work; maybe the younger members in here would have more empathy. We are seeing the commencement of a crisis in youth unemployment in this state, and that is under the watch of this Labor government, now into its third budget. This government owns the outcome.

We have a government that does not understand that what it does has an effect on the state domestic economy. The 7.5 per cent levy on foreign investors buying houses has collapsed the new apartment market. Talk to the people who build new apartments, or, should I say, were planning to build new apartments. They have scrapped those plans because now that market has disappeared.

Removing the regional immigration status from Perth and limiting the jobs available to students who are on temporary visas has impacted not only the number of overseas students in the state, but also the number of overseas visitors, because for every international student, we get around four visits a year from overseas visitors. It is no wonder that overseas tourism has collapsed in this state.

The government should reflect on the dishonesty of this budget. Today we heard self-congratulatory messages again from this government, from the Premier and the Treasurer, saying what a wonderful job they have done and how all their friends—Rick and all the others—had congratulated them for the job they are doing. But there is no recognition at all in the budget of the enormous cost of Metronet to this state. It is simply not on the books. It is not there—not to be seen. That means that the budget is not truthful or honest. The government has refused to reveal the true cost of the Metronet project. It is very clear that the government does not know what the cost is. It was a wish and a prayer, a philosophical idea, if you like, and something that it did not cost. That is something that members opposite criticised the last government for, heavily, yet they are completely incapable of providing numbers in the budget to reflect the true cost to this state. The other thing that is not reflected is the operating cost. There is nothing about the increased operating costs for rail for this state. Members opposite should know that the state subsidy for rail passengers is around 75¢ in the dollar. Every passenger who goes on those extra rail lines will increase that subsidy by quite a large amount.

We are told the government is doing the hard work—with sweat on the brow—of budget repair. However, according to the forward estimates, of the \$9 billion that the government is getting in additional windfall income—that has nothing to do with the government—net state debt will reduce by only \$660 million. We heard from the government and the Treasurer that they are doing everything they can to reduce state debt. That is patently not true. It has had a \$9 billion windfall and state debt is reducing by only around \$660 million. What is happening to the additional money? The truth is that there are massive hidden holes in the budget and the government is hoping to fill those with that money. There is also a dishonest trick going on in the budget, and that is that the federal government grants for major projects are being booked as income. However, state government expenditure either is not being declared or is being pushed out beyond the forward estimates, which substantially reduces the apparent deficit, when in fact that money will be real; that money will have to be spent.

We have seen a massive increase of \$856 in fees and charges by this government in its first three years. The justification is simply insulting to families struggling to provide basic necessities for their children, and terrified that they are going to lose their family home because they are in negative equity. Justifying the increases by saying that its fees are lower than the previous government's fees is simply disingenuous. Members opposite know the truth, or, at least the Treasurer has the capacity to know the truth. The previous government faced a perilous financial situation with the global financial crisis and a collapse in iron ore prices less than half the Treasury price forecast, and substantially less than its own conservative forecast, down to \$35 a tonne at its lowest. The previous government held utility charges down for political purposes, and that was a massive burden on the state. That government did the hard work. It made the hard political decisions and, in the end, it paid a political price for it. It made the decisions to bring those charges up to cost recovery. What we know now is that this government is taking the prices well beyond cost recovery. We know that is especially the case for water. If we look at water charges in this state, and go to the budget, there is no secret. Look at page 266 of budget paper No 3.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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**Dr D.J. HONEY:** In this financial year, the Water Corporation will deliver \$966 million to Treasury. That is cash. By the end of the forward estimates, that will have gone up to \$1.2 billion. That is being taken from the pocket of the water users of Western Australia, mostly in metropolitan Perth, and given to the government. There are about a million households in Perth. That is a bit over \$1 000 per household. They are households in members' electorates, where people are losing their houses, cannot pay their mortgages, cannot feed their kids and cannot sleep at night because they are so sick with worry; the government is pulling out over \$1 000 per house in those additional charges. On top of that, we are seeing the sequestration of royalties for regions. We can see in the forward estimates that royalties for regions money is progressively being used for areas that would normally be funded from recurrent government expenditure; for example, now I see Aboriginal housing coming into royalties for regions. But according to the forward estimates, the amount for water services will go up to just on \$300 million a year. A third of royalties for regions money is in fact going into an area that was previously funded from consolidated revenue. If we go forward, we see that there are increases of 2.5 per cent proposed for water sewerage and drainage charges. We heard in the budget speech that that is not much more than the inflation rate of 1.8 per cent. The truth is that inflation is in fact 1.2 per cent this year, consistent with Australian inflation, so the proposed water charges in the forward estimates are more than 100 per cent greater than inflation. Those charges are hitting people who can least afford them. I think the most egregious part of those charges is the increases in standard fixed charges. A constituent who contacted me the other day told me that their water bill was, I think, \$279, of which \$17 was for water use charges and the rest was for fixed charges. They could not escape it. If they turned their taps off and died of thirst, they could not escape those charges. The standard fixed service charge, minimum charge, consumption charge and first fixture and volumetric charges are all going up by 2.5 per cent—that is two times inflation. Remember, this is for a department that is now paying almost a billion dollars into Treasury's coffers, going up to \$1.2 billion, hitting members' constituents, those people in their electorates who can least afford to pay them, in particular the fixed charges. I think that is absolutely shameful.

The domestic economy is not going to improve until households have more discretionary expenditure. Contrary to the socialist philosophy of the world, we cannot tax our way out of a recession. That is something the Premier and the Treasury should be telling Bill Shorten, with his \$387 billion in new taxes. Just imagine that, members. This potential government is going to drive and improve the Australian economy with \$387 billion in new taxes. What an absolute disgrace. What a nightmare potentially facing the people of Australia.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Can I say, member for Armadale, we are very grateful for the Premier's participation in the campaign. We see that the Labor vote has dropped by six per cent already. We are looking for the other 3.3 per cent so that we can equal the drop of 9.3 per cent that the Labor Party saw in the last state by-election. Keep on campaigning, guys! Keep on putting the Premier's face up there, because we welcome it, and we look forward to a good result out of the federal election, particularly in Western Australia.

The government's justification for the increase in water charges is simply dumbfounding. It is absolutely ridiculous for the government to say that it has saved people money by increasing the charges at only half the rate of those in the previous budget. It is a bit like, Attorney General, saying that a person has saved someone's life because he was going to kill two people, but he killed only one; therefore, he should be applauded for saving someone's life, because he has done only half the job. It is clearly a ridiculous proposition. The simple truth is that those charges should not be increased because the state economy simply cannot afford it.

I am pleased to see that the government is making some effort to increase the amount of water that is being recycled, and there is some money in the budget to recycle an extra 14 gegalitres of water. However, it does not go far enough.

**Ms S.E. Winton:** Member, will you take an interjection?

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** No, thank you. I have very little time and so much to talk about.

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Mr Acting Speaker, I am not taking interjections from the member for Wanneroo.

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You have already asked the member for Cottesloe and he has indicated that he is not taking interjections, member for Wanneroo. Thank you very much.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you for your protection, Mr Acting Speaker. However, it does not go far enough. I noticed with interest the comments made by the state Minister for Agriculture and Food at an election rally for the federal

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election to be held on 18 May that the state government is supporting the development of a new agricultural precinct in Wanneroo.

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** We have the shiny press releases from the minister for agriculture referring to some funding to grow that precinct. However, the proof of the pudding is in the eating. What is in the forward estimates about fixing the problem of the declining watertable in the Gngangara mound and the pending cuts to horticulturalists in the north Wanneroo area? Nothing. There is nothing in the budget at all. Member for Wanneroo, I heard that comment made by the minister for agriculture. What nonsense. The truth is that the government gets its bureaucrats to make an estimate for any significant project that it is going to commit to, and it puts a place holder in the budget. That is what the government has always done with major projects that it intends to undertake: it makes it clear that it is a place holder, it makes it clear that it is an estimate, and it makes it clear that it is going to be refined. The simple truth is that reasonable estimates could be made. There is nothing in there. Again, what is it? It is a stunt to try to get the federal Labor candidate elected, and it is a stunt that looks like it is going to fail. We will find out next Saturday just how well that stunt has gone, will we not, member?

The North Wanneroo Residents Association meetings are an interesting thing.

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** The North Wanneroo Residents Association meetings clearly drive the state government agenda.

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** Point of order. It is becoming ridiculously annoying to listen to this constant interjection. I would ask the Acting Speaker to bring the member for Wanneroo to order, please.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy):** It is not a point of order—you can quote the number—but I understand the sentiment of what I think you are saying. Member for Wanneroo, since the member for Cottesloe has referred to you, I will ask the member for Cottesloe to continue directing his comments to the Chair and not refer to other members so that they do not interject. Thank you.

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The member for Cottesloe is referring to an event that may well have included the member for Wanneroo, so the content of his second reading contribution is not in question here.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, your point of order?

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The point of order is that she is interjecting on the member when she has been asked not to, and that is a breach of the standing order.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I have heard the point of order. Member, please continue.

*Debate Resumed*

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Thank you very much, Acting Speaker, and thank you for the protection from my own members as well!

The meetings of the North Wanneroo Residents Association or ratepayers association clearly heavily influences the government because when they had their public meeting previously, 24 hours before the meeting, we again saw the minister back down on 25 per cent cuts in water licence allocations —

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** Saying that —

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I hope this is not chewing up my time, Acting Speaker—saying that they are going to reduce them to 10 per cent in nine years' time; that is, really making no decision at all and kicking it down the road, but creating the most enormous uncertainty for those water users. Those licence fee increases caused outrage in the horticultural community. I did not know too many people in the horticultural community before I took on this role, but—I have to thank the Minister for Water for this—now I have friends all over the state, all the way from Carnarvon down to Manjimup, Busselton, Bunbury and Margaret River. I have friends all over the state. I have had the pleasure of visiting the growers in the north Wanneroo area —

Several members interjected.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, members!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** I have had the pleasure of visiting growers in the north Wanneroo area four times and I have never felt more welcome in my life.

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** They're good people.

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** They are good people.

When we look at the press release and the statements by the minister, we find that it is clearly not a serious effort. There is nothing in the forward estimates to suggest that the government will do anything about it at all. Currently, 124 billion litres of wastewater is being pumped into the ocean. The cuts of 10 per cent in the north Wanneroo area make up four billion litres. The truth is that it is easy to remedy that issue. There are examples in this state and elsewhere in the world of that being done at very low cost. Not only would it not threaten the livelihood of horticulturists in that area, but also we could grow that industry, employ more people and build export opportunities.

The Minister for Water has had a busy time with backdowns. He had to back down on the closure of the standpipes for farmers in the wheatbelt. This was another example of an ill-thought-out cost-cutting measure that caused enormous distress and concern for the people in Lake Grace, Katanning, Newdegate and Jerramungup who were affected by it. It was done without adequate consultation and without an understanding of the issues it would cause. If I were the Minister for Water, I reckon I would have a closer look at my department to see that I was not being set up, because pretty well everything he has tried to do has failed. As I say, it made me lots of friends. I am just giving the minister a bit of advice. I have known him for a long time. He should have a close look at his department and perhaps question a lot more closely what he is being told. I can see nothing in the budget that will provide a solution to that problem. I attended a public meeting about water supply issues in Bedforddale, where the pressure has been dropped because the pipes are leaking so much that they cannot take full pressure. Yet again, I do not see specific items in the budget to solve that problem, and that is something that the government needs to focus on.

This government has caused enormous pain. The budget cannot be trusted. Major spending commitments are simply not in the forecasts. The government is boasting about what it is doing and spinning what it is going to do. It talks about its restraint. Spending will blow out by over \$430 million above the estimate in the last budget. That is the government doing the hard yards—spending will blow out by \$430 million. Perhaps Rick Newnham could study that little fact a bit before he starts congratulating the government.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Dr D.J. HONEY:** This budget does nothing to reverse the harm that the government has done to the state economy and all the hardship suffered by people. It is time for the government to rethink its strategy and focus on the people it claims to represent.

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy):** Member for Wanneroo, I call you to order. I was on my feet.

**MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands)** [4.43 pm]: I begin by —

**Mr J.R. Quigley** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. As I was saying, I would like to begin by thanking the Under Treasurer for briefing members of Parliament this morning on the 2019–20 budget. He gave us a pretty good overview of how it has been framed this year and also the forward estimates. Before I get to some of the points he made and what underpins the budget, one of the criticisms that we have had to endure from members opposite over the last two years has been about the fictitious deficit that was supposedly left in the budget. They keep talking about a \$40 billion deficit. As everyone knows, it was \$32 billion.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Yes, it has gone up. One question that I would like government members to answer at some stage in their response to this year's budget is: what operational expenses that the previous government had in place would they not have spent? It is very simple. They keep saying that we spent all this money and that we cannot manage money, but they cannot put forward one project that we spent money on that should not be there.

**Mr J.R. Quigley:** Yes, we can—Roe 8.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will talk about that project later on.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you, members!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** They were hoping that there would be public outcry over the stadium. The then opposition was very lukewarm on the stadium, and what happened?

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, do you seek to take interjections during your contribution?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** No, I do not.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, please allow the member to continue his remarks without interjection.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I do not have an hour in which to speak, so it will be very difficult to get through this content in the 30 minutes that I have. I have not even started; this is just my introductory statement.

Some of the small and medium-sized businesses in my electorate said quite the opposite of what government members are saying. They used to say, "Thank goodness you guys are in power or I would not be in business." During the downturn after the boom time, actual expenditure on infrastructure projects and some of the hospitals kept some small and medium-sized businesses in operation; it kept their employees going and kept the economy going. I am open for someone opposite to tell us during their response to the budget speech—but not during my 30 minutes—which hospitals and other facilities they would not have put in place.

Getting back to the budget, I commend the Under Treasurer, Michael Barnes, for giving a very detailed presentation this afternoon. I will quickly touch on some of the points that underpin the budget. He said that the \$1.2 billion turnaround from the \$674 million deficit forecast in the midyear review was due to the events in Brazil and the GST top-up. I feel sorry for the people who died in the spill in Brazil; it is the second collapse of a tailings dam in Brazil and it needs to do something about it. Without that and the GST top-up, we would not be in the same situation. That is a bit lucky.

In terms of the WA economy, economic growth for the 2018–19 period was projected to be three per cent but has now been downgraded to two per cent. These figures are from the Under Treasurer. As we all know, that is mainly due to weaker than expected household consumption, which is a really important part of the economy that we need to address, and a lower than previously planned increase in household fees and charges. Basically, the economy is very flat. Interestingly, they are predicting a lift in gross state product to 3.5 per cent next year. It will be interesting to see whether that happens, because a lot of the revenue will depend on getting that 3.5 per cent growth. That is a summary of the budget revenue and outlook. However, in terms of operational surpluses—the Under Treasurer explained very well the difference between an operational surplus and a cash surplus—that does not include any capital expenditure. Future possible cash surpluses rely on there being no extra capital costs in the forward estimates. Any project that is not in this budget, such as the Ellenbrook railway line, will impact on cash surpluses. Other speakers have already spoken about that and I am sure that the Leader of the Opposition and our shadow Treasurer will talk about that in great detail. That is all I want to say about the general budget.

I want to talk about Roe 8, which the Attorney General mentioned. Roe 8 is a key piece of infrastructure for Western Australia.

**Mr J.R. Quigley** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I do not want an interjection, Acting Speaker. I am sure the Attorney General will get up in due course and talk about the benefits of not having Roe 8. I am going to talk about the benefits of having Roe 8.

Roe 8 was not a political thing; it was pure engineering and infrastructure. It was needed to drive Western Australia's economy? It would have been an efficient road network, not only for utilities and passenger cars, but also for heavy vehicles. As everyone knows, if Roe 8 had been built, 6 900 trucks and 74 000 light vehicles that currently use Farrington Road, South Street, Leach Highway and other local roads daily would have been using a dedicated, free-flowing, controlled-access highway. Why would a government not do that, particularly when the commonwealth government wanted to provide 100 per cent of the money? The construction of Roe 8 would have created 500 direct jobs for the project and generated 3 360 direct and indirect jobs. Why would a government turn that down when we need jobs to stimulate the economy? A \$1.2 billion gift was just sitting there. We should have grabbed hold of that and got the economy going. Why did the government not do that? At the same time, roads would be made much safer. Leach Highway is a disaster ready to happen.

**Mr J.R. Quigley** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I want no interjections.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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The figures I have on Leach Highway indicate that the number of truck-to-car accidents is double the state average and, because of the traffic lights and heavy trucks, the number of rear-end accidents is double the average. It is a no-brainer. An incredible amount of work was done on environmental offsets. The place where the road would have gone is already a road anyway. When people drive to Adventure World, they drive on what would have been Roe 8. We should build Roe 8. What is the response of the Minister for Transport? She is going to build a roundabout.

When trucks have to stop at the many traffic lights along Leach Highway they have to slow down. They go through their 12 gears and have to guess what to do so that they do not crush a car that cuts in front of them. The one traffic light the government is going to get rid of is at the T-junction where Stirling Highway hits High Street. What will be achieved with a roundabout? It is to avoid trucks having to stop, which is a good objective. However, it will need a radius curve for those trucks to go around. Engineers from Main Roads can tell us what the radius needs to be for a truck to go around at a certain speed, but, obviously, the larger the radius, the faster the trucks can go. Also, because trucks have trailers, when they go around a circle, the lanes have to be wide so the trailers do not cross into other lanes. It is quite dangerous for trucks to go around a roundabout and they need a very large radius. I understand that the project will cost about \$110 million. It has to be asked whether the \$110 million will be well spent? If Roe 9 had been built, High Street would have gone over the top, because it would have had a grade separated intersection. The trucks would not have had to go through there. Purely from the point of view of safety, it would be better to build Roe 8 and Roe 9. Guess what! As a bonus, it would have been paid for by the commonwealth government. I will move away from Roe 8. I am sure that lots of other people would like to talk about Roe 8 later.

Before I get onto my portfolio issues, the other general issue I want to talk about is lead in the water at the Perth Children's Hospital. I have asked a number of questions about this and it has taken me two years to get answers. I finally got answers about some of the samples taken from the water inlet to the Perth Children's Hospital. There have been seven instances of elevated lead levels in the water inlet. I will talk about the significance of elevated lead levels later. Members should ask themselves: if lead in the water at the Perth Children's Hospital was caused by corrosion of the brass fittings at outlets, which are the final part of the reticulated network of water in the hospital, why did samples of water find lead at the inlet? Under the Australian standard, brass can contain up to 4.5 per cent lead. Did lead run back through all the pipes? I doubt it. From a forensic point of view, why was lead in the inlet?

**Mr J.E. McGrath:** The dead leg.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Maybe the dead leg is the reason. It cannot be ruled out. I am not saying that it is the dead leg, member for South Perth, because I have not done the research and I am not an expert in that field. If someone taps into a 300-millimetre diameter pipe nine metres from a dead leg, with the dead leg as part of it, and they open the valve, the water will rush into the hospital. Nine metres from where the water was rushing from—in fact, it is the same pipe—there was a lot of gunk. We know what its content was. It had massively elevated levels of lead and iron, but that is another story. A lot of iron in the water can set up electrolysis. If there are other metals and the water has a high iron content, electrolysis will take place a lot quicker, particularly if the water is sitting. If water with a high iron content comes into a major facility such as a hospital and it sits in brass fittings for many months, it is likely that electrolysis will happen very quickly. I am not an expert. Members need to talk to a chemist, but that could have been the cause of the brass fittings corroding more quickly.

Putting that aside, I will get back to the impact on people of lead in water. A gentleman by the name of Brian Stone lives in the electorate of Cottesloe. He is a very experienced retired engineer, who decided to look at this issue because he has about 20 years' experience commissioning buildings in the United States. He was concerned that the way the lead was being measured was incorrect. I will quote from a report that he wrote and submitted to a number of people and organisations including the Water Corporation, the Department of Health, the Chief Medical Officer and various ministers including Minister Dave Kelly, former Premier Colin Barnett, Macquarie University—which I understand is doing work in this area for the government—*The West Australian*, and other colleagues. I will not mention the names of various people, but the report states —

Based on conversations, May 2017, with ... it was evident that **WA Health had erroneously assumed that the Guideline for lead (as derived by NHMRC in 1996) was a maximum (not an average) value of 0.01 mg/L.** The actual guideline, as derived by WHO and NHMRC is a statistical average daily value. NHMRC was subsequently contacted and asked to confirm in writing that the Guideline was an average daily value and not a maximum figure. **NHMRC did confirm by email that the Guideline was not a maximum limit but an average value over a period "greater than a single day"). Data that was available in June 2017 indicated that water at the Hospital complied with the all international standards by safe margins.**

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I will not go on, but that is a summary of his report. I raise that issue because of my concern about the forward estimates and how much the budget allows for any settlement for the overrun of costs that have emanated from the Perth Children's Hospital project. That is an issue of concern for obviously the state government and the budget. I will finish my general comments before I get to my portfolio responsibilities.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** This is a one-liner, really. I attended a presentation by the Salaries and Allowances Tribunal and I am concerned about members of Parliament who are on short terms and might be in Parliament for only one term of four years. I do not think the current remuneration for MPs is adequate for those on the new scheme. I think it is probably reasonable for those on the old scheme. The base remuneration when I came into Parliament in 2008 was—someone might correct me—about \$150 000. I am reading the salary for 2009. It is currently \$156 536. I do not know what the increase has been over the 10 years I have been in Parliament, but I do not think it is very —

**Mr I.C. Blayney:** It was \$135 000 when I came in.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Was it? Okay, it has gone up a little, but I think members will find that we have had probably the lowest pay rise in percentage terms of many people in government. I feel unless we address that, we will not attract the calibre of people in future.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Will you take an interjection?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will take an interjection on this one, member.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** If you actually do a comparison with other parliamentary officials within this Parliament and compare the rise in their salaries, which I support, with parliamentarians, you will see the incredible difference between the two. Can I make a second point?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** You sure can.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** The late Don Randall, the former member for Canning, said to me that it doesn't matter how much you pay politicians, it will always be too much!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I agree entirely with what the member said. I think it is something that needs to be addressed. In my situation, I came to Parliament later in life, and I made sure—I think the Attorney General is in a similar situation as we are a bit older than other members, although I think the Attorney General is a tiny bit older than me, but not by much —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** He looks so young.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** He looks younger than me, does he not? But it is a serious issue about the calibre of this Parliament and I hope that the Premier looks at it.

Given I have 12 minutes left to talk about my portfolios, I want to raise a few general points. Firstly, I cannot overemphasise the importance of the mining industry to Western Australia. The Chamber of Minerals and Energy probably sends everybody these statistics, but it is worth reading them in Parliament. The total direct economic benefit of the resources sector for Australia was \$58 billion and in Western Australia was \$38 billion. We well and truly drive the resources sector in Australia; in fact, we contribute \$38 billion and the rest of Australia contributes \$20 billion. In terms of wages and salaries, the industry generates \$7.4 billion in wages to Western Australians. In terms of state and federal government payments, mining companies pay \$5.2 billion in general taxes and payments to operate in Western Australia.

It is interesting to see how state revenue from royalties has changed since 2000–01. In 2000–01, royalties were 13 per cent of state revenue and totalled \$1.1 billion; in 2007–08, royalties grew a little bit to 14 per cent and \$2.55 billion; and in 2017–18, royalties rose to 22 per cent of state revenue and totalled \$5.97 billion. So royalties are a significant part of the budget. How is that increase reflected? Looking at the particular commodities, we can see that iron ore is the big one, as everyone would expect. In 2000–01, iron ore royalties totalled less than \$300 million; in 2007–08, they rose to just over \$1 billion; and in 2017–18, iron ore royalties contributed \$4.5 billion to Western Australia.

The employment figures for the general sector have been rising continually. In 2001, just over 40 000 people were employed in the resources sector. In 2013, employment in the sector peaked at just over 110 000. In 2015, it dropped off slightly to 100 000 workers in the mining industry. Those statistics show how important the mining sector is. We have had a bit of a lull over the last few years, but the sector's lowest employment level was 100 000.

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We are now going up again and getting close to the peak of 110 000 in 2013. It is a very important sector. I think Western Australians understand that and they support it.

How is the government supporting the sector? I will talk about some of the policy issues the government has implemented that, surprisingly, have had a negative effect on this amazing industry that supports the Western Australian economy and, indeed, the Australian economy. The first one I will talk about is the exploration incentive scheme, which supports drilling operators and benefits those mining companies—in fact, all mining companies have to explore otherwise they go out of business, which is an aspect of mining that not everyone understands, including some Western Australians. Companies have to keep exploring to keep their mines going because their resource dwindles. The exploration incentive scheme is a government-run scheme in which the government in our day, when we were in power, supported 50 per cent of the costs of drilling up to a certain limit for any greenfield drilling that added to the database of knowledge of the Geological Survey of Western Australia, which means the data is captured for other people to explore through data analysis.

The Minister for Mines and Petroleum got a dorothy dixer and said how pleased he is to continue to support the exploration incentive scheme introduced by the former Liberal–National government. He said that we have to keep supporting the scheme, but in order to support it, he decided he did not have any money to fund it. What did he do? He increased the fees for mining tenements leases and licences to capture the \$10 million equivalent to the government's contribution to the scheme. Now, the industry pays 100 per cent of the exploration incentive scheme. If that were not bad enough, because the mining tenement fee has gone up, the companies also have to pay council rates. Council rates are based on the fee companies pay to the state government. If the fee goes up, local government rates increase. It is a bit of a conundrum that one. I am looking at Mr Acting Speaker (Mr I.C. Blayney), who would understand this very well. When we talk to the mining companies that are located very close to a town, they will say that they pay local government rates, but the local government does nothing for them. Indeed, sometimes the mining companies upgrade the roads from gravel to bitumen for their own haulage. They do that, as well as pay their rates. Of course, the local governments grizzle, because they say that sometimes mining companies do not contribute much to the economy. It is a bit of a conundrum. Indeed, that policy has cost the industry.

I turn now to the federal government's policy on uranium mining. The people I have been speaking to have said that that basically means that exploration for uranium is not worthwhile. The government has said that it will support uranium mines only if they have already been approved. There are three or four uranium mines that could be operational now if the price of uranium went up. Thank goodness those mines are there, and let us hope the government does not back down. I know that the current Minister for Mines and Petroleum supports those projects, but I think there is some pressure within his party from people who do not share his views.

In the three minutes left to me, I want to finish on an important topic, lithium. Lithium is something that we all support. It is a great new product. The foundation for the Albemarle Lithium Pty Ltd lithium hydroxide plant in Kwinana was laid under the Liberal–National government, and hopefully it will soon produce its first product. I have spoken to the Association of Mining and Exploration Companies about the royalty that should be paid on lithium as it is refined further up the value chain. That is currently a grey area. The government needs to articulate what it intends to do in that area. I went to the ground-breaking ceremony for the Kemerton strategic industrial estate, at which that plant is located. I was quite surprised at the number of trees that had been cleared. That forced me to check the Environmental Protection Authority's approval for that plant. The Kemerton strategic industrial estate was set up for heavy industry, so we would think that area would be set aside for the building of heavy industry. However, because there are a lot of trees on that site, Albemarle, which is an American company that is providing benefits for Western Australia, has to comply with certain offsets. The EPA recommendation on offsets states —

The EPA recommends that the state government considers the use of a pre-determined biodiversity offset for all industrial zones within the KSIA. This would reduce the need for site-specific offsets to be developed for each industrial development and provide a more strategic approach to offsets. This type of approach has been used in other areas of the state and ensures that the best-available offsets are captured ('like for like') before the development of an area.

The government should take up that eminently good suggestion to ensure that the next project at the Kemerton estate in the south west can be approved quickly.

**MR J.E. McGRATH (South Perth)** [5.13 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and to respond to the budget that was handed down by the Treasurer last Thursday. I have to say that I was not surprised with the budget. We all know that two years out from an election, a government will offer a few inducements to the people of Western Australia, such as the two per cent increase in household fees and charges. However, having been in government, we know how these

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things work. In next year's budget, the government will be looking at providing some serious funding for the people of Western Australia. I forecast that there might be some reduction in payroll tax for small businesses. That is the kind of incentive the Treasurer and the Premier would like to take to the 2021 election. Therefore, as I have said, the budget was not a big surprise to me.

I am very interested in Metronet, and I will speak more about that a bit later. I am actually a supporter of the Metronet concept, because although Perth has traditional rail routes to Armadale, Mandurah and Midland, and the northern line and the Fremantle line, we also need to have cross connections. Cities like Melbourne have a lot of cross connections via light rail and heavy rail lines. Perth has sprawled very quickly. As a result, people may go to a station on one of those lines and still be five kilometres from their house. The modes of transport are not as good as they are in other major cities.

I would first like to speak about the Treasurer's announcement that tomorrow he will read in the enabling legislation for what is colloquially known as the sale of the Totalisator Agency Board. I have always been a supporter of the sale of the TAB, through my involvement in the racing industry, and as shadow Minister for Racing and Gaming. About 10 years ago, I made a public statement that upset a lot of my friends in the racing industry. I said that the only way in which the industry could get much needed funding for infrastructure would be if the TAB were sold. The fact is that the world has changed. Punters can now bet on their iPhone and computers. They do not need to go to the races. That has made it very difficult for the Western Australian TAB, owned by the state government, to compete with some of the big competitors that have come into the wagering system from overseas and also from the east coast. Before the Labor Party won the 2017 election, there was a fierce campaign against the privatisation of the TAB, so much so that a lot of people in the industry felt it was the wrong way to go. The Western Australian Racing Representative Group is an industry group that was put together by the Barnett government. It comprised a number of very respected and knowledgeable members of the racing industry. Its task was to look at privatisation of the TAB and its impact on the industry. The reason I raise that report today is that the McGowan government announced in the budget that 65 per cent of the net funds from the sale of the TAB will be paid into a special purpose account as a down payment on the planned new women's hospital to replace King Edward Memorial Hospital.

I do not think that is a bad idea. I have previously advocated that wagering income that is paid to government and set aside for projects should be identified. Some years ago, Crown casino was allowed to expand its gaming room, with more machines. As a result, it was compelled to put funding into the Swan River Trust for maintenance of the Swan River. That was a very worthy environmental program. I said at the time that if Crown casino has put several million dollars into that program, why not put up some signage or a plaque to tell people who are walking around the Swan River that Crown casino has contributed to the wellbeing of our great river?

By "Crown casino", I mean all those people who bet at the casino. Obviously, they do not all win. I do not think that 65 per cent of the net funds from the sale of the TAB would pay for a new hospital. The money will be put into a special purpose account. The public would know that Western Australian punters—the racing followers—have invested their hard-earned money in betting on horses and dogs and whatever. Out of the proceeds of selling the TAB, the government has been able to build a new women's hospital.

Since 1955, the Hong Kong Jockey Club has been doing something like this. About 70 per cent of the club's annual surpluses have been donated to community development projects in Hong Kong. They are massive figures. When a new wing of a hospital is built, it may be named the Hong Kong Jockey Club Wing. We might be able to have a Lucy Warwick Wing at the new King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women. Only last season, Lucy Warwick was rated the top female jockey in the world. Out of all female jockeys in the world, this young girl from Western Australia was rated at the top. What a great thing. She is a famous sportsperson. I think it is not a bad initiative.

At the same time, some people in the industry are asking whether the government should be taking any money out of the sale of the TAB. Maybe all the revenue should go to the racing industry. That leads me to a document the Western Australian Racing Representative Group produced before the 2017 election titled "... Racing Towards the 2017 State Election ...". The group called it "The Racing Industry's position" on the sale of the TAB. There were a number of things that it wanted the government to do, including investment in metropolitan racing carnivals—that is the big events—and reinstate state government infrastructure funding support to the industry to the tune of \$20 million over four years. It wanted the government to commit to funding of \$1 million a year for four years to expand the Country Cups program. One of the most significant ones was the group said that the government should guarantee an infrastructure fund of at least \$100 million from the privatisation proceeds. That was very similar to what Premier Barnett spoke to the industry about in conversations that I was a part of. The industry needs an infrastructure fund. Premier Barnett's view was that the fund could be controlled by the state. It

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would not just be given to the industry to do as it liked. The fund would be set up and the industry would have to come to the minister of the day to seek funding for those infrastructure projects.

The industry is supportive of the fact that 35 per cent of the proceeds of the sale of the TAB will go to a racing infrastructure fund. It is a good outcome. It will be interesting to see what is in the second reading speech when the Treasurer introduces the legislation tomorrow. The only other issue that has been raised with me is how TAB agents will be treated. There has been some contention because there was a buyback clause in the original contracts. That contractual arrangement was changed some years ago. With the changing face of wagering, these people could be disaffected by this. The Minister for Racing and Gaming is in the chamber. I will be interested to see whether the government has come up with something that will be agreeable to the TAB agents.

Getting on to liquor licensing—another of my shadow portfolios—I was at the Australian Hotels Association awards last night. The minister was very glowing in his praise of a couple of our shadow ministers.

**Mr P. Papalia:** He was! You got praised.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** I even got some praise.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Our friend Bradley was effusive in his praise of you!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** And the shadow Minister for Tourism, who has been a bit of a thorn in the minister's side, got a very big accolade last night at the dinner. It was well deserved.

**Mr P. Papalia:** He did not hold back in his praise of the minister either!

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Even if the minister doesn't say so himself!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** On liquor licensing, we agreed to disagree on the saturation of the community with the large package liquor outlets—the Dan Murphy's and things like that. I believe work is ongoing on that to come in through regulation. I believe the government is working with the AHA on this. That is something that has gone through. We know that once it goes through, it goes through.

**Mr P. Papalia:** All parties, not just the AHA.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes. I can see the Minister for Sport and Recreation over there in his pale blue suit that he has had flown down from Hong Kong. He is looking very sharp!

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** He has his own tailor in Perth!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** No. He took me to a tailor in Hong Kong once. It was not the best. He said, "Do I know a man who could look after you!"

Anyway, an interesting thing came out of the budget, minister: the increased expenditure in operating costs at Optus Stadium. I wonder how the forecast was underestimated. I saw in the budget that part of it is due to a lot of full-time equivalent employees being employed. The minister has done well there. The first three or four times I went to the stadium—I was involved in the construction—I got lost every time. Attendants who show people where to go are still employed, which is good. The minister has done a great job with that. Some of my friends complain about the prices, but I am not sure—I cannot compare it. Some say it is more expensive than the MCG. I might ask the minister those questions in consideration in detail. It is a great stadium. Everyone who goes there is full of praise for it. I want to praise the staff. The attendants at Optus Stadium could not do more to help people find their seats.

The other thing on sport is the WACA ground redevelopment. I notice that there was a pledge made of \$30 million to the WACA. I cannot recall who pledged it! I am a supporter of the WACA. I am a member of the Parliamentary Friends of the WACA, along with Hon Colin Holt and the minister for Transport.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** You better hold a placard up this Saturday.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes. We have to support the WACA because the new stadium is not a cricket stadium.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** It was Bill Shorten, was it?

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Yes, \$30 million.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Did he?

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You would be very supportive of that.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** I am supportive of the WACA.

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**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes, I support that. Whichever way the election goes, even if the federal government is re-elected, I think the federal government will come up with the funding.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney):** Member for Armadale, I look forward to your budget speech!

**Dr A.D. Buti:** Thank you.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I do not really want to listen to it now.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Why do I provoke so much interjection? They must think I am an easy target, Mr Acting Speaker.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You're a nice man.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You stimulate their thought!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Another one for the Minister for Sport and Recreation: VenuesWest will begin a program of infrastructure upgrades across high-profile, bigger venues, to mitigate the risk of hostile vehicles. That is a big issue. The member for Dawesville was on a committee that looked at protecting big crowds.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Yes, crowded places.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** VenuesWest will ensure that all the bigger venues are given proper protection. They are not going to use the bollards that we have out the front of Parliament House. I think they will find more modern ones!

Perth Motorplex is one that the minister has not been able to do yet. The government obviously believes that Perth Motorplex should be run by a private operator. It has gone out to tender a couple of times. Through reading the budget, I sense that it has been a bit difficult, but the government is still hoping to achieve an outcome. The complex itself has been performing very well.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** This year far better than last year.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes, under the Minister for Sport and Recreation!

I want to now talk about my electorate. There is the Canning Bridge station. People have to understand that there is massive densification occurring in that part of my electorate around Canning Bridge. It is on both sides of the river—in the member for Bateman's electorate, too. Thousands more people will be living in and around that Canning Bridge precinct. There is an issue with the bus interchange. The buses park up on Canning Highway, just off the bridge. They hold up traffic. Students come off the train and go upstairs to get on the bus to go to Curtin University. It is not a very safe precinct. Also, a lot of elderly people who live in my electorate walk to the station and have to cross two or three lanes of traffic and go through a couple of sets of lights.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** In February this year, Infrastructure Australia identified the Canning Bridge station as a priority project, which is forecast to become capacity constrained in the longer term. I think the longer term has just about arrived. This has happened very quickly. South Perth, and especially around the Mill Point precinct, has gone through the biggest period of change since the Narrows Bridge was opened 60 years ago. There has been massive change, with the construction of a number of high-rise buildings and densification around the Canning Bridge precinct, so that train station has become very popular. We all know that governments of any persuasion have to work hard to get people out of their cars. We have always been a car-dependent city. We have to get people living closer to major transport facilities. What has happened in the Como region in South Perth is that the densification has led to six-storey apartment buildings going up alongside single-level homes. That has caused a bit of angst among existing residents, especially some of the older people. But the problem is: how do we bring in densification? Do we wait until everyone dies and then go in and buy all the houses and build a whole new city, or do we do it bit by bit? I think it has to be done incrementally. The City of South Perth is looking at how to make this process as good as possible for existing residents, so that it does not have that huge impact. But the Canning Bridge station is something we need to get on to.

Just up the road is the Manning Road ramp. I know that money has been put in the budget for the Manning Road ramp. This is another project that I have been supporting for a long time. It was supposed to be finished by the end of 2019. I think it is going to be a little later than that. I think there is \$15 million in this year's budget and another \$1.4 million in the following budget for it. The Manning Road ramp is another project.

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I have been a big Metronet watcher. I saw in a document somewhere that South Perth train station could one day be part of Metronet. Why would it not be? South Perth is a very important place.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** Right near Richardson oval.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Right near Richardson Park. I am hoping that there will be action with Metronet. I know that there are two lines being done now—the one through Canning Vale, which will be great for people who want to go to the new stadium, and the other on the northern line. They are both being funded in this budget. However, if people want to look at where Metronet will go in the future, there is not much indication of where the government intends to spend this money because there is nothing else in the budget. There is nothing definitive about the line to Ellenbrook, even though there is federal government money for it and Bill Shorten has offered even more funding for that line. We wonder what the government's plan is for the Ellenbrook line. Will it bring it in as a funding project in the next budget? I am not sure. It is a question that our members will consider very closely in the transport division of the budget estimates process.

In 2016, I was chair of a working group that looked at the possibility of using more ferries on the Swan River. Wherever I go, people ask me, "Why don't you have more ferries on your river?" There are ferries in Brisbane. Sydney Harbour is obviously a massive harbour and it has a lot of ferries. We do not really use water transport as much as we should. If the Swan River were on any other continent in the world, there would be a lot of boats on it. If it were in China, there would be boats taking all sorts of goods up the river. It has been predicted that if traffic gets too bad one day, we might go back to using the river like we used to 100 years ago. The working group looked at some possible ferry services. The one I was keenest about was one from the Raffles Hotel to Elizabeth Quay, because the densification on Canning Highway in Applecross with those new towers will mean that there will be several thousand new people living there. Rather than those people walking across the bridge to the train station to catch a train, which by the time it has come up from Mandurah might be full anyway, they could go to a jetty and jump on a fast ferry and be at Elizabeth Quay and on their way to work in probably 10 minutes. That is something we should look at. Our government was very keen to investigate the use of more ferries. I think the McGowan government is keener on rail transport, but I think we should try to expand the ferry service. In other cities, ferry services go to areas of densification. Because of the way Perth developed around the Swan and Canning Rivers, there is not much high density right on the river's edge; it is mostly big, rambling old blocks of land with lovely old houses. As these areas become more densified, we will need to service them with ferries.

I am glad the Treasurer is in the chamber. I mentioned this to him before. The Treasurer and I have adjoining electorates. I actually saw his predecessor when I took my wife to dinner at a restaurant in West Leederville. We were sitting at a table by the restaurant window and the next minute this guy knocked on the window. I opened it up and it was Geoff Gallop. He had taken his beard off. I said, "You look 20 years younger! It's fantastic." He asked whether I was still in Parliament, and I replied that I was glad that he was keeping up with my career! I noticed that Victoria Park Primary School, in the heart of the Treasurer's electorate, received \$7.1 million in the budget to build a new two-storey building. Not far away is Curtin Primary School—the old Koonawarra Primary School—which is a lovely little school with only 120 students. The problem when a school is small in number is that it does not have the clout that the bigger schools have. I am not speaking about you, Leader of the House.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Us little people have to fight hard!

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** It has not received a lot of maintenance funding. It is getting some at the moment, but I will tell members some of the things that I found when I went there a couple of weeks ago to have a look with the parents and citizens association and the school's council. It has flaking lead paint on the school exterior. The samples were analysed and that confirmed that there is a significant presence of lead. We should get the member for Nedlands to look at it; he is an expert on lead in hospitals. Funds have been allocated to repaint only the front of the school, but more needs to be done around the back. Asbestos is in the putty around the window sills. It is an old prefab-style building—like those old schools.

**Mr P. Papalia:** Perhaps you should raise it in estimates with me next week.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** I will. The minister will be doing estimates? I have all the notes here. I have to get it into *Hansard* so I do not forget.

**Mr P. Papalia:** We will have the department people here.

**Mr J.E. McGRATH:** Yes.

The basketball courts have cracked asphalt, which is beyond repair. The department said it might be able to put synthetic turf down, but the school thinks that the synthetic turf will be too hot for the kid's feet on hot days. The

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netball courts require resurfacing. The internal paths and access roads have cracks and potholes. Really, it is terrible. The tennis court there is in a shocking state of disrepair. In fairness, the department is doing some work. It is doing some re-stumping of the old buildings, but the P&C and school council said to me that they need a bit more. I told the school that I would raise it in here this week. I will raise it again during estimates next week.

Finally, I turn to end-of-life choices. I sat on the Joint Select Committee on End of Life Choices; I was one of two Liberal members on that committee. I was very pleased that the government has put an extra \$41 million in the budget for an end-of-life choices and palliative care package for Western Australians. Palliative care is very important; we all know that. But through many surveys, Western Australians have also demonstrated that they want to have some control at their end of life, depending on the experience that they are going through. We heard some very distressing evidence about the end of life of many Western Australians and the impact it had on their families, but by the same token one of the recommendations in our report was that palliative care should also be given more funding, because it is also very important. We all went around individually with people who work for palliative care providers. The work they do, particularly with cancer sufferers, was quite amazing. I am looking forward to the legislation and to see what the government puts into it; I believe that will come up in August. That will be a big debate in this place and I look forward to participating in it.

**MR K.M. O'DONNELL (Kalgoorlie)** [5.43 pm]: Greetings, Mr Acting Speaker. I have been a coach of junior sporting teams for nearly 20 years in T-ball, soccer, football and baseball. I am not very good at any of them, but I learnt to always say something nice at the end of the game. Even if Johnny or Sally did not get a kick or a touch, just find something constructive. I want to start my contribution to debate on the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 by congratulating the Treasurer on a surplus budget. So, I have been nice.

**Mr R.R. Whitby:** We kicked a tonne of goals.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No. I have said that from day one, I will thank the government every time. My electorate was allocated \$6.3 million for an MRI. I thank the Minister for Health. Finally!

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** Thank the federal Minister for Health.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Correct. We are getting the machine from the state, but the federal government granted the licence, which is fantastic; I thank them.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** And \$6.3 million.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Yes, that was contributed; thank you.

We need that. All these people in the goldfields keep traveling to Perth from Laverton, Warburton and Blackstone—all over the place—and we are talking in excess of 1 000 kilometres one way.

We have been allocated a family and domestic violence one-stop hub. The idea of it is very good in making it easy to access services with practitioners, health workers and councillors giving legal advice at a one-stop shop. Up to \$6 million is allocated for it. I hope that it works with the current women's refuge and that the government possibly looks at merging both of them and/or building a new place so that they all fit together rather than having a women's refuge helping at one location and then having to transport people to another location.

The goldfields–Esperance area was allocated \$40 million for the upgrade of the Coolgardie–Esperance Highway. I do not know how much of that is going into my electorate, but I hope it is a lot. The only three things that my electorate was allocated exactly were the MRI, a family and domestic violence hub and \$4 million to the Laverton Hospital. Various other things have been allocated to our area, plus everybody else's areas, such as the \$42.5 million methamphetamine action plan. I would love to know how much of that will be spent on my electorate. What will be spent in my electorate? I thoroughly agree with the \$2.3 million for the WA elder abuse helpline.

On the website, we can see that \$6.5 million is allocated for the Aboriginal Community Connectors program, which was called Aboriginal community patrols. I would like to know how much of that will come to the goldfields. We do not have a patrol in Kalgoorlie for that sort of thing. We have a patrol bus, but they do not interact with people, so I do not know whether part is that funding is going to that. The budget states that the program is to —

... improve community safety and reduce community consequences of Alcohol and Other Drugs and related 'at risk' behaviours

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That is fantastic. That leads me to ask: why move our Aboriginal affairs office from the main street of Hannan Street? I have brought this up before. The Indigenous affairs office was ideally situated in Hannan Street. The problem was that it had frosted windows and people could not see in and staff did not interact with the locals on the street. We have a chance here, with the budget, to next year hopefully put staff on who can interact with those in our community who live on the streets—those who come to the streets just to drink and converse—and help them go to various other government departments. We get some of the mob from Warburton and the desert, and they want to speak to somebody, whether it be the Department of Housing, Aboriginal medical services or legal aid. But at the moment, the office just tells them where to go. Somebody from the bush has no idea how far that is. I am not belittling them in that respect; language plays a part in trying to advise people where to go. But if we could end up budgeting and getting liaison officers to be available and help them work with the mob on the street, that would be very good.

There is \$4.8 million for an enhanced driver training and education program for regional areas. Again, it is well and good saying that, but I have no idea how much is allocated in my electorate for that program. I hope that in future the government can say, bang—we have all those figures.

I would just like to bring up a fact, and no correspondence will be entered into if my figures are incorrect—okay? I will note my research officer Cherie Hood did these!

**Ms A. Sanderson:** You are responsible for what you say in here.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** But he can thank his RO for all her hard work.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Yes! That is a better way to say it; thank you.

I would like to say that I have been here for over three years—for three budgets. If anybody wants to have a crack, out of the nine sections, where do members think Kalgoorlie–Boulder has come in total money allocated to us within the whole state during those three years? I will tell members. There are nine sections, and we came ninth. It is about \$120 million over three budgets. Of the total money allocated to us, this year we came eighth, last year we came eighth, and in the year before that we came eighth, but the Gascoyne had a huge amount of money thrown at it last year so it got up to eighth spot. For some reason, the government is not a fan of my electorate. Going by the calculations on the website, the south west is at the top of the hit list, with \$1.6 billion. I will have to get some tips from the member for Collie–Preston about what I can do. My good friend from the Pilbara, the Pilbara got \$1.5 billion. At second and third on the list—an anomaly—the Nationals WA kicked in and got \$700 million. The goldfields has issues and it needs help, just the same as everywhere else. According to the figures, we are going along well and do not need anything, but if I look back—I do not mean to be like this—I think it is because of the gold tax that we stopped.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I must interject very quickly.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member, will you take an interjection?

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I do not mind.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I think that you should go back to royalties for regions and see where the balance was there per head of population. I will not say any more.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Thank you; I appreciate that.

I would also like to talk about taxis. Further transition assistance came out the other day, with \$10 000 per taxi-car licence being available to eligible regional taxi licence holders. That is good. The main issue for our taxi people is that some of them have spent possibly up to \$200 000 for their plates. Apparently, that was a lease arrangement, yet they had to pay stamp duty as if they owned them. I would like the levy to continue to apply for a bit longer to help regional taxi leaseholders. They might not get the huge amounts that leaseholders in the metropolitan area get, but they should at least get more than \$10 000. That needs to be addressed. We have heard that many taxi operators are closing their doors. The \$10 000 assistance is totally insufficient, but it is better than nothing. I have spoken to some taxi operators in Kalgoorlie who will have to sell their house, pay off the mortgage, pay off the loan and then still pay more. Some have said that they might have to declare bankruptcy. It is not good. I am glad that Steve Thomas, the member for South West Region, has moved a disallowance motion in the Legislative Council to block the gazettal of the government's regulations in an attempt to bring the minister into meaningful consultation with regional taxi operators. Hopefully, something comes about there.

I would also like to talk about the Wiluna–Meekatharra highway, which I have spoken about a few times previously. It is not in my electorate. An amount of \$60 million was allocated in 2016 to seal the road, but that money was taken away and utilised elsewhere. We have had three budgets, but we have still missed out. I have

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spoken with both the Minister for Regional Development and the Minister for Transport and both were receptive. I strongly ask the Treasurer and the Minister for Transport to look at funding this road. I dare say that it will cost more than \$60 million now, but hopefully not too much more. That money could be spent on sealing the road between Wiluna and Meekatharra and that would greatly improve local accessibility, freight transport and economic opportunities in the region for both the north west and the goldfields. It would open up a lot of economic opportunities. If that is done, hopefully freight from the eastern states will not have to go all the way to Perth, and Kalgoorlie can become a transport hub where trucks can unload and then head off to the north west, thereby saving a day or two days. That could be big.

I would like to talk about Kambalda. I say up front that I did these calculations. At the last election, I did not win at the Kambalda polling box; I got 103 votes out of 719, so I got around 14 per cent. Labor topped the count and got 30 per cent, with 225 votes. I put it out there that the people of Kambalda voted for Labor at the last election. I am leading on to the swimming pool for Kambalda. I will give a quick recap, because I have brought this up before. On 31 March 2018, the Kambalda aquatic centre was forced to close, as it required maintenance and repair. The town site reached in excess of 44 degrees in summer. There were no adequate recreational swimming facilities for the youth, elderly and other members of the community. People hoped that they knew someone who had a backyard swimming pool, but there are hardly any in Kambalda. They had to drive to either Coolgardie, Norseman or Kalgoorlie. Some people in Kambalda cannot afford the petrol and some people I have spoken to do not even have a car, so they just to bear the heat. Minister MacTiernan and the state government are refusing to fund the shortfall of \$900 000. Minister MacTiernan said that the Coolgardie council will have to pay for it out of its reserves. If the Coolgardie council pays that, it will be left vulnerable, with nearly nothing in its reserves. Minister MacTiernan informed the mayor that it was unlikely the state government would assist on this issue. She stated that the Shire of Coolgardie should consider applying for funding in the next community sporting and recreation facilities fund round; however, I have been advised that this project will be ineligible as it has already commenced and progressed prior to funding being granted. In conclusion, I strongly propose that funding for the Kambalda aquatic centre be considered and approved. With this funding being rejected at both a state and federal level, the governments have not adhered to their statements to the public. I quote the following from the website of the Department of Local Government, Sport and Cultural Industries —

Aquatic centres in regional towns and cities are important for recreation, learning, exercise and rehabilitation. They are an integral piece of infrastructure. Aquatic centres also facilitate swimming lessons, including in-term and vacation swimming classes, school carnivals, teaching children and adults about water safety and survival techniques. Evidence supports that in remote communities, regular visits to the aquatic centre helps reduce chronic disease and improve educational and social outcomes.

Aquatic centres play an integral part in our society. I implore the state and federal governments to come to the party and agree to either go 50–50 in the shortfall, so that Kambalda gets the whole job done prior to the school holidays in December, or go thirds with the Shire of Coolgardie. I do not want the Coolgardie shire to deplete its reserves, which are made up of money put in by ratepayers and the people of Kambalda. In my 34 years in the goldfields, I do not ever once remember the people of Kambalda arcing up about anything. This is the first time I have seen it. I strongly recommend that other members across the way ask the Premier or the Treasurer whether they can help in any way. I dare say that other shires in the area would love to help by chipping in, but that is not what it is about. I apologise for being repetitive, but I hope that they come to the party. Can metropolitan members imagine what it would be like in summer if they did not swim in their backyard pool or did not go to the beach? Can they imagine what it would be like without a pool? I had a pool at my house but I sold it, so I do not have a pool anymore. There are times when we just want to jump in it.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** In Kalgoorlie you would.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Yes. It gets very hot just down the road from Kambalda. Members can imagine the miners when they get home and it is a stinker.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** They deserve to get in the pool. Again, I say that Kambalda is a Labor seat.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm*

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Greetings, Mr Acting Speaker. I am happy you are the Speaker again. I will finish shortly.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Oh! Go long.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No. Before I finish, defence was mentioned earlier and, as I said in my first two years, it would be good to relocate RAAF Base Pearce up to Kalgoorlie–goldfields.

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**Mr R.S. Love:** What on earth for? That's further away from the action. They won't be out near the coast where the enemy will come from.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No, they will be protected 600 kilometres inland. We need to look at job opportunities and decentralisation. It would be great if the land in the metropolitan area could be opened up. It would be better for the RAAF to be located in the goldfields because we would get an international airport, and it could work side by side with the airlines. One side of the airport could be set aside for commercial flights and the other side could be used for the Air Force. Imagine the boon to the goldfields economy! It would be huge.

Another thing that I would like to see in future budgets is allocation of money for prisoners to learn to drive road machinery, especially at the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison in Boulder. That would be great. Many prisoners are from remote areas. Whilst in prison, all that prisoners get is a certificate in anger management or work in the laundry or kitchen. I would rather see the government purchase road machinery and get trainers to come in and train the prisoners so that when they go out to, for example, Tjuntjuntjara, Warburton, Blackstone or Wingellina, they can actually do the road maintenance instead of the government hiring and relocating people from the Perth metropolitan area. There is a huge cost involved in that. The locals would have more pride if they were doing the work.

I have already mentioned in this place the outback highway that will go from Laverton to Winton, Queensland. Imagine if we could train prisoners to use road machinery on a section of that outback highway and then put up a big sign saying, "This section for the next four kilometres was built by prisoners from the Eastern Goldfields Regional Prison." It does not belittle them, it gives them a bit of pride. I tend to think that that would be better. I have been in the prisons and I have seen elders working in the laundry. I will bet members 5¢ that there is no way in the wide world those elders will go back out to Warburton or Wingellina and do the laundry in the house. It is not going to happen. They need more meaningful stuff. I guarantee that they would love to be driving bobcats, graders, trucks or anything. It would be very good.

I would like to close by repeating—I am not being derogatory—that Kambalda is in a Labor stronghold. The people in Kambalda voted for the Labor candidate at the last election. He smashed me; he took 30 per cent of the vote to my 14 per cent, and he was new to the area. He had not been up in the goldfields region for long.

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** What about the National Party?

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Do not get me started on that mob! The Nationals WA beat me in Kambalda too!

**Dr D.J. Honey:** They need re-education.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I know. Yes, that is correct. I am working on that.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** You beat them. You won the seat.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Yes. I really would appreciate it, and the people of Kambalda would appreciate it, if the government would come to the party and work with the Shire of Coolgardie, fly its little plane into Kambalda, get off there and say, "We're going to give you your money. Make sure you've got your thing. We don't want to see the people of Kambalda and people in remote areas suffering without a pool." The people are getting the pool, but they just need that bit of extra effort that those people in the metropolitan area take for granted. If I lived down in the metro area and it was hot, I would just drive down to Cottesloe, Hillarys or Joondalup. Does Joondalup have a beach?

**Ms E. Hamilton:** No. Ocean Reef.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Ocean Reef has a beach. I would go down to Ocean Reef.

**Mr R.H. Cook:** We've got a beach.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Do you have a beach?

**Mr R.H. Cook:** Best beach in Western Australia.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** All the Deputy Premier's Labor friends in Kambalda would love it if he could give the Premier, or the Treasurer on his other side, a nudge and just say, "How about we help them?" The people of Kambalda would love the Deputy Premier for ever and a day. I will even remind them. I will even give the Deputy Premier a thankyou in here, even though my party will be angry if I do it.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** You could always swap sides.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Vince did it; you could do it!

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No, thank you.

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The last thing is that we are ninth in the last three budgets. If I were a racehorse, I would probably be put out to stud or pasture.

**Mrs A.K. Hayden:** Stud!

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Stud? Great! How about we move up the rung?

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** What do you mean? Ninth on the —?

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Sorry. The member was not here earlier?

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** No.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I did some adding; well, somebody else did, but I have to take the hit if it is wrong. Each year we have come eighth out of nine regions in how much money is allocated directly into that electorate—not as a global state, just an electorate. We came eighth this year, eighth last year and eighth the year before, in the first three budgets I have been here for, and we are now ninth, because the Gascoyne region ended up getting \$65-odd million last year. We are last.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Are you talking about capital expenditure?

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Yes. Of the main lot, we allocate \$6 million for our MRI—and thank you, Deputy Premier. Six million dollars is what I count, not \$42.5 million for the meth, because that is state-wide. We are ninth. I would love it if Minister Johnston sat down with the Treasurer and the Premier and said —

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Yeah, but you're not counting your current expenditure.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Most of the money is in the current.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** Yes, and we have things coming on, but I only counted that which you said were for this year. If we can move up a rung, it would be appreciated. The people of the goldfields will appreciate it and they will know where it has come from. At the moment my main priority is the Kambalda pool. I would love it if it were the government's. If the minister were to come to the goldfields, we could have a coffee or a beer. He does not even have to see me.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** I always see you!

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I know, but I would love the minister to get in his little plane and come to Kambalda. The people will come out in droves.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** I will be there—not this Friday, but the following Friday.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** If the minister could come with a little chequebook —

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** I'm not a chequebook minister.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I even emailed the Treasurer and asked how about he and I go on a road trip together. I have not had a reply yet, so I take it he does not —

**Ms M.J. Davies:** What was the response to your request?

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I am still waiting. When I passed him in the hall, he said that he had received my email. I am not trying to get in his ear, but the people of Kambalda would love it. They really would. The 30 per cent of Kambalda who voted for Labor would love it if the government stepped up. The member for Pilbara could give us \$900 000 out of his \$800 million—or whatever he is getting. I want to finish up now.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** Keep going!

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** There is a provision in the standing orders. I can give you an extension.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney):** No. He is on his extension.

**Mr W.J. Johnston:** There's a provision. Ask the Clerk.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Not that I am aware of.

**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** No, thank you. I do not want to waffle.

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** Take it out of royalties for regions. That's where it should come from.

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**Mr K.M. O'DONNELL:** I thoroughly agree, but the government does not.

I am finished now. Thank you.

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the Nationals WA)** [7.11 pm]: The member for Kalgoorlie is a very hard act to follow. As I rise to make my contribution to the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019, I lend my support to the member for Kalgoorlie in his call for funding for the Kambalda pool. My colleagues and I met with community members in the shire about that very matter not too long ago, and that community has some very passionate people. The member's argument on the importance of a community pool, particularly in areas such as the goldfields, is very persuasive. He has our full support for that project. We, too, will continue to advocate on their behalf.

I would like to start my contribution with a review of what I said in the last state budget debate and the commentary about the second budget that the McGowan Labor government brought down. I began —

It is with a heavy heart, as the leader of a party that represents the good people of regional Western Australia, that we come to this place to talk about the second budget of the McGowan Labor government. In this budget, we see no commitment to real and meaningful regional development, and no commitment to royalties for regions. Despite what the Premier and the Treasurer continue to say about royalties for regions, there is no commitment to the communities that generate the wealth of this state. It is unfortunate that for the Labor Party, regional Western Australia is a political pawn. The people of regional Western Australia are either showered with funding or ignored completely. The government's lack of commitment to a regional development plan and to a fund that was designed to assist those communities to grow and thrive will have long term ramifications for this state.

...

Regional Western Australians know now that this government was elected on a lie. It was elected on promises of creating jobs, keeping royalties for regions and maintaining services and making sure that ordinary householders were not impacted. It has done everything but. It has done exactly the opposite. We all know what happens when we lie. Eventually, the truth is revealed.

Unfortunately, 12 months on, those words still ring true with the third Labor government budget brought down last week. This Labor government has done nothing to persuade me or my party that it is governing for all Western Australians. This budget cements the fact that this government has no vision for regional Western Australia. In the budget I cannot find the kind of investment programs that marked the Liberal–National government's time in office. We made a \$350 million investment in agriculture. In question time today, the Premier talked about agriculture. In addition to the Department of Agriculture and Food's budget, \$350 million over a number of years was invested in research and development, groups that were on the ground such as grower groups, marketing, drought relief, and business development. A whole raft of programs sat within the Seizing the Opportunity Agriculture initiative. I see nothing like the \$40 million Water for Food program, which was auspiced through royalties for regions and the former department of water. It was an irrigation initiative spread right across the state, which was a partnership between the private sector and other organisations to leverage federal government funding to expand our irrigated agricultural footprint in Western Australia. I do not see the kind of significant investment in health that we made with innovative programs such as telehealth, which was funded through the Southern Inland Health Initiative and is now a mainstay of the Department of Health in regional Western Australia. That innovation came from being able to have a discussion with health providers that we needed to do things differently. As I see it, there is no capacity to do that in the royalties for regions budget or the health budget.

Where are programs such as aged-care initiatives and education initiatives that maintain the basic and essential services that our communities deserve? They are not in the budget, or if they are, they are the tail end of programs the Liberal–National government invested in the last time around. I think we are the poorer for it. Recent announcements such as the \$40 million that the federal government put on the table for the southern forests irrigation scheme were championed by the previous government to make sure that we had investment to unlock the potential of the Manjimup–Pemberton area. We championed that cause and the federal government has now put money on the table as a result. We did that both in government and in opposition. We now have a program that farmers in the south west corner will welcome with open arms. It will cement the productivity of that region for many years to come.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

p3225b-3284a

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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Likewise, \$190 million will come from the federal government for the Myalup–Wellington scheme. Had it not been put on the agenda by the previous Liberal–National government, there would be no program to deal with the biggest challenge we have. Outside the Ord River irrigation scheme, the biggest body of water in the state, which could not be utilised, is Wellington Dam. That we now have federal funding committed is a legacy of the Liberal–National government, and we can start working on unlocking the potential of the Myalup and Collie irrigation districts.

There has been none of that aspirational thinking or forward thinking from this Labor government. There is no space for this type of thinking in this budget, which reveals the government's true colours. It reveals a singular focus on metropolitan Perth and delivering Metronet, regardless of the pain it will cause ordinary everyday Western Australians and regardless of the opportunity loss we see as a result of the decision to divert funds to that project. This government has presided over some of the highest unemployment rates that we have seen in 17 years. That was well reported and canvassed in this place earlier this year. Despite being a party that came to government saying that it would create jobs and that it would be a government for jobs, Western Australia has had the highest unemployment rate since 2002. This government is reaping the financial rewards of the hard work of many who came before it to restore the GST to Western Australia. At every opportunity it claims that the success is its alone and forgets that many people were involved in rectifying the situation so that Western Australia would get its fair share of the GST. The first person I recall making a real stand on that was the then member for O'Connor, Tony Crook, when he moved a motion in federal Parliament to draw the federal Parliament's attention to the fact that something needed to be fixed. From that point forward any number of people from Western Australia—our members, members of the Liberal Party and, I concede, members from the government side—continued that work. It was not this Labor government's success in attracting that. This was a matter of timing. Goodness! What I would have given for this set of books and a floor in the GST return to the state when I was a cabinet minister! It would have been wonderful. That is matched by the iron ore prices. Regardless of what the Treasurer and the Premier say, this set of books has been created by a floor in the GST and a fair share returning to Western Australia—off the back of the efforts of many people—and iron ore prices that have returned to a significantly higher level. Members and commentators will rightly point out that our previous government had record iron ore prices as well. We do not deny that but the key difference for us was that there was no floor in the GST. We saw those funds go to building roads and infrastructure in Victoria and New South Wales rather than being retained here to deal with the fact that a lot of people—almost the population of Tasmania—moved to Western Australia. We needed to accommodate that growth while dealing with cost-of-living pressures because we were competing with a burgeoning mining sector with very high wages growth.

This surplus that our Treasurer and Premier have been spruiking up and down St Georges Terrace has been built largely on those two aspects. We contend also that it has been built on the death of royalties for regions. Once and for all, the final nail has been driven into that coffin. If we look at the numbers in royalties for regions, there is no longer any pretence that the government sees this as a real regional development program. It is there for show only because the government knows that there would be enormous political ramifications if those words were removed from the state budget. We say that royalties for regions is dead because, despite \$4.2 billion being budgeted over the forward estimates for this program, \$1.6 billion is what we contend to be normal government expenditure; that is, \$1.1 billion is for the Water Corporation for subsidies; \$160 million for running our orange school buses; \$35.2 million for employing regional education assistants; \$180 million for TAFE subsidies; and \$224 million for remote community water and power. That has been added in this year. It is something new that has been transferred into royalties for regions. We will always support that spending is needed on those very important services. We are not for one moment saying funding should not go to the Water Corporation to provide subsidies to make sure we have some degree of equality of water pricing between metropolitan and regional areas. However, we contend that it should come from consolidated revenue. It was never designed to come from royalties for regions. I saw the Premier on GWN last Friday night and I heard him say —

Under the last Lib–Nat government, royalties for regions was used for health, education and infrastructure. Under this government it is being used for health, education infrastructure, roads and the like. It is no different.

That was disingenuous of our Premier. Royalties for regions under this Labor government is a shadow of its former self. It has been pillaged by this government to pay for excesses in its election commitments and it is ripping money out to pay for day-to-day services and freeing up money in the rest of the budget to spend on its pet project, Metronet. I might add that it is also going on non-essentials. It caused quite a furore in my electorate when we heard that \$300 million would go towards the East Perth power station refurbishment. I will explain why there is that level of anger or disappointment. For us, it is about dealing with the “need to have” before dealing with the “nice to have”. There are plenty of examples in which those needs to have are not being addressed by this government. To add to that rancour in regional Western Australia, to rub salt in the wounds when people there see

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this program being demolished, the budget papers reveal that the Labor Party underspent royalties for regions to the tune of \$320 million last year. It did not spend \$320 million through that program. That is opportunity lost. It is \$320 million that could have gone to extending the patient assisted travel scheme. It could have funded additional paid paramedics to support our hardworking volunteers across regional Western Australia or any plethora of local community projects. However, that \$320 million will go straight back to consolidated revenue and will no doubt be spent in the Perth metropolitan area. That is why we have always said that our concern is not the fact that royalties for regions remain in the budget; it is about who manages it and about the custodianship of that program. It was always going to end up like this under this government.

All of that forms our proposition to the house today. There is an opportunity cost: the benefit that is missed or given up when one alternative is chosen over another. I am sure everyone is aware of that. When we make decisions, there are consequences. This government has chosen Metronet over returning the funds it cut from the agricultural college trust fund, which is something the government cut in the last budget. It chose Metronet over restoring funds to the boarding away from home allowance, which is something those members on the opposite side still do not understand the importance of. When there is not a school that children can attend in their home town or community, they have to go away. It is not a choice that parents make—they do not have a choice. The boarding away from home allowance supports families who do not have a local school to send their children to to finish their schooling.

The government chose Metronet over the farm water grant scheme. We are seeing communities that are struggling with water shortages, particularly in the member for Roe's area. There have been declared water shortages. A program existed for many years that allowed the opportunity for our farming communities to become more self-sufficient. When we have a rapidly drying climate, particularly in the south west corner of Western Australia, we would have thought that programs like that had the support of members opposite; yet it has gone and there is no opportunity for those farmers to try to improve their self-sufficiency and reduce pressure on the main system through the Water Corporation.

I think Metronet has been chosen also over addressing challenges facing communities in the Murchison. I apologise to the member for North West Central, I was not in the chamber when he was speaking; I have no doubt he spoke about Meekatharra Hospital and single nursing posts in Cue, Yalgoo and Mt Magnet. There are 11 towns in WA that have a single nursing post.

**Mr V.A. Catania:** Eight now.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Eight, sorry; I stand corrected. I say to the house, imagine being a single nurse on roster in those remote communities. Imagine being an elderly person or a mother who needs assistance for her child only to find that her nurse is on leave, there is no nurse because they have not been able to recruit one or they have gone to assist in an emergency at a neighbouring town some 200 kilometres away. That is a reality in those Murchison communities. Between December and January 2016–17 the towns of Cue, Mt Magnet and Yalgoo were without a nurse for up to two weeks. Those towns are remote and small, but they deserve access to appropriate health care. We have sat in front of those communities and listened to them and their concerns about what would happen and what has happened when they cannot access appropriate support when they need it.

This government has chosen Metronet over midwives. Almost half of all the midwifery positions in WA country hospitals last year went unfilled, leaving pregnant women and newborns vulnerable. Our questions in this Parliament revealed that the WA Country Health Service figures show very few of the advertised midwife vacancies in the goldfields, great southern, Kimberley, midwest and wheatbelt last year were filled. Of the 55.6 full-time positions advertised, 25.6 were left vacant. This state government has been unable to attract one midwife to big regional centres such as Esperance, Carnarvon, Narrogin and Kununurra. Where is the plan to deal with this? I am aware that some work has been done in my home town of Northam, for instance. A model is being developed to support families and I commend the government for that but we have to start addressing these numbers. We have to ask: Where are the rewards for people prepared to go into these roles; to take on midwifery roles and general nursing duties? How do we deal with the issues they are putting forward as the reasons they do not want to take up these roles? However, the government cannot and will not do that because it chose Metronet rather than looking to be innovative in certain areas of the Department of Health.

I think the government's decision to funnel the entire windfall of \$185 million from the sale of the taxpayer asset of PEXA into Metronet also points to its priorities. It was done when there were serious issues with the Geraldton Health Campus. An 84-year-old grandmother was forced to wait on the floor of the local hospital due to a lack of beds, yet the Treasurer has decided to put that \$185 million into the Metronet project rather than deal

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with our stretched resources and, potentially, being able to bring forward some of that build and investment rather than focusing on improving services at Geraldton hospital.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Geraldton hospital spent 21 days under code yellow conditions last year, which highlights the acute shortage of beds at that overstretched facility. We have met with members of that community and we understand their concern. When we see the government's priorities of building an extra kilometre of Metronet versus an 85-year-old grandmother on the floor of the Geraldton hospital emergency department, I think most people would say that it is not unreasonable for us to ask why and how is this happening in a community today. Likewise, businesses could rightly be disappointed that the budget papers contain no relief from payroll tax. It was always said that when the GST situation was resolved payroll tax would be addressed. It is a tax on jobs and a handbrake on our economy. The Premier has promised to create 30 000 jobs, and yet we have a tax on jobs. I encourage the Treasurer to revisit that decision. When the government is posting a surplus, when iron ore prices are high and the GST situation has been resolved, if the government wants to stimulate the economy, it needs to unleash the potential of our small and medium business sector to employ more people, and get more people off the unemployment rolls. Members will recall that earlier this year the Nationals moved an amendment to legislation being debated that would have lifted the payroll tax eligibility threshold from \$850 000 to \$1 million. That is still an option for this government, and I encourage it to find, if not that way, then some other way to provide relief to people doing the hard yards to create jobs and prosperity for this great state.

As I stated when I began my contribution, this government is defined by opportunity lost for regional Western Australians. It is overlooking what Western Australia needs to have for what is nice to have—for the shining big statement that says, "We have delivered Metronet". In regional Western Australia, that comes at a very high cost. We have listened to the members for North West Central and Roe, and no doubt the members for Moore and Warren–Blackwood, when they make their contributions, will have other stories about health services and education, essential services and supporting volunteers who are doing those hard yards, and who will feel rightly short-changed. The government is now spending more on one single metropolitan project than it is on a regional development program designed for the entire state. Let me say that again: the government is spending more on one single metropolitan project than it is on regional development for the whole of regional Western Australia—a regional development program that was designed to serve regional Western Australia. The government is failing regional Western Australia, and we deserve better.

In the last few minutes I have, I will talk about the bouquets. There were some glimmers of hope. I know the member for North West Central would have acknowledged the funding that was returned for the Carnarvon aged care project. I see the Minister for Health in the chamber, and I add my thanks for the return of that \$5 million. There were genuine tears of gratitude, I know, from community members and members of Parliament alike when it was shared with us that they would finally be able to start. However, I would respectfully say that they would probably be now cutting the ribbon on that facility had that money been left in the budget at the beginning of this term of government. The cynical person inside me—after 10 years in this chamber, she has become more cynical—would say that the funding was cut and then reinstated so that there would be a ribbon to cut just before the 2021 state election. Nonetheless, we thank the Minister for Health for that project. It was, without doubt, one of the worst facilities I have ever visited in my life, and I would have been appalled to think that one of my family members would end up there. There is some gratitude, and we will celebrate that win and thank the Minister for Health on that front.

I welcome in my electorate two projects that we have been heavily advocating for—both of them road projects. The wheatbelt secondary freight network received some funding. Members will recall that a few weeks ago \$70 million was put on the table by the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael McCormack, for a project that 42 local governments across the wheatbelt have been championing for some time—to try to unlock the bottlenecks and create a more seamless road network in that area. The roads carry a significant amount of our grains, lime and all manner of freight. Roads from one shire were butting up against others, where they were changing from a restricted access vehicle road to something else; it was a real mishmash and a really challenging proposition for not only local governments but also the state government. It was inhibiting our growth and our ability to manage a growing road freight task. We welcome the \$70 million from the federal government for that. That was a wonderful announcement from our Deputy Prime Minister. There was also \$16 million from the Main Roads budget. The Minister for Transport was quite critical of how the money was cashflowed by the federal government, but I note she has done almost the same thing in her budget, and back-ended all of the funds. There is about \$100 000 in this financial year, but that nonetheless will allow those local governments to come together and complete the plans and prioritisation, and we will continue to advocate for additional funding for those very important roads.

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There is also \$18 million for works to Great Eastern Highway between Walgoolan and Southern Cross. This is a challenging piece of road. There is a bridge going across it that belongs to Arc Infrastructure. It is a very narrow section of the Great Eastern Highway. The drop-offs are big, and if two trucks are passing at the same time, bound by the parameters of that bridge—a big concrete structure that is close to the edge of the road—it is very scary. I called the Shire of Westonia to talk about this earlier in the week when I noticed it in the budget. The shire CEO, who had just come back from Southern Cross, had had a very near miss there. He said that they had a few moments of silence in the car when they realised they had just had a very scary moment. That will require Arc Infrastructure to work with Main Roads. Any of us in that region, where there is an intersection of Arc with any of our Main Roads or Public Transport Authority infrastructure, will know that that is not an easy task. I place on record tonight that we will be wholeheartedly encouraging Arc to come to the party and start working very cooperatively now that that money is in the budget. I give credit where it is due. That has been welcomed by the Shire of Westonia and every road user who travels along that very major artery for our state. It is the major east–west connection, but there are sections of that road that, quite frankly, are terrifying. We look forward to seeing the works commence on that front.

I am concerned that funding in the royalties for regions budget for regional men's health comes to an end. That program has been funded for a number of years. It has always come from royalties for regions. I am desperately hoping that it has been shifted to somewhere else in the budget, and that those funds have been shifted to the Department of Communities or the Department of Health. I would very much welcome that advice. For those members in the house who are not familiar with regional men's health, Owen Catto and his team have been doing a wonderful job. They are a health promotion outfit that looks after and educates men, predominantly groups of blokes and individuals, about their physical health, making sure that they understand they need to look after it, and also their mental health. They do suicide prevention and work with a raft of community groups right across regional Western Australia. In fact, they have just been over to New South Wales, off the back of the horrible drought that state is having. They have been invited by some of the communities over there to share the stories that they have been sharing with our communities for the last 12 years, because they are so well respected in that domain. I truly hope that the funding has gone from royalties for regions and is somewhere else in the budget, but I have not been able to find it. If it is not, I would be bitterly disappointed and very surprised, because I think they have done a wonderful job, and we have a number of challenges in regional Western Australia, particularly in relation to suicide, and particularly in the wheatbelt. We need to make sure that we are doing everything to maintain those projects that we know work well. That was certainly one of them, and I think every single person who has come into contact with that group would attest to the same thing.

I would like to finish by recapping that although from the perspective of the electorate of Central Wheatbelt there are some things in the budget that I have welcomed, for us this is an opportunity lost. The funds allocated to royalties for regions are diminishing because they are paying for ordinary everyday expenditure, and being underspent on top of that. The government is inhibiting the opportunity for those communities to drive innovation, to partner, and to plug holes where we see them emerging. It is disappointing, because regional development is hard. It requires a concerted effort and a long-term view. Unfortunately, I think the comment I made last year at the beginning of my response to the budget speech—that regional Western Australia is a political pawn when it comes to the Labor Party—is true, because the regions are either showered with funding or they are ignored completely. We are starting to see pockets of regional Western Australia being showered with funding, but there are some real challenges emerging right across the board, particularly in health and education. These are people's lives, and we have always said that health and education are deal breakers. If the government does not get those fundamentals right, people will pack up their families and leave and go elsewhere. In addition to restoring royalties for regions to what it was originally intended to do, we call on the ministers for Health and Education and Training and the Treasurer to not forget these little communities, and the bigger communities. We are talking about some of the challenges being faced at Geraldton Health Campus. Specialist wait times are spiralling out of control and that can make all the difference to a child who requires an appointment with a hearing specialist; it can then impact on their learning and all of a sudden it can roll into a far bigger issue. I have to say that the statistics in regional Western Australia for that sort of thing are quite horrifying.

We need to make sure that focus is returned to that to ensure that regional communities are not forgotten. Unfortunately, when we look at this budget, we see a very heavy focus on Metronet, with every spare dollar going into that key project. It is extraordinarily disappointing to see this government spending more on one single metropolitan project than on a regional development program that is supposed to stretch across the length and breadth of this great state. It is an opportunity lost.

**MRS A.K. HAYDEN (Darling Range)** [7.41 pm]: Before I start, I would like to apologise to Hansard: I have a cold, so hopefully Hansard is able to understand me!

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I rise to respond to the budget speech, this being the Labor government's third budget. Sadly, it continues the theme of the last two budgets in that it is a budget that shows no mercy. The government showed no mercy in its first budget, it showed no mercy in its second budget and sadly, last week when it brought down this budget, it again showed no mercy. This state budget has failed the people of Western Australia. It has failed to provide relief for families and it has hit seniors with even more cuts. It leaves key projects across the state, including projects in Darling Range, in the dark.

As I said, this is the state Labor government's third budget. It has had three opportunities to stand up for the very people it purports to protect, yet I can tell members that the mums and dads that Labor pretends to stand up for are hurting and struggling. They know that they have been let down by the very party that campaigned for their vote on the promise of advocating and standing up for them. To say I am disappointed with this state budget would be an understatement. This show-no-mercy budget is just another demonstration of the way in which the Labor government has eroded the processes and procedures of Parliament. It has, on so many levels, shown disregard for the processes, protocols and operations of the Parliament—things like stacking committees at the beginning of the term; a lack of transparency, which has been shown in this budget; broken promises, which it covers with spin instead of detail and which again has been shown in this budget, with its lack of detail; an inability to answer questions in question time; and rewriting history to suit its own warped sense of achievement.

We have heard government ministers say that the former Liberal–National government delivered nothing for roads in the East Metropolitan Region, yet they stand there cutting ribbons and saying, “Isn't this underpass fantastic? Isn't this new road extension fantastic? Look at all the roadworks around town!” Yes; they were all projects that were funded, started and delivered under the former Liberal–National government, but members opposite choose to rewrite history to pat themselves on the back, when in actual fact they have not done a bit of work on any road infrastructure. Everything has been a carryover from the previous government. On top of its lack of transparency, its broken promises and its spin with no detail, I am very concerned about the slippery slope the government is going down with its misuse of Government House, but we will leave that one for another day.

The Premier and the Treasurer stood there today during question time and instead of answering questions, they patted themselves on the back. They explained to the whole house how important they were at their breakfast, how many people clapped, cheered and applauded them, and how many people came up and shook their hand. They made self-congratulatory comments throughout question time. I googled “self-congratulatory”, and the first two words that came up were “arrogant” and “smug”. I would suggest that if the Premier and the Treasurer want to come across as working-class people of the Labor Party who stand up for struggling Western Australians, they should stop patting themselves on the back and get out of St Georges Terrace. I invite them to come down to Darling Range, although I know they will not, because last time they came down they did not get a nice welcome. How about they go to the electorate of Armadale, or out to Ellenbrook, where there are struggling Labor constituents, families and seniors who are trying to pay their household bills. The Premier and Treasurer should stop walking down St Georges Terrace, thinking that that is where they get their credit and mark their performance by how many rounds of applause they get after delivering speeches to a room full of people from St Georges Terrace. They should get out into the real world and start listening to the real families who gave them their vote, to protect them.

In the last budget the government increased household fees by up to just over \$730, when we add in the previous budget—the extra cost on household bills. When we add in the heartless attack of this budget, we are now up to more than \$850 that this Labor government has put on struggling households and seniors. At the same time as it has put that extra burden onto households trying to pay bills, it has also cut \$15 million from the hardship utility grant scheme—the very program that was set up to support people who are struggling and finding it hard to make ends meet. First, the government increased the cost-of-living rates for water, power and car registration, and then it took away the very program that is in place to help people in need. No, the government will take the last penny from their pocket and also reduce the assistance that is available out there.

When we look at the detail of this budget, the old saying that the devil is in the detail comes to mind. One of the reasons I won the seat of Darling Range was that the community was struggling with massive hikes in the cost of living. The McGowan government mercilessly increased the cost of living in its first two budgets, and now in its third. It is now trying to downplay these increases with smoke and mirror tricks. It cites different percentages and breaks things down to try to trick the people of Western Australia. The lack of respect this government shows our community and the people of Western Australia is, to me, simply disgraceful.

The government is standing there, patting itself on the back and saying that everything is hunky-dory with the economy, but it needs to simply look at the paper. Every day in the paper there is an article on the cost of living and how people are struggling. The one article that should have hit home to everybody was the one on 11 May

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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about bodies lining the streets—the number of homeless people out there, and they are young people. They are homeless either because they are too scared to go home or because they cannot afford a home of their own. Meanwhile, the Premier and the Treasurer are saying that they are doing a great job. They should pick up the paper and stop looking only at the articles in which they are pictured smiling and being slapped on the back with people saying, “Well done”; they should read the articles that matter—the articles that are telling the real story of people hurting out there. That is one of the biggest issues this government needs to address—to look in its own backyard.

Many government backbenchers have constituents who are struggling. As I did once before in this place, I call on the backbenchers to come forward and tell the government and the cabinet ministers the real stories that are going on out in their electorates. If they do not, they will not be sitting on those back benches for very much longer.

The spin, the twists and turns, the smoke—this government just keeps on playing the blame game, dodging questions and twisting the truth. It just keeps using spin and smoke and mirrors as though it is in a theatre. The government may twist and make up numbers and figures as much as it likes, but for the people who are struggling to pay their bills, only one thing shows them whether the government has increased the cost of bills—that is, how many pennies are left in their pocket. The government can twist its numbers as much as it likes, but when people take out the pennies left in their pockets, they will know exactly what the government has done regardless of what it has said about how much the fees and charges have increased by with its lies and the mistruths in the budget.

For example, the government has kept saying that over the years it has had one of the lowest increases in the cost of living, but when we look at the budget papers and the table “Representative Household Expenditure Increases”, we see that over the past 10 years this government had the highest expenditure increase in household bills in 2017–18, with \$438.39. It is table 8.6 in the 2017–18 budget, in case the minister is wondering. The proof in the pudding is in its own budget paper. It has had the biggest increase in dollar value over 10 years—a \$438.39 increase in 2017–18. As much as the government tries to disguise it, the people of Western Australia can see the truth. Instead of supporting them, it cuts their funding and ties their hands behind their back. It has increased the cost of power bills, water bills and car registration. It has cut assistance to community organisations such as the Western Australian Council of Social Service, Foodbank, the Salvation Army, Linkwest and Vinnies. They are struggling to meet the demand that has been created by, and has grown under, this government’s very harsh and cruel increases in the cost of living.

I want to give an example of the smoke and mirrors. The honourable member for Cottesloe has talked about the water tax quite often in this place. Part of the household modelling is how we work out our cost of living. In previous years, the average household consumed 250 kilolitres of water. The McGowan government, in this budget, decided to increase the cost of water again, so it wondered how it would make it look like less of an increase than it is. Instead of modelling costing on a household using 250 kilolitres of water, as it had done previously, it chose to do the modelling on a household using only 240 kilolitres of water. It set that up last year and it thought that worked quite well. It thought to try it again this year but this time apply it to electricity bills.

In 2016–17, the modelling assumed that the average household consumed 5 198 units of electricity and that is how the cost of living and the increase is worked out. In 2017–18, again, the household model assumed that the average household consumed 5 198 units of electricity. In 2018–19, the household model assumed the average household consumed 5 198 units of electricity. What do members think is the assumed electricity consumption for 2019–20? We would think that it is the same as it has been for the last three years, 5 198 units, but no. This is where the smoke and mirrors come in. Instead of using 5 198 units as the average rate of consumption, the government has reduced it to 4 904 units. That is a 294-unit drop. The government is saying that the average household cost has gone up by only this much. I am sorry. The government is using mistruths, cloak and daggers and smoke and mirrors. This is going on in our budget papers when it is meant to be a rolled-gold transparent government. It has now changed the whole way that we are using the household average usage. It is reducing the number from 5 198 units to 4 904 units and claiming that a household will pay only \$1 790 a year based on the new household model. If we use the housing model that was used last year and the year before and the year before that, WA households are now paying \$1 875 a year instead of \$1 790 a year. That is a \$321 lie. That is a \$320 hit. There is a \$320 difference between the two household models.

In 2017, the Labor Party campaigned on the platform of rolled-gold transparency. Now, it is embarrassed that it is again hiking up the water bill and, to try to lessen the blow, it tries to fool Western Australians by changing the household model as it did with water. It has changed the household model for electricity and water to try to make it look as though its increases are not that bad. As I told members, the people of Western Australia do not care about percentages. They do not care about household models. They do not care about the smoke and mirrors that the government uses with the units. They care about how many pennies are left in their pocket. If the government changes the household model, no matter how it spins it and how much it spends on the political spin doctors in its

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offices, the same pennies will come out of that pocket regardless of whether people are being told the truth. The people of Western Australia are going to feel that extra \$321 by which the government has increased the cost of living. It has not made the increase transparent, and people will know that the government has tried to take them for fools. We all know that people in Western Australia are not fools. When the government thinks that it can pull the wool over the eyes of the people of Western Australia and fool them with this trickery, it shows how low it will go to win a vote.

While we are on the topic of how low the government will go—I am going to digress a moment—Labor went to the election promising no increases in fees or taxes and rolled-gold transparency. I have just proved that is a load of baloney. Labor is campaigning in the lead-up to the federal election and it has no limits. No bar is low enough for the Labor Party. I will refer to a very good friend of mine whom everyone in this place knows. We have only to look at the nasty personal attacks that Labor has made on an outstanding member of Parliament to see what Labor is like. Labor has attacked this member of Parliament because it is running scared, and it should be. This member is Ken Wyatt, the federal member for Hasluck. We could not get a more genuine, honest and dedicated individual than Ken Wyatt. He would be one of the warmest and most charming gentleman I have ever met. He has put up with a lot in his life and endured a lot of bad behaviour. I have sat and talked to Ken a lot about this behaviour and he never wants it repeated, and we simply cannot repeat some of it. Ken has always said to me that it is not worth giving it oxygen—just let it go—but he rang me on Sunday totally upset and disappointed. I have never, ever heard Ken this upset and disappointed. He was not angry. He was upset and disappointed because the Labor state secretary took an innocent photo, manipulated it, made a complete lie and then put it on social media.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** The misrepresentation of the generous act by Ken Wyatt on that day has been spun into the awful stuff that Ken had to endure. I am telling members this story because I am sick and tired of the lengths to which the Labor Party is willing to go to win a vote. All members on the other side need to understand that when they go to win a vote, there are people out there who are human beings. Ken Wyatt is a human being.

**Dr D.J. Honey:** A very decent one.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** Exactly; he is a decent human being. I thank the member for Cottesloe. I can tell members exactly what will happen when Labor members attack a decent human being just for a vote, make budgets such as this, and manipulate the units on which the modelling is done to try to fool the people of Western Australia. People do not reward bad behaviour. There is one thing I am certain of: the Labor Party has assisted Ken Wyatt with this behaviour, because I know on Saturday he is going to be re-elected. He is going to be re-elected and he is going to gain extra votes for the bad behaviour he has had to endure. I just hope that everyone on the other side of this house will go back to the state secretary and maybe tell him, "You need to get in line, buddy, and you need to start lifting your standards", because making up lies and mistruths about decent individuals is well below any standard I have seen before, and I am very, very disappointed. I did not expect a lot from Labor, but this has really disappointed me. Can the Labor Party please stop and remember that grubby tactics do not help it. Its members stand here and want to introduce laws —

**Ms A. Sanderson** interjected.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** You have just walked in; will you just shoosh up!

**Ms A. Sanderson:** I have interjected to this for the last 15 minutes.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** You can leave; I will be happy for that.

The Labor Party comes into this place and wants to give us guidelines about how we look after animals. It wants to give us guidelines telling us not to go over speed humps with a dog in the car. Labor Party members come in here and say to eat no meat on Monday. We have female members of Parliament saying not to address them by their gender, but as a person, yet when they are out on the street, they attack a genuine man like Ken Wyatt who is serving his community and putting his hand up to do a good job. The Labor Party attacks him. Labor members should stop and try to get things into perspective about what they think is important and the acts they do.

**Ms A. Sanderson** interjected.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** You have no idea what you are talking about, member, so I suggest you do not embarrass yourself.

I go back to the budget, Acting Speaker, because I am respecting your request. I am disappointed with the games that this government plays on the ground in campaign and in budget mode. As I said, the Labor Party is just proving that it will not stand up to the promises it made to the community, that it shows no regard for this place and its

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processes, and it has no respect for the people of Western Australia in thinking it can fool them the way it has done. Instead of this government doing the right thing, it has adopted a show-no-mercy method, with smoke and mirrors and sideshow alley tactics. The people of Western Australia are not going to buy this rubbish anymore.

One of the other issues I wanted to raise is that when the government puts cost-of-living burdens on the people of Western Australia, what does the government think they will do? They cannot go out and spend money down the road at the local restaurant that employs a few staff. They cannot go out for the weekend and visit our tourism operators, which the government is investing money into to try to grow tourism. They cannot support our small businesses. They cut down on their grocery spend. Government members should spend five minutes talking to their hairdresser or butcher. I talk to my hairdresser and I talk to my nail technician, and all of them are saying —

**Ms A. Sanderson** interjected.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** Yes, they are busy people. The member is mocking a nail salon. She should not.

**Ms A. Sanderson:** I am mocking you, my friend.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** I am not your friend.

Getting back to the nail salon, the owner has been going for 15 years. He is in a major shopping centre and he has told me that last year his sales dropped by 12 per cent. The year before they also dropped by 12 per cent. His rent has gone up every year. Not only is he losing by the drop in sales, he has to incur the extra cost of rent. He also has to incur the extra cost of the government's electricity prices, water prices and the cost of car registration. He has 21 staff and he said to me, "Alyssa, when my staff say to me that they are going on holiday and they do not know whether they will come back, I am happy because I think, great, I am going to save one staff member's wages." Normally he would be saying that he needs to find another staff member as soon as possible. It is the same with hairdressers. People are pushing the time between hair appointments to double the length. Instead of going every four, five or six weeks, they go every eight, 10 or 12 weeks. This has a roll-on effect on employment and apprentices. When the government keeps increasing the cost of living, it is hurting small business and jobs. As the member for Carine said earlier, we have unemployment levels of 6.1 per cent, and the government is trying to stifle small business again with the increase to the cost of living. Small business owners do not just get it at home; they get it at their business as well. When the government increases the cost of living, it causes a roll-on effect to the whole economy of WA.

As I said earlier, the only thing that matters to these people are the pennies in their pockets. I have had a few emails come through. Just to prove to members that I do not make this stuff up, I will pull out a couple of emails I get from my constituents. I am not going to say their names in order to protect their privacy. The first email reads —

... it's gone up \$200 from my last one for no reason

Nothing has changed and it seems to be an issue in Byford that nearly everyone's has shot up with no visible explanation

Can this be looked into and response returned

I'm a single mum and you try and budget but this is crazy

Another email reads —

This mail is in regards to the nasty synergy bills people of Byford have been getting. This is the first time my bill jumped over \$500 ... It was never more than \$250 to the max. Please have a look into this matter.

Another one reads —

I am just writing to let you know that I too am struggling ... with the increased power bill—my bills had increased by \$300-00 so I basically have had to cut back on my power completely in order to survive.

Very stressful situation when you have to cope with the ridiculous rates ...

I have another email. I have only pulled out a couple, because I would be here for too long otherwise. This email reads —

... higher than normal ive never had a bill this high before i have a pool and its still never been over 250 mark we havent had the ac on that much, ive rang them and they kept saying i need to check my appliances i said there is nothing wrong with them ... the bills have never been this high even the owners said its never been that high even when they were in here.

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They asked me what was going on with the bill and whether I could help them. That email referred to appliances. The state budget talks about power increases. There is a section in the budget that refers to getting upgrades to appliances—getting more efficient appliances. That is great for people who can afford to buy a brand-new washing machine that will save water, it is great for someone who can buy a brand-new fridge that will run more efficiently, but what happens to those people who cannot afford the washing machine or the new fridge? Again, why can they not afford it? It is because they cannot afford the government increases to the cost of living, so that cycle just keeps going around and around.

Before I run out of time, I want quickly touch on the promises made to the people of Darling Range. These promises were made in 2017 in the time of the former member of Darling Range, and it was for the extension to the Tonkin Highway from Thomas Road to Mundijong. The government again promised the Tonkin Highway during the by-election it had to have. The great member Andrew Hastie, the number for Canning —

**Dr D.J. Honey:** Outstanding member.

**Mrs A.K. HAYDEN:** He is an outstanding member. He has delivered 80 per cent of the funding for this Tonkin Highway extension. It is disappointing that after ignoring the RAC's report, the pleas from the community, petitions, and letters from constituents and members of Parliament on the Tonkin Highway and the upgrade to Thomas and Nicholson Roads, the state government has finally put money to these projects—finally—but remember that Andrew Hastie and the federal Liberal government provided funding of \$929 million of this \$1.61 billion project. This is to the Tonkin Highway corridor upgrade. The state has only provided funding of \$2.32 million. My biggest concern, and the one the minister keeps refusing to address, is when these projects will be delivered. When will people in Darling Range, Oakford, Byford and Mundijong see dirt being turned, bitumen being laid and the road being put down for the Tonkin Highway extension? When will they see the actual work starting at the Nicholson Road–Thomas Road roundabout? The Tonkin Highway upgrade includes this, plus other things along Tonkin Highway, with the announcement from Ken Wyatt for the Hale Road and Welshpool Road interchanges. I have to say that the project has only had \$575 million put into the budget between now and 2023. The whole project is \$1.16 billion but only \$575 million has been allocated for all the projects over the next four years with the balance pushed out way past 2023. It could be 2024, 2030 or 2040—we do not know. This tells me that the government has been given \$929 million by the federal Liberal government, which it has put in the bank, and that it has spread only \$575 million of it between 2019 and 2023. It has pushed the rest out there—way out there—to finish when? People are waiting to see the road fixed. Lives need to be saved. There are monthly accidents along these roads and deaths at these intersections. There is also congestion with trucks sharing the road. We need this road done. The Labor government is very good at picking up an old commitment and dusting it off. They dusted it off in 2017, again at the 2018 by-election and now it thinks, “There's a federal election. We've got a Labor candidate who needs some attention”, so it has dusted it off and here we go. Guess what its campaign will be in 2021. It will pick up the same media release—blow the dust off it and announce it again. As I said earlier, the people of Western Australia are not fools. The government should stop trying to fool them with smoke and mirrors in the budget. It should stop trying to fool them by saying that it will deliver certain projects. It has the money—\$929 million. It should cough up the rest and deliver the projects that it promised the people it would deliver. It should deliver on the promise it made to everyone in Western Australia that it would not increase the cost of living and taxes and that it would stand up for the people who matter.

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse)** [8.11 pm]: When I look at the McGowan government's third budget, as well as the Minister for Tourism's comical posturing last week when he tried to defend his leadership of WA's underperforming tourism sector, I am reminded of a second-rate magic show, one that seeks to distract and confuse the audience by trying to convince it that what is ordinary is suddenly extraordinary. There is nothing extraordinary about the McGowan government's third budget. This budget, Labor's projections and its recent increasingly desperate diatribe about how well it is managing the economy, how well WA tourism is going and how small businesses in the state are going is just an illusion; it is smoke and mirrors that seek to hide the reality of what is happening on the ground. We need only look at the Minister for Tourism's antics last week to realise that he is out of touch with reality, the industry as a whole and what operators on the ground are saying. I thank the Minister for Tourism for the laminated copies of my opinion pieces that were published in *The West Australian*, which I have with me now. I am heartened that he is reading them and, further, that he is taking their content on board and seemingly putting extra effort into making sure that they are preserved as a legacy to what happened to the industry when he was in charge. The real story in the opinion pieces—again, I thank the minister for the opportunity to talk about them—is that in one way or another, they have led to a backflip or policy change by the McGowan government, which is always welcome.

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I start with the opinion piece that he presented last week on sharks. Sharks are a real threat to our tourism industry. It was a written response to the way the McGowan government spectacularly mishandled the cancellation of the Margaret River Pro last year and how it tried to downplay the impact of sharks on the tourism industry. At the time the minister said —

There's no evidence anywhere that these sorts of incidents or some of the more horrific incidents that have occurred have any impact on tourism ...

Nothing to worry about, nothing to see here. In fact, thanks to the government's indifference and lack of concern about our swimmers and ocean users at the time, the BBC labelled WA as the shark capital of Australia. It took a very robust community-led campaign and over 2 000 petitioners before the government took this issue seriously. My opinion piece reads —

What is needed is a comprehensive and proactive shark mitigation policy—one that includes using more than one brand of shark deterrent for a select few—and one that takes a realistic, apolitical approach when considering the use of SMART drumlines and clever buoys, which have been a success in NSW and Queensland.

That is just one paragraph. I was pleased when five days later, the minister extended chopper patrols. There has also been an investment by the Minister for Fisheries in a smart drumline trials to see how the technology will work in WA. At least the Minister for Fisheries is concerned about the issue.

Another of my opinion pieces refers to the mega-department. It is extraordinary that the minister went to such effort to laminate my opinion pieces in A3 size. I am quite flattered. The opinion piece on the topic of the mega-department —

**Ms A. Sanderson:** Are you going to quote yourself? Quote yourself!

**Ms L. METTAM:** Why not? As I stated in the opinion piece, one thing is strikingly clear—procuring and promoting events for this state cannot happen without dedicated investment in the Tourism WA marketing team. More importantly, it cannot happen without a dedicated CEO. What happened? There was a policy change. I was pleased that the minister took my opinion on board and introduced a managing director. Brodie Carr is, by all accounts, doing a fantastic job. The tourism agency finally has some direction.

The third issue the Minister for Tourism raised as apparently a concern was my opinion piece that stated that WA must deliver on its tourism potential. The issues raised in the opinion piece were about the removal of incentives for overseas students and changes to the skilled migration list. Again, it was very pleasing to see, after a 12 per cent drop in commencements in the migration scheme under the government's watch, that the government introduced a graduates' skills list, which is welcome, and an additional \$4.5 million to try to turn around those shocking numbers.

**Mr W.R. Marmion:** You're doing all the work.

**Ms L. METTAM:** It sounds like it.

Last week, the minister gloated about some positive figures and said that in 2018, Western Australia had the highest number of visitors in history. He said that the growth in the number of international holidaymakers is double the national growth and that we lead the nation in international holidaymaker growth at 12.6 per cent. We all agree that 12.6 per cent is fabulous growth if it translates into tangible outcomes for WA. What about the six per cent decline in the number of visiting friends and relatives and the four per cent decline in the business market for the same period? The overall reality is that if we exclude the domestic market, the number of international visitors to WA since March 2017 has increased by 0.3 per cent; and, more importantly, the spend of these tourists has fallen by nine per cent at the same time. It is spend that matters. An increase in the number of visitors is very welcome but what matters to small businesses and employees is the spend. The minister went on to mansplain the figures further when he said that although they come out quarterly, they are not a quarterly barometer of performance over the last three months; they are a report of the previous 12 months to the date of compilation.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Look it up.

They come out quarterly but they are also a quarter late. In fact, looking more closely at the spend, there have been six consecutive negative quarters of growth since Labor came to office. According to the Tourism Council of WA, 1 226 jobs were lost in the government's first financial year. It is commonsense. If people come but do not spend money, that will not support any small businesses and will lead to the loss of jobs.

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I have touched on international education. There has been a downturn in that sector, but \$4.5 million has been committed for additional marketing of the sector, which will be valuable and very much welcome.

The regional tourism sector has been hit hard by this budget. Funding of the Camping with Custodians program, which received \$2.189 million in 2017–18, will cease. That program allows tourists to camp in remote Aboriginal communities and experience the local culture. It is about retaining residents and basic services for those communities, enabling them to be more self-sufficient, and enables Aboriginal communities to also stay on country. Previously, residents were moving to larger centres because of the lack of opportunities and services in those communities. That program builds independent businesses and tourism in regional communities. It has been done well and is achieving valuable outcomes. Three sites opened successfully and another two are to open in the near future. However, instead of encouraging and supporting this concept, the McGowan government is turning its back on these communities by cutting all funding for the program. There is real concern that without appropriate product development and support, these sites, particularly the new ones, will fail. Despite the Minister for Tourism saying a week ago at one site that it is a brilliant concept, there will be no future funding for this program. We are seeing a 28 per cent cut in Aboriginal tourism development. Aboriginal tourism brings \$43 million and provides 339 jobs to this state. Many of those jobs are in remote areas where employment opportunities are limited. Tourism WA research has shown that Aboriginal tourism is of great interest to visitors to WA, particularly international tourists, with up to 82 per cent interested in having an Aboriginal tourism experience. Participation levels are low, at 26 per cent, but I would have thought that future investment would take place in this area. Unfortunately, spending in this area has been cut.

**Mrs A.K. Hayden:** We were leading the country on that.

**Ms L. METTAM:** And the Western Australian Indigenous Tourism Operators Council program has been overwhelmingly successful. Although WAITOC is receiving funding going forward, this 28 per cent cut is nothing but brutal. I refer now to a media statement released today by WAITOC, saying that it has been “hung out to dry with an allocation of only 0.8 per cent of the new budget”. It describes this as —

A bitter blow for Australia’s most unique attraction and a savage cut of 38% from the previous \$5.8 million funding for WAITOC—the leading Aboriginal Tourism organisation in Australia.

I quote Robert Taylor, who said —

“And there is no budget to address the huge gap in Aboriginal tourism development,”...

That is of great concern.

I believe there is also concern about Tourism WA’s regional events program. An allocation of royalties for regions funding is dedicated to Brand WA, but I am not sure what that means. Questions will be asked during the estimates process about what why there is no longer—or seemingly, according to the budget papers—a funding program dedicated to regional events in Western Australia. I will be seeking some clarification from the Minister for Tourism about this. If regional events have to compete against events across the whole state, that is not necessarily a good outcome. We know that regional communities face unique challenges in establishing these events, but they are wholly and most definitely valuable for encouraging regional dispersal and supporting regional communities. I point to Broome’s Shinju Matsuri, the Mandurah Crab Fest and Busselton’s CinefestOZ as great examples of this.

In relation to regional aviation, the government has spoken much about having a platform and focusing on regional aviation in the future. That plank was part of its election commitments going into the election campaign in March 2017. I welcome the investment of \$10 million into airline and aviation development. Although the minister is committed to regional aviation, it is disappointing that he allows the Premier and the Minister for Regional Development to turn their backs on increasing the number of direct interstate flights into the south west by their refusal to fully develop the Busselton–Margaret River Regional Airport and also by removing Tourism WA from airline engagement. That is despite FOI documents that revealed that a number of airlines were interested in potential routes to Busselton and beginning flights as early as December 2017. I wonder whether it would be a different matter if this airport was located in Bunbury or Collie.

I welcome the \$16.2 million in the forward estimates for Rottneest Island. In addition, this iconic destination has received a commitment from the federal Morrison government of \$17.2 million. However, I am still concerned about the online booking system, which is not functioning at an optimum level. We can market the island as much as we like, but we must ensure that bookings are able to be made and that visitors to the island can return home safely. Obviously, funding is available and safety issues on the island are being addressed, but as questions on notice indicate, issues regarding that booking system are still outstanding. I look forward to seeing those issues addressed.

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In relation to WA's brand, a lot of work is being undertaken at the moment by Guy Taylor from Tasmania in developing a narrative for WA's tourism industry. I talked about machinery-of-government changes as an issue earlier in my speech. Although this investment in a narrative, which involves a consultative process, is being warmly received across the tourism industry, it has been delayed by about 12 months as a result of those machinery-of-government changes.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I believe that the campaign to develop a narrative for WA is not set to start until November 2019—after this government has been in office for two years. I look forward to the work that is currently being undertaken and look forward to an outcome.

In small business there is no greater example of how the McGowan government is creating an illusion of sound budgetary management than the plight of thousands of small businesses in this state that are facing economic hardship. So far under the Labor government we have seen an increase of \$700 a year in household fees and charges, and I understand that will now increase to more than \$860. We have seen the removal of the first home owner grant boost, the introduction of a foreign investor surcharge, a failed gold tax, the Uber tax, payroll tax increases, regional sponsored migration scheme changes, restricted access to hardship payments, cuts to rebates for seniors and 40 per cent water tariff increases. My colleagues in opposition have already outlined the impact that discretionary spend can have in the community. When households are doing it tough, small businesses do it tough, as we have already seen.

**Dr A.D. Buti** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** There are 141 000 households suffering mortgage stress, up from 85 000 last year; 31 552 residential customers are on the hardship program; over 12 000 residential customers are repaying a debt, not including customers on a hardship program; and in WA there have been nearly 20 000 utility disconnections, a 12.9 per cent increase in insolvencies, an 18 per cent drop in dwelling values and a 10.6 per cent increase in bankruptcies. According to the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia's latest consumer confidence survey, almost three in five or 59 per cent of Western Australians consider cost-of-living pressures to be their biggest confidence dampener, yet this government is increasing cost-of-living pressures. Over two-thirds, 68 per cent, do not expect to make a major purchase in the next quarter. As everyone knows, any hardship felt in the household impacts directly on discretionary spending and significantly on small businesses. Small businesses are struggling, with more than 30 000 now shutting their doors. With each door shut comes more unemployed. WA's unemployment rate continues to be a drag on the economy and although it currently sits at 6.1 per cent, it was as high as 6.8 per cent in January this year. WA held the title of the highest unemployment rate in Australia only five months ago, in December 2018, and the highest payroll tax, a tax on employment, which does not say much for a government that came into power promising more jobs and opportunities.

I will now focus on Vasse. I would like to address the impact of the budget on my electorate. According to December 2018 Australian Bureau of Statistics figures, this electorate continues to be the home of some of the fastest growing towns in regional WA. The Busselton region population increased by 3.2 per cent in contrast with the regional average of 1.7 per cent, yet despite this significant growth, the Vasse electorate hardly rates a mention in this budget. Although the south west region has attracted regional investment, it is once again heavily focused on Collie and Bunbury and continues to ignore one of the fastest growing regions in the state. Contrary to Labor, the previous government invested in WA regardless of which party held the seat. A great example —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms L. METTAM:** A great example is the \$50 million investment in Coalfields Highway, which remains a great example of how a Liberal government had invested in an important road—on either side of Labor electorates—in the seat of Collie for the benefit of WA. The previous government recognised that investments in infrastructure such as safe roads, health and education, should be for the benefit of all Western Australians, not just those who happen to live in a Labor-held electorate. However, I must admit that although not spelt out in the budget itself, I was very pleased that \$4 million has been reportedly set aside towards the \$80 million investment in the Bussell Highway dual carriageway between Capel and Busselton. It is a small win for a community that has campaigned very hard to make this section of road safer. From March 2018 to March 2019, almost 13 000 vehicles travelled on this stretch of highway every day, with a peak of over 21 000 earlier this year. There were 59 crashes on the highway between Busselton and Capel between January 2016 and December 2018, three of which were fatal. The RAC identified this stretch of road as the riskiest in the state and number one for regional priority funding. This is an issue we have raised continuously with the McGowan government. With more than 6 000 people signing petitions

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in support of something happening, I am at least pleased that work will start on this road in June. This project was identified as a priority by the former government, with progress happening in 2015. Although it is disappointing that it has taken so long to put politics aside and commit to this road, I certainly welcome this commitment by the Minister for Transport.

I look forward also to seeing commitments spelt out in the budget through the estimates process to spending on Canal Rocks boat ramp, Lou Weston Oval and a better understanding of what it means for regional taxis. A commitment has been made in recognition of the minister not taking an opportunity to meet with these operators given they still face a significant hurdle. I welcome the reform package, but I understand that strikes are happening across regional WA in response to the minister not understanding their plight, their concerns and the unique issues that affect regional communities that rely on taxi services.

In relation to health, like many members of my community, I express disappointment at this government's continued attack on regional health care. The government showed extraordinary gall in attempting to pass off funding for an aged-care facility in Carnarvon in last week's state budget as palliative care. To pass off specific funding for the region is quite extraordinary. The government claimed a 74 per cent increase in regional palliative care services, which is entirely covered by the \$5 million allocation for a purpose-built, 38-bed residential aged-care facility in Carnarvon through royalties for regions. Again, it shows the government's approach to regional communities. In Busselton, I have been advocating on behalf of Coastal Palliative Care, a service that extends between Busselton and Margaret River, which is well and truly stretched. I wrote to the minister about this in March 2018. It is particularly stretched with over 40 to 60 patients. It has a significant number of volunteers but it has a great area to cover and it is certainly under a lot of pressure and needs more support. I am pleased that in response to the letter I wrote to the minister in March, staffing has been slightly increased but it is still only at two FTEs to support a significant area. Again, I urge this government to consider the Busselton and Vasse community given the obvious needs of a growing and ageing population.

The government has walked away from the promise of a standalone facility in the south west for mental health needs. Instead, it has provided an additional 33 beds at existing facilities in Bunbury. This does not meet the need for support services in Busselton and the surrounding Cape facilities. I note the \$12.6 million investment in the step-up, step-down facility in Bunbury and I urge the minister to also consider the mental health needs of the Busselton community. This highlights also the urgent need for a psychiatric liaison nurse in Busselton. Again, this is something I have been advocating for to the Minister for Health. In a recent letter, in response to many questions asked since December 2017, the minister advised that a position would soon be funded just for periods of high demand, including evenings and weekends. But the minister's letter states that the government is working towards funding this position. There is no detail in the budget, which is of great concern. Again, that is an obvious need for a region that is crying out for more support.

Earlier this month the shortage of appropriate services in emergency relief and mental health support was highlighted when a woman came into my electorate office seeking help. She had ongoing mental health concerns and was in need of emergency housing. She was a victim of domestic violence, and after my electorate officers and I spent the day on the phone trying to source help, it was obvious that there was nothing to assist her in this region. We ended up looking up bus services and services outside the region to see what we could do to help her in either Bunbury or Perth. No agencies in Busselton could help her and Entrypoint Perth emergency housing could not help as she had to physically be in Perth to be accepted. It could not help anyone in regional areas. In the end, she was taken to Busselton Health Campus via ambulance due to her distress and rapidly deteriorating sense of mental health, as she did not know where she would stay for the night. This is an all too common occurrence for people in the regions, and that is why every region is important.

In summary, despite the McGowan government being the beneficiary of surging iron ore prices and a GST floor that will chip in an extra \$4.9 billion in GST over the forward estimates, this budget is another example of the ordinary way the McGowan government treats people in regional areas, particularly those in non-Labor held seats.

**MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands — Deputy Speaker)** [8.41 pm]: I want to start by acknowledging and thanking someone who I think is one of the best researchers of highly complex and wicked problems in WA, Elizabeth Lennon. Acknowledged Australia-wide as a leader who has contributed to the discourse on ageing, she has researched, analysed and dissected the landscape and the budget from the perspective of services to support older Western Australians. Liz, thank you. You are amazing.

Ageing well in the community for Western Australians has a range of challenges and opportunities that I will explore in this speech. Poverty, in particular, adds layers of challenges in access to affordable services and support. It impacts on tens of thousands of older people in WA. The chances of living in poverty increase as a person ages

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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if that person is a woman, an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander person, a person with a disability or if they live outside the metropolitan area, particularly in remote areas. If a person is an older Western Australian living in poverty, the chances are that they will have experienced some or all of the following: housing stress; homelessness; housing not fit for purpose; physical and mental health issues, with the associated health costs; food and energy stress that requires people to miss meals or not use hot water; difficulty finding employment or starting a business; and a sense of isolation, shame and, often, self-blame. I believe that in order to plan correctly for ageing well in the community, policymakers must have a real understanding of the diversity of race, gender, sexuality, ability and interests that fall under the older persons umbrella. I will start by defining what I mean by ageing well in the community rather than ageing in place.

Ageing in place has a geographic connotation. For many older Western Australians, living in poverty can mean living in places that are not fit for purpose, take up over 60 per cent of their weekly income, are not safe, damage their mental or physical health, have bad access to public transport and isolate them from the rest of the community. Ageing well in the community is underpinned quite differently by values of autonomy, connection and choice. The community is more than geography and embraces communities defined by gender, ethnicity, sexuality and others. In the 2016 census, five per cent of the Aboriginal population were aged over 65 years compared with 16 per cent of the non-Indigenous population aged over 65 years. Aboriginal people have a lower life expectancy than the general population, and older Aboriginal people face many challenges in ageing well in the community. An older Aboriginal woman with a disability has a greater chance of living in poverty and a life expectancy that is well below average.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics states that the older, culturally and linguistically diverse population of Australia, although not homogenous, generally has similar characteristics. Older people from CALD backgrounds have poorer socioeconomic status compared with the older Anglo-Australian population. They may face substantial language barriers in accessing services. They may have different cultural practices that create a lack of understanding or barriers to service use. Umbrella Multicultural Community Care was recently in my electorate and has just moved to Belmont. It delivers services such as caring for the needs of older CALD people. It does an amazing job. The ABS also notes that older Australians who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex have lived through a period of social and cultural transition. Recently, the specific concerns of the older LGBTI community have been highlighted at the national level in the form of the national lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex ageing and aged-care strategy. This strategy addresses the need for change in aged-care services to promote equitable access to high-quality aged care for all people who identify as LGBTI. I pay tribute to the work of WA-based LGBTI Rights in Ageing group, which was established in 2005 to address this issue exactly.

The McGowan government's WA "Sustainable Health Review" was launched April 2019 to guide the direction of the WA health system. The review aims to drive a cultural shift from a predominantly reactive, acute, hospital-based system to a focus on prevention, equity, early child health, end-of-life choices and seamless access to at-home services in the community. In the 2019–2020 financial year, the McGowan government is investing \$26.4 million to commence the recommendations from that review. I would like to mention some specific recommendations in the review that relate to this topic: improved coordination and access for country patients, which impacts on older Western Australians living outside metropolitan areas who may have health issues needing attention with different consultants and health settings; the use of digital technologies, including virtual clinics, assisted independent living solutions and Hospital in the Home; transforming the approach to caring for older people by implementing models of care to support independence at home or in other appropriate settings; achieving respectful and appropriate end-of-life-care choices—in this budget we have allocated \$7.36 million to end-of-life choices and palliative care services; introduction, evaluation and spread of out-reach models to improve linkages between hospitals and residential aged-care facilities in partnership with primary care.

The "Sustainable Health Review" is an ambitious and visionary plan for health reform. I congratulate my colleague Hon Roger Cook, Minister for Health, and his department for this excellent piece of work. The Council on the Ageing Western Australia has been running the Living Longer Living Stronger program for 15 years. It delivers customised fitness programs across WA to more than 3 500 people over 50 years old. Its "mall walking" initiative encourages older people to engage in physical activity in five shopping centres in the metropolitan area and attracts hundreds of people on a weekly basis. In addition, many local councils, including the City of Bayswater in my electorate, run free and affordable fitness, physical activity and socially connected activities for older adults in their communities. The recent Anglicare rental affordability snapshot revealed that there were no affordable private rental properties for a single person on a low income in Perth. That is shocking. Many older single women on low incomes are hidden in private rental accommodation and experience high housing stress, and are often unaware of how to access public, social or other housing options. Nearly a third of older Western Australians rent their home.

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The challenges of renting a home as people age include insecure tenure; “no grounds” eviction clauses; uncapped rent increases; the inability to make the home age-friendly in terms of accessibility; people often being afraid to ask for basic maintenance in case they are evicted—I have had people in my office who have experienced these instances—and, most importantly, people usually not being allowed a pet.

I have been given permission to quote from a soon-to-be-published report called “Ageing on the Edge”. This is a five-year national research and advocacy project funded by the Wicking Trust and coordinated by Housing for the Aged Action Group based in Melbourne and the Centre for Housing, Urban and Regional Planning at the University of Adelaide. The WA research will be launched later in 2019. The findings of this report are very relevant to understanding and improving housing issues for older Western Australians on low incomes. Although the overall rates of homelessness in WA appear to be declining, the number of older—55-plus—homeless people in WA has steadily increased over the last three censuses. The statistics do not include older Western Australians on low incomes in the rental market who experience housing stress. Customised, unpublished 2016 census data on low-income older Western Australians in the rental market shows more than 12 000 households where the resident was 65 years of age or older at risk of housing stress. The majority of these households are single-person, with one lone female head, representing nearly 60 per cent of the risk of housing stress. Of the 12 000 households, 74.4 per cent were in housing stress, 4 395 households were in extreme housing stress—that is, paying more than 50 per cent of their income on rent—and 1 534 households experiencing housing stress comprise people 75 years of age or more. The WA Ageing on the Edge research found that a wide range of housing options are available for older people, but they are not easy to find, and housing information for older people is not readily available and often out of date. This is common across government and community centre websites. Services to assist older people at risk of homelessness have to be more generously resourced. The research found that there were 197 specialist homeless services in Western Australia, but their main focus is the provision of housing crisis responses for people with complex needs. One of the recommendations in the report to be released will be to create a specific information, support and advocacy service that is face to face as well as online, for older Western Australians.

The McGowan government has created the Supporting Communities Forum as well as developing a number of strategic plans that could impact on housing and homelessness for older Western Australians. A homelessness strategy directions paper is soon to come, and already released are: a 10-year strategy for reducing family and domestic violence, a 10-year women’s plan; a state disability plan; the state housing strategy 2030; “Ageing with Choice: Future Directions For Seniors’ Housing 2019–24”; and the “Affordable Housing Action Plan 2017–18 To 2019–20”. This is laudable work, and congratulations to my government on those impressive reports and plans.

The affordable housing action plan provides ambitious targets, and I would like to detail just a few actions as well as recent budget allocations. We have increased the previous government’s target of 30 000 additional homes for people on low to moderate incomes to 35 000 homes. The plan is not just about a supply target; it includes broadening trials of transitional and affordable rental models and continuing to work proactively with the commonwealth government on further discount to market rent initiatives. There is a \$394 million Metronet social and affordable housing and jobs package, with just under \$12.5 million being allocated in the next financial year. Some 320 social housing dwellings and 400 affordable purchase opportunities are part of this package. Up to 300 of these houses will have universal design features. There will be \$11.4 million of social housing investment under the construction and purchase of housing programs. Ageing well in a safe, sustainable and affordable home is vital for older Western Australians, and we are working as a government to make this happen. We are also trialling and exploring innovative housing options, including those for people on low incomes. I also support the work of individuals and groups who are researching and developing intentional housing communities, including cooperatives, co-housing and co-living options.

Feeling safe in the home and in the community is incredibly important to older Western Australians. Public and private safety is a large topic, and I will just address a few key areas. It is estimated that between two and ten per cent of older Western Australians may experience some form of elder abuse. WA will spend \$2.3 million on initiatives to support the national plan, including community education and awareness campaigns, advocacy and legal services and the state elder abuse helpline. Family and domestic violence still impacts on older Western Australian women. Stories from women’s health services indicate that many women well into their 70s are experiencing violence in the home. We will be investing \$20.5 million in capital for new and refurbished crisis accommodation facilities for people dealing with family violence, homelessness and drug and/or alcohol issues, including two new women’s refuges. A further \$3.817 million will be used to develop family and domestic violence hubs that provide information and support for victims of violence. Public safety is important to older Western Australians and in my electorate I have pioneered research and action plans on crime prevention through environmental design, in partnership with Dr Paul Cozens, local councils, community groups and businesses. Online safety and cybercrime

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are huge concerns for older Western Australians and I applaud the work of the Council on the Ageing WA for its very well attended cybercrime workshops, which quite frankly frightened the hell out of me when I found out all the things I was not doing. I sponsor a workshop in my electorate for seniors on this subject.

Public transport is a vital component of ageing well in the community for older Western Australians. People want access to affordable and connected trains and buses, accessible pathways and cycleways and traffic lights with what are called “green men” that allow frail aged and people with disabilities to cross the road without fear of the lights turning green. In Singapore, older people can increase the length of time the green man is on by flashing their seniors card at the traffic lights, and they get a bit longer to cross the road! I think that is a great idea.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Thank you.

**Ms L.L. BAKER:** That is all right, member for Girrawheen.

In my own electorate, \$17 million will be spent in the next financial year on the Bayswater railway station and nearly \$10 million on the Metronet Bayswater train station road-related work. Another \$34.743 million will be spent on new and existing metro train stations to improve disability access, CCTV, lighting, station access and pathways. We will also increase the presence of customer service personnel at escalators and continue to develop marketing campaigns to educate elderly passengers on better options to use, such as lifts, in order to prevent slipping, trips and falls.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms L.L. BAKER:** We will spend \$30.819 million in the next financial year on the country age pension fuel card scheme, and \$1.589 million on pensioner fare subsidies. The free travel for seniors program encourages and supports people to travel out of peak hours.

Finally, navigating the aged care system is not for the fainthearted. I would like to mention a pilot program that COTA WA and other organisations nationally are piloting, creating aged care navigator hubs to help older people and their families access aged care services at home or enter an aged care facility. Many older Western Australians live on low incomes, have difficulty accessing employment, experience discrimination in the workplace, and do not feel encouraged to start small businesses. The COTA WA 2019 budget submission noted that of the 39 116 people receiving Newstart in WA, nearly 45 per cent are aged 45 and older. Research has shown that people who are over 55 and unemployed longer than a year, may not be able to find a job. Many older people have told COTA WA and other agencies of the lack of respect and understanding they receive from Centrelink and some employment services. Older people have skills and experience that are underestimated and underutilised and employment service staff are often not trained to work with this skilled cohort. I want to note that in the next financial year we will spend nearly \$26 million on the seniors cost of living rebate and \$10 million on the hardship utility grants scheme.

In a 2018 note, the Australian Bureau of Statistics reported that 79 per cent people aged over 55 had difficulty finding work, and when they did it was often not secure and did not use their skills. On average, part-time workers over 50 want 10 hours more work per week; they feel underemployed. In 2018 the age discrimination commissioner, Hon Dr Kay Patterson, and the Australian Human Resources Institute conducted a survey of over 900 human resources practitioners in Australia. In their report “Willing to Work” they found that up to 30 per cent of Australian employers are reluctant to hire workers over a certain age, which for most of them was over 50. I want to explore one more area of potential revenue development that seems to be ignored by policy makers—the area around small business, micro-enterprises, home-based businesses, or being one's own boss. The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development maintains that turning unemployment into self-employment has become an increasingly important part of active labour market policies in many OECD countries. It highlighted that, contrary to the traditional perception that entrepreneurship is a young person's endeavour, seniors are the most entrepreneurial age group.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Hear, hear!

**Ms L.L. BAKER:** Especially the member for Mandurah!

The Kauffman Foundation and the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor found that there are two subgroups of older entrepreneurs. The first group creates a business out of necessity. They usually start a micro business with minimal financing. The second group are opportunity-driven people, who could obtain employment but choose to start a business. We need to find ways to support necessity-driven senior entrepreneurs who may not be able to find employment. Necessity-driven entrepreneurs are often from marginalised groups.

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Senior entrepreneurs could be supported in a number of ways: by building awareness amongst older people and service providers of this option; by building IT and tech support; by building networks; and by providing government support for specific older adults' small business development opportunities, including older women-specific programs along the lines of a program that used to operate called the Women's Environment and Development Organization, which ran training courses for women in microenterprise and small business development. In America there are a series of free co-working spaces, specifically designed for people over 55, that provide information support and networking opportunities. I would support trialling something like that here. The Small Business Development Corporation will spend just under \$11 million in the next financial year on information guidance, referral and business development services. It would be interesting to ascertain how these services are accessed by people over 55.

In conclusion, we need to understand, encourage and partner with older Western Australians to re-imagine ageing well in the community, in ways that previous generations could not. Poverty should not exclude people from ageing well. A liveable income should be a basic right for all older Western Australians. Access to employment that is free of age discrimination should be our goal. We should also endeavour to encourage, support and resource older Western Australians who have an idea for a small business enterprise that will add value to the broader community. I support the development of pilot programs for older people, particularly in small business information, co-working hubs and similar support mechanisms.

We need to develop age-proofed policies and practice within and across all levels of government. A multi-sectoral approach is required that has collaboration between government, NGOs, researchers, designers and older Western Australians. We need to experiment and explore new ways for older people to age well in the community, that cover their key needs. This will require new kinds of partnerships across government, NGOs, the private sector and older adults themselves, where people are prepared to challenge the current narratives and dogma about ageing well, then fund some new projects and innovations as pilot programs. We need to explore new options for home, including for older women and housing initiatives for other groups, including co-housing, co-living and cooperative housing, as well as small home communities. We are starting to see some of that happening. Indeed, the Minister for Housing talked about small housing and different sorts of co-living activities. Let us up the ante on that and do more. Now is the time to move on it.

Exploration should include environmental sustainability to combat climate change, as well as new funding and financial models and partnerships. We need to develop older adults' information and advocacy hubs, online and offline, that provide older Western Australians with clear, respectful, useful and practical information about their rights, responsibilities and options on all the above needs regarding ageing well in the community. Information needs to be culturally relevant and available, both online and offline. It would be useful for information services to be staffed by experienced older people of both genders and of a range of ethnicities.

We need to recognise the social, cultural and creative capital that older Western Australians on low incomes can contribute to our communities. They are assets, not burdens, with diverse needs, aspirations, capacities and contributions. Older people have the right to autonomy, choice and control over how they live and how they die. Ageing well in a fair and just society means people being able to do the things they value; maintaining their physical and mental health; having access to a secure and sustainable home; having access to good transport; having freedom from poverty; enjoying age-friendly communities; engaging in ongoing learning and development; having opportunities to connect and contribute; and having freedom from entrenched ageist and discriminatory practices. In short, it should be our privilege as a society to ensure that all older Western Australians can age well in their community of choice.

**MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach)** [9.03 pm]: I rise in support of the Treasurer's and McGowan government's budget for this year. This is a good budget; this is a good budget for my constituents in Burns Beach. This is a good budget for all in our Western Australian community—both our metropolitan residents and our country constituents.

Talking to my constituents in my community, I found they have four main concerns: employment, job security and youth unemployment; health; community safety; and congestion. I see that in this budget there is a funding boost to create thousands of apprenticeships and traineeships. The McGowan government has negotiated with its federal counterpart for \$126 million through the federal government's Skilling Australians national partnership fund. For my constituents this means thousands of pre-apprenticeships that are strongly supported by industry and that include an employer incentive scheme that will provide training support to employers, including small businesses. This means opportunities for the youth in my electorate. Based on the last census, there are pockets of youth unemployment of more than 20 per cent in my electorate, which is more than three times the state unemployment rate.

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I have a personal interest in this space, as my son Adrian is also an apprentice. He is into his third year and bound to his boss, a master roofing carpenter, for another year. Fenton Makene is the name of his boss. We talk often about the building industry. He enjoys teaching young kids his craft, but finding good apprentices is hard and keeping them is even harder. He gets little support but he will keep training them; he has to, because his trade needs skilled workers do the job. An incentive scheme will help, as it will mean he can take on an extra couple of hands, double his workforce and employ more kids. The \$2 125 that he will get as an incentive payment means a lot to him. He is keen to employ more, and I am sure other tradesmen want to do the same. This means more employment.

Apprentices need TAFE. I see that in this budget there is \$590 000 for the upgrade of the Clarkson TAFE campus. That is more than half a million dollars going directly into my constituency. This money is being spent on classroom upgrades and on creating a multifunction space for the delivery of industrial automation training. The remainder of the funds will be used to complete an expansion of weatherproofing of outdoor training areas, and this will be completed by December 2019. The money that is being used for the classroom upgrades are dedicated to an industrial automation training facility; for the first time, the northern corridor will actually have training facilities for automation.

This money is part of the \$3.7 million in capital works for the upgrading of the North Metropolitan TAFE campuses at both Joondalup and Clarkson. We are starting to put the meat back into TAFE after it was absolutely gutted and stripped bare by the last administration. I recognise Michelle Hoad, the director of North Metropolitan TAFE. She has done a brilliant job and I hope to work closely with her in future developments in this key sector.

**Ms J.M. Freeman:** She's won awards, member.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** She has; she is a great lady and she is an absolute asset to TAFE.

These upgrades came about because I lobbied and suggested strongly that the Clarkson TAFE campus was underutilised and was not performing at its best. This is a great outcome for my constituency.

I am absolutely over the moon that we are bringing automation into our TAFE, and particularly onto the Clarkson campus. On a recent tour I had in the north west with the Chamber of Minerals and Energy, I was shown how critical automation has become in our mining sector. I saw, first-hand, driverless Haulpaks and drilling rigs, and how critical it was for skilled workers with automation skills to work on site with this equipment. It was interesting to hear that the most critical person on the mine site at the moment is a kid who walks around with a mechanised diagnostic tool and a can of compressed air. This worker is the person who keeps this equipment on the road. He is not an engineer; he is not necessarily a tradesman. He is a technician who has picked up his skills through TAFE, and he is critical to keeping the automated mine sites running 24 hours a day.

When I discussed the upgrades to Clarkson TAFE with John Young and Jody Parker, respectively the principal and a board member of Clarkson Community High School, they were clearly impressed because they could see the pathways that were now available to high school kids from their school and the surrounding areas. These upgrades have the added benefit of showing that we are creating a pathway from primary school, into high school, through TAFE and then clearly into a job. These are exciting times for my community. When I discussed this with Barbara Bromley, the principal of Mindarie Primary School, and Kath Gilbert, the P&C association president, they agreed with these sentiments.

I was introduced to coding at that school; coding is part of the STEMS program introduced by this government. But what is coding? In a practical sense, it is teaching kids to make robots dance! It means more when we see it embedded in other primary schools, such as Joondalup Primary School; it makes sense. When Russell Hahn, the principal of Joondalup Primary School, and his proud staff showed me the school's brand-new STEM classroom, I observed science being conducted by the students, such as static electricity and bending water. The kids were totally enthusiastic about this new learning environment. I could see how the McGowan government is spending money not on silly ideas but on a coordinated approach, starting at the earliest years in primary school, moving through to high school, as evidenced by the work done at Clarkson Community High School, and finishing in TAFE. We are preparing an industry-driven workforce for the new jobs of future generations. This is a good thing. With the 20 per cent youth unemployment rate in the electorate that my constituents continually remind me about, they are worried about their students getting work in the future. This is one of the ways in which the McGowan government is driving down unemployment rates and creating work for the future. This is just a small part of the \$5.2 billion we have set aside for education, which leads to employment opportunities for the kids in the future.

Let us talk about the improvements to our health system. The Treasurer raised various points in this budget. One of the things that excited me was the future health and research fund, a key election promise, providing a secured source of funding for medical and health research and innovation. To me, this is such an important

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announcement. Without proper peer-led and peer-reviewed research, how can we drive down the health costs that impact on our community and particularly my constituents? Our medical research facilities are some of the best in the world. The work done by Telethon Kids Institute is an example. Other research done through our medical universities is further evidence that we are clearly a clever country—good people doing great research to relieve the pain and suffering that our community and my constituents endure. Investment in this space is more proof that a McGowan government is forward thinking.

We recently announced the completion of a stroke service at Joondalup Health Campus. This service comprises 12 beds and six acute care beds co-located in a therapy space. We know that the first 40 minutes is critical for stroke survival. Previously, we relied on getting patients to southern hospitals such as Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre. With bells and whistles, our ambulances in peak hour could not achieve the 40 minutes even with their best drivers. This was at a great cost to constituents in my electorate. It was life threatening. Now we have a northern suburbs unit on our doorstep. This provides the resources and specialist equipment to treat my constituents at the earliest possible time, and I am proud to be part of the government that introduced this unit.

Methamphetamines are a scourge impacting on our community at greater volumes than we have ever seen. The fine officers of the Western Australia Police Force are achieving significant seizures of large amounts of drugs, but it is still not enough. I know only too well the damage that this drug does to families and it is from my previous experience as a police officer. We know through sewerage testing that we are only scratching the surface and more needs to be done for those addicted to this substance. As a result of the Methamphetamine Action Plan Taskforce report, we have committed \$42.5 million, including \$20 million to the north west drug alcohol support program. I speak to the parents who are frustrated that they cannot find beds or placements for their addicted children. This additional spend will help them get their children treatment for their addiction. I speak to too many frustrated parents in my electorate, so at least now I can point them in the right direction and offer them some hope.

Is it not better that our community stops getting tied up in this cycle of addiction in the first place? Is it not better to break the cycle of offending being driven by the addiction cycle before it occurs? This is the belief of the McGowan government, so we are about creating a safer community. From personal experience, I know the successes of our police and citizen youth clubs in this space. I was previously a senior police officer and officer in charge of Kalbarri Police Station and I ran the biggest regional volunteer-based PCYC in this state. This organisation is such an iconic brand and community-driven success story the McGowan government has committed \$11.3 million in funding to ensure the ongoing operational sustainability of our PCYCs.

Let me tell members two stories about how successful our PCYCs can be. The first one is from when I was the officer in charge of Kalbarri Police Station. We were dealing with a massive problem with school leavers and antisocial behaviour. In the year prior to my arrival, Kalbarri school leavers had caused over \$100 000 of damage to community infrastructure. I led a community-driven PCYC response. Part of this response was to empower teenagers to develop a school leavers program that engaged kids around the club. The result of this program over the three years that I ran it, at an approximate cost of \$5 000, was that we went from \$100 000 of damage to the community's resources to zero damage. The second example of a PCYC success story was in the Carnarvon police district. Over a two-week holiday period, the township of Carnarvon had 180 burglaries. The officer in charge, Senior Sergeant Tony Mettam, and Detective Sergeant Brett Ranford, using their PCYC and staff from the police station, led a juvenile-targeted response program that included sporting activities such as basketball, Blue Light discos, gymnastics and other activities to engage youth in the community. The result was that there were zero burglaries during the next holiday period in the town site. That is a 100 per cent reduction. The key to this success was the community-driven response enhanced by the PCYCs. Members, PCYCs work. We have returned investment to PCYCs to continue their sustainability. I put it on the record that we need one in the northern suburbs and, personally, I want one in my electorate in Clarkson. Whether I get it remains to be seen, but I will fight hard for it.

I get approached all the time by seniors in my electorate who are worried about being safe in their own homes. The McGowan government is strong on crime prevention. Let me evidence this. Our police force, my mates, the strong men and women who defend us at night while we sleep, now have multi-threat body armour for the first time. It is personally issued so that they can wear it at all times to ensure that they are safe while protecting us in our homes. This piece of police kit will save lives. I know, because I have had to hold the chest together of a police officer who was stabbed while trying to apprehend a mental health patient. If he had had this vest, he might not have received the injury. Our police have wanted this equipment for the past 20 years. We were promised it by the previous government and we were not given it. It was only by the grace of God that no officers were killed on duty because of this lack of foresight. My constable who was stabbed would not have gone through what he went

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through if he had had that piece of kit. Now we have stronger, safer police officers. Well done, Treasurer and Minister for Police.

The McGowan government introduced the no body, no parole legislation. We have also introduced harsher penalties for serious drug dealers. This government is tough on crime and has a zero tolerance of domestic violence. The government has been innovative in its approach in this space. This is clearly evidenced by the development of our long-term state prison expansion plan. We are investing \$186 million to provide 344 beds at Casuarina Prison. We have also recruited a further 450 prison officers. At no time in my 27-year policing career have I ever heard about such a recruitment drive in the prison system—never. This is clearly something the previous Liberal–National government could not achieve. Our police are the finest in the world and are outstanding at catching crooks. We now have a fantastic system for keeping them. We catch them and now we will keep them.

Further evidence that this government is strong on crime is our boost to the sexual assault services in the northern corridor. In 2016–17, the Sexual Assault Resource Centre treated 552 patients. The overall demand for SARC has increased by 22 per cent over the last financial year. The McGowan government will provide funding to enable an extra 80 clients to be seen this year in the northern suburbs. The Joondalup outreach service, which has significantly increased the number of appointments made for those who have been sexually assaulted, will get more funding. This means that my constituents who have been subject to this abuse will get the best support services at the earliest opportunity. This support will also lead to an increase in the apprehension of those people who commit sexual crimes. In addition, with the extra space in our prisons, we can now put offenders where they belong.

Recently, I had the privilege of attending the new Department of Water and Environmental Regulation offices in Joondalup with the Premier, Mark McGowan; the Minister for Environment, Stephen Dawson; and the Minister for Water, Dave Kelly. This building brings 800 public servants to Joondalup. This is a good thing. More government workers in the northern corridor will revitalise and provide a boost to economic activity in the surrounding areas. I hope there will be a multiplier effect for small businesses in the surrounding area, which will create opportunities for youth employment, particularly for kids from my electorate.

With the opening of Prime House comes the issue of congestion in the northern suburbs. Last year, we spent \$40 000 improving the Marmion Avenue–Moore Drive intersection. Moore Drive is a thoroughfare that runs past Currabine Primary School.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** I was at a recent Anzac Day service at the school and was speaking to the school board's chair, Mike Bush, and principal, Geoff Smith about the intersection near the school, and they brought to my attention several near misses that have occurred there over the past couple of years and stated that the improvements should be a great help.

The McGowan government has committed hundreds of millions of dollars to the improvement of the road network that surrounds my constituents in Burns Beach. This includes the extension of Mitchell Freeway from Hester Avenue to Romeo Road.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis:** The extra lane?

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** We will see. We will work with what we have got for now.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis:** Your people want that.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** Yes, I hear the member.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Hillarys!

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Hillarys!

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** I am often asked by constituents about what is happening to the extension of Mitchell Freeway. This money is now in the budget. Let us have a look at this. Over the past couple of years we have seen the dualling of Wanneroo Road, the announcement of the improvement of the intersection at Joondalup Drive–Wanneroo Road, the announcement of funding for the realignment of the Burns Beach Road at the Joondalup roundabout in partnership with the City of Joondalup, and the announcement of the rail line through to Yanchep, which has been costed and is now being enacted for construction to begin shortly. Why have we been able to do this? Let us have a think about it. We have not spent like drunken sailors. The McGowan government has kept government spending to a minimum and, as a result, we have brought the budget back to surplus. We have

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managed to achieve this within two years of coming into government. This must make a mockery of the federal Liberal Party's argument that Labor governments are poor financial managers.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange:** They actually did it for you.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** Please! Last time I checked, a Labor member was the Treasurer in this state.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis** interjected.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** I will not take an interjection.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Hillarys!

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I am not.

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** We must be doing all right, because the opposition did not ask any questions about our budget during question time today. We must be doing something right. There was not a single question about the budget. *The Australian Financial Review*, arguably one of the most conservative newspapers in Australia, said that the McGowan budget for this year was commendable.

Personally, my biggest worry around budget time is expenses for householders, and particularly those who are not so well off—namely, our pensioners and poorly paid workers. For these people, \$1 is quite a lot of money when they do not have it. Our Treasurer and the McGowan government have managed to keep price increases within two per cent, which is in line with the forecast inflation rate. I would prefer no increases to utility costs, but if we are to compare these increases with those of the last government of the Liberal Party, they equate to 35¢ a day. I am not happy with any increase, but two per cent or 35¢ a day versus the 19 per cent power increases we have seen in the eastern states is a far better outcome for the people who really matter to me. I just hope for a change of federal government so that we can help those who need our help the most. Unlike any other person in this house, I have been to far too many homes of elderly people who have not been able to afford their power bills and who, as a result, have not turned on the heater at night and have not made it to morning. We must support the poor, our pensioners, our war service veterans and the unemployed. We must provide a fair outcome to them all. This is a great budget and I commend our Treasurer for his hard work. I commend the budget to the house.

**MS J. FARRER (Kimberley)** [9.25 pm]: I rise to comment on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 and to talk about what the budget delivers to the Kimberley region. I am proud to be a part of this government that has returned the budget to surplus for the first time in five years, with a plan to continue these surpluses for the next four years. The Kimberley is one of the largest and most remote electorates in the state. With that comes many demographic and geographic hurdles. Having said that, it has some of the most majestic landscapes, natural phenomena and amazing experiences of anywhere in the world. It can be both harsh and beautiful, and I consider myself privileged to be the member representing all the people who live there.

Today, I not only want to talk about the major projects this budget brings to the Kimberley, but also the smaller ones, as smaller projects are no less important and are often the building blocks for making a huge difference. I realise that the downturn in the economy we have suffered for a number of years affects more than just the Kimberley, more than just Western Australia and more than just Australia. It is global. But my electorate is the Kimberley. It is not only my home, but also where my heart and passion lie. I want to ensure that the budget benefits the Kimberley and provides hope where it is needed so that it can prosper. I truly believe this budget will provide that hope.

Roads are the internal arteries of my electorate. In the Kimberley, these roads cover long distances, with no service stations every 20 to 30 kilometres or less as in the metropolitan region. Many of the roads in the Kimberley are not sealed and there can be in excess of 300 kilometres between roadhouses, so good roads and regular maintenance are essential. This budget has provided over \$290 million to upgrade roads throughout the Kimberley. This includes \$87.5 million to upgrade Great Northern Highway from Broome to Kununurra. This is the main road that goes from one side of the Kimberley to the other. There is \$51 million towards the Ringer Soak and Northern Minerals access road in Brown Range, \$42 million to upgrade the Tanami Road, \$43 million towards improvements on the Gibb River Road, \$65.7 million to continue work on upgrades to the Broome–Cape Leveque Road and \$4 million to complete the sealing of the Bidyadanga access road. Roads may be the internal arteries of the electorate, but the sea is an important external one. Funding of \$5.9 million to purchase a new harbour crane to improve operational efficiency and safety at Broome port is very welcome and much needed.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

p3225b-3284a

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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This budget has been a win for the whole of the Kimberley. Everyone will benefit, from the West Kimberley to the East Kimberley. The opportunities for employment provided by this budget will have far-reaching effects. The \$1.9 million for the Fitzroy River management plan, \$10 million to support development in the Ord, \$1 million for the Dampier Peninsula project and \$1.4 million for planning to build a new Broome regional prison will all create jobs that will have flow-on effects for local businesses. Broome Senior High School will also get its long-awaited upgrades, with \$19.3 million being allocated for a new two-storey teaching block with general learning areas, computer laboratories, a staff studies area, a student services facility and a new industry-standard food technology studio. Existing teaching spaces will be converted into science laboratories. The Kimberley will also share in some of the \$12 million statewide expenditure to Tourism Western Australia to expand the overseas promotion of Western Australia; \$131.5 million of additional statewide expenditure to support agriculture in WA, grow export markets and create long-term jobs, including \$39.6 million to boost biosecurity defences, Asian market success and grains research and development support programs, in addition to \$45 million for grains research and development in the 2018–19 budget; \$182.4 million of statewide funding for a new employer incentive scheme and training delivery, including \$45 million for regional WA, with the scheme helping WA employers with the costs of employing apprentices and trainees; and \$24.1 million in ongoing statewide funding for the WA Open for Business program to promote export opportunities for regional businesses.

The state budget also includes funding for important services in the Kimberley, including \$1 million for the Kimberley mobile dialysis unit; \$280 000 for the Jawun partnership agreement; \$5 million for the Indigenous land-use agreements as part of Plan for Our Parks; \$4.8 million for enhanced driver training and education for regional and remote communities; a \$2.3 million package to combat elder abuse, including continued funding for the WA Elder Abuse Helpline; an additional \$713 000 to maintain regional bus services; \$19.9 million for the regional arts and cultural investment program; \$8.1 million for the suicide prevention strategy; and the introduction of the new regional taxi transition fund.

Work is continuing on a number of key projects in the Kimberley, with funding of \$21.5 million to continue the delivery of regional youth justice services in the Kimberley and Pilbara; \$1.9 million over two years to expand the Earbus program in the Kimberley; \$9.7 million to upgrade boating facilities at Entrance Point and Town Beach in Broome; \$22.4 million for the Kimberley schools project; \$5.2 million for operation of the Aboriginal short-stay accommodation facility in Broome and \$3.4 million for the Indigenous visitor hostel in Derby; \$43.6 million towards improvements of the Gibb River Road; \$18.7 million statewide for the Aboriginal ranger program to provide jobs looking after state parks and protected areas; \$65.7 million to continue work on upgrades to Broome–Cape Leveque Road; \$4 million to complete the sealing of Bidyadanga Road; \$1 million to complete planning for a new boat harbour in Broome; \$8.6 million towards replacing ageing volunteer fire stations in regional locations, including Halls Creek; \$16.7 million for new swimming pools in remote communities; \$65 million across regional WA to continue to support community resource centres; \$170.5 million across regional WA to continue the Country Age Pension Fuel Card; and \$5.1 million for the Emergency Services Volunteer Fuel Card.

The McGowan government is investing in programs to address crime and youth justice issues in the Kimberley. The budget includes \$900 000 to deliver the Kimberley juvenile justice strategy to find alternatives to detention and provide services aimed at diversion; \$42.5 million in additional statewide funding for the Western Australian Methamphetamine Action Plan, including \$20.1 million for the north west drug and alcohol support program to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and other drugs in the Kimberley, Pilbara and the midwest; \$9.2 million towards the development of a comprehensive alcohol and other drug youth service in the Kimberley, which is fulfilling an election commitment; \$2.34 million for four low medical withdrawal beds in the Kimberley; \$914 000 to increase training for Aboriginal staff in AOD services; \$6.5 million for the Aboriginal community connectors program to improve community safety and reduce community consequences of alcohol and other drugs and related at-risk behaviours; \$2 million for a new police and community youth centre in Kununurra; \$1.3 million for the West Kimberley Youth and Resilience Hub project; \$1.1 million for the Kimberley family violence service to continue to assist in responding to family and domestic violence; \$34.6 million for the rollout of personal issue mobile smart tablets for police officers across the state; and \$15.4 million towards the rollout of personal issue multi-threat body armour to frontline police officers across the state.

There has been a wave of crime across Kimberley towns. This wave of crime is a symptom of a much wider and systemic issue. I have been inundated with correspondence regarding crime and antisocial behaviour, and local social media noticeboards have a constant theme of posts concerning this matter. Our community is reaching melting point and unless we respond with a considered holistic government response, community members will talk about taking matters into their own hands and will form vigilante groups. This could result in horrific incidents and could cause major community conflict in the Kimberley. We must avoid this at all costs. As there are complex

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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issues stemming from entrenched generational disadvantage factors, a comprehensive cross-portfolio response is required. Historical issues such as the forced removal of children from parents, displacement, ongoing drug and alcohol abuse and child sex abuse, as well as the ongoing issues of a lack of housing and services, are some of the complex problems that many Aboriginal people in the Kimberley face. There is widespread trauma in the Aboriginal community as a result of these historical issues, and until this trauma is recognised and managed accordingly, the subsequent crime, antisocial issues, and physical, domestic and sexual abuse issues will continue. Police have dealt with the brunt of the issues with the utmost care and professionalism, but the police are only capable of resolving the symptoms of a far greater problem. A comprehensive response requires collaboration from all parties, including state and local governments, the federal government, industry stakeholders and the Kimberley community. I am pleased that the state ministers with whom I have spoken regarding these concerns are responding. Intervention by the police, child protection authorities and the courts cannot resolve this problem. I will work closely with the various agencies and departments to address community concerns. It is critical that we acknowledge cultural authority as the centrepiece of solving these issues on a local level. I am very pleased to see funding that should help see native title corporations and other culturally recognised Aboriginal bodies brought into the dialogue, as these groups have a significant responsibility given the role they play in their communities.

Crime and youth justice is a subject I am very passionate about. Locking children up does not solve the problem. In 2014, I was part of the Kimberley alternative juvenile justice strategy working group, which produced the report, “Kimberley Juvenile Justice: Improving the Current Juvenile Justice System”. Our children are our future. I will finish today by quoting the foreword that I wrote for that report, to demonstrate how this budget is helping to deliver that. It reads —

This issue has been in my heart, and in the hearts of thousands of Kimberley people, for far too long. It is about the health, wellbeing and future of our young people. How can we sleep at night when we all know too well the issues that our young people face? As leaders and adults, we find it difficult to come up with solutions. Why are we seeing such devastating rates of Aboriginal suicide in the Kimberley? Why are we seeing a drop in the overall number of incarcerated youth but a rise in the incarceration of young Aboriginal people? Why are we not seeing any improvements under the current funding, resources and strategies?

It has been evident for a while now that things are only getting worse. A lot of lessons have been learnt along the way and a lot of strategies have been tried and trialled. I acknowledge all the efforts, funding and resources that have been aimed at trying to tackle this problem, but unfortunately young Aboriginal people in the Kimberley continue to be overrepresented in the justice system. There are ongoing examples of antisocial behaviour and a continual reliance on the welfare system. Community and family homes are breaking down across the Kimberley. We cannot ignore it any longer. It is now time to act. Things need to change. We all need to work together to implement a new approach to help young Aboriginal people in the Kimberley. This is an issue of utmost urgency. I call on the government to place a high priority on setting a new approach to juvenile justice in the Kimberley. This needs to be done now to prevent the high rates of Indigenous adult incarceration, which is causing our prisons to overflow.

I acknowledge that it is no easy feat to improve the current juvenile system, but with small steps that are community and regionally owned and led, we will start to address the complex problems at the heart of this intergenerational crisis. Our new approach must be holistic. It has to go beyond the justice system. We have to reach out to the broken homes and communities. We need to listen to their voices and their cries for help as they plead, beg and scream for comfort and support. Mostly silent pleas, we have to listen and act quickly now.

That is what I said when I spoke on a motion for the adoption of the “Kimberley Juvenile Justice: Improving the Current Juvenile Justice System”. I continued —

Our people have the ability to turn this crisis around with the added support of government and financial investment. Working together, we can achieve a better future for our young Kimberley people. Together, as a Parliament, as a nation and as a state, we need to make this happen. We must do better. We must improve the future and provide positive pathways for our young people to reach adulthood successfully, with flourishing health and wellbeing.

I remain committed to working with my ministers, our agencies and departments in collaboration with the Kimberley community to ensure that everyone who lives in my beautiful region can prosper and access the services that they need. Thank you.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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**MR T.J. HEALY (Southern River)** [9.40 pm]: I very proudly rise to comment on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019 on behalf of the people of Southern River. This budget is about jobs, people and families. It is a fantastic financial document that is delivering on our election commitments and ensuring that we are good stewards of the economy by putting Western Australia back on its correct path. I commend the Treasurer, the ministers and all government members for maintaining the financial discipline to deliver a budget that returns a surplus for the first time in a long time. We have delivered the lowest increase in household fees and charges in 13 years. That is exactly what I am after. Please, all Liberal Party members, feel free to come back into the chamber. Have a seat because I have some lovely things to say to all of you. Please ensure that you are in your seats to heckle and interject.

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** All Liberal Party members, please feel free to return to the chamber. There is some fantastic news in this budget about your electorates. First, I want to speak about my electorate of Southern River. It is fantastic that the budget papers contain funding, once again, for two primary schools. One has been built—Southern Grove Primary School, which opened this year—and the second school in Riverbank Estate will start construction next year and open in two years' time. The two Canning Vale train stations are fantastic initiatives. The funding for Canning Vale College and Southern River College are in this budget. There is funding finally for PCYCs in the budget after savage and disappointing cuts. There is funding for the WA industry participation strategy. For those people playing at home, I am referring to page 190 of budget paper No 2, volume 1. It refers to how this government will make sure that when we spend money, Western Australians will have access to jobs, that people in all our electorates—you and I—will get work out of government projects, that level crossings will be removed as part of the Metronet project, that railcars will be built in Western Australia and that the birthing centre at Fiona Stanley Hospital will be built. These are fantastic items of infrastructure. It is fantastic to see our government delivering on its commitments and its promises as it said it would, including returning the budget to surplus and maintaining financial discipline.

I also commend the government for delivering on its promise to deliver Infrastructure WA. Again, it will be a fantastic thing. The politics will be taken out of decisions about what is needed for our community. It is about making sure that the right decisions are made without ego. I know that is a sensitive matter. There was a lot of filibustering on the Infrastructure Western Australia Bill 2019 when it went through this house; there were a lot of fragile egos when we spoke about the Barnett era. It is fantastic that this government is delivering the correct infrastructure.

I would now like to refer to the member for Cottesloe's speech earlier today. He said a couple of interesting things. I am not quoting the uncorrected *Hansard*, I was in the chamber —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Copious notes.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** He was reading from copious notes. I was in the chair at the time and I did not pull him up on it, but he was reading from copious notes. My recollection is that the Cottesloe MLA said at about 4.10 pm today that there is nothing for road infrastructure; there is no solution for road traffic. I will start with the member for Cottesloe. On page 539 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, \$8 million is allocated for the Stephenson Avenue extension. On page 551 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, \$10.5 million is allocated for the upgrade of the Claremont station in the member's electorate. That is very, very important congestion, road management and traffic infrastructure. There is funding for the Queen Victoria Street crossing over the Swan River. A new bridge is going to be built on the footstep of his electorate. The member for Cottesloe was whinging about problems with traffic up and down Stirling Highway, in the middle of his electorate. He forgot to mention that we are building a brand new bridge in his electorate. On page 537 of budget paper No 2, volume 2, there is \$4 million for a brand new bridge.

I now want to mention the member for Kalgoorlie's speech. He made a fantastic contribution and acknowledged the positive things being built in his electorate. But just in case he missed a couple, I thought I would draw some things to his attention. I am happy to send the member for Kalgoorlie a copy of *Hansard* in the mail later so he does not miss anything. The Laverton Hospital is a fantastic funding initiative. I refer the member to page 282 of budget paper No 2, volume 1, which shows that \$871 000 will be spent this financial year and \$3.129 million in the next financial year.

**Mr P.J. Rundle** interjected.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I will come to the member for Roe's electorate in just a moment.

There is funding for step-up, step-down mental health facilities in Kalgoorlie and \$50 000 in 2019–20 for the Kalgoorlie motorsport precinct. Family and domestic violence one-stop hubs —

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**Mr K.M. O'Donnell:** That is not mine. Mine is only talking about this budget.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** The MRI?

**Mr K.M. O'Donnell:** Yes.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** The “Kalgoorlie Health Campus Magnetic Resonance Imaging Suite”?

**Mr K.M. O'Donnell:** Yes.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** Money for the MRI is not new money?

**Mr K.M. O'Donnell:** Yes.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** Thank you. The Kalgoorlie Health Campus MRI will receive \$3 million in 2019–20, \$2.5 million in the next financial year and \$775 000 in 2021–22. That can be found at page 284 of the budget papers. I think that is fantastic. There is also funding for extensions for road projects, which is just fantastic.

Member for Roe, we have discussed how well Esperance and your community are doing in this budget. I refer the member to page 338 of the budget papers. It shows that the South Regional TAFE in Esperance will receive \$7.1 million this year, \$8.4 million next year and \$1.75 million in 2021–22 for its replacement campus. There is also funding for the Coolgardie–Esperance Highway, the port of Esperance access, the Goldfields–Esperance revitalisation unit, the Narrogin helipad and the Narrogin health centre. All those things are commendable and are being funded in this budget. I certainly commend the inclusion of those projects.

The member for Nedlands mentioned in his contribution some things that were going through. I mentioned this in my contribution to the budget last year, but the underground power program for Floreat and parts of his electorate are fantastic. There is funding for the new inner-city college, which, heaven forbid, Liberal Party members are worried might be called “Bob Hawke College”! But there is a new high school being built in his electorate. There is funding for the development of the Shenton Park health campus—a fantastic initiative.

**Mr S.K. L'Estrange** interjected.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** I am sure that the shadow Minister for Health supports that. There is also funding for upgrades to Shenton College. An amount of \$1.8 million will be spent on that school this year.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members on my left!

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** Of course, an issue that is very important to me is King Edward Memorial Hospital for Women because it is where my first daughter was born. Two-thirds of the proceeds from the sale of the TAB will go towards the relocation of King Edward Memorial Hospital, which, of course, benefits all our electorates, country and metro. It is an important thing for us all. They are brand new health facilities in opposition members' electorates—fantastic!

The member for South Perth also made a great contribution. The Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development will refurbish laboratory facilities in South Perth, with \$300 000 to be spent over two years. The state underground power program is going in in South Perth. Whoever becomes the future member for South Perth will benefit from that, but I hope the current member stays around long enough to reap the benefits of that fantastic infrastructure. There is an allocation for upgrades at the career fire and rescue service at Kensington Fire Station. There is the Manning Road on-ramp, which the member has spoken very, very positively about over some time. There is the “John McGrath” on-ramp—a fantastic initiative.

The member for Vasse has spoken. The electorate of Vasse spreads through to Margaret River. I refer to the Margaret River wastewater treatment plant. Clearly, a lot of wastewater from those two areas is treated there. The Margaret River wastewater treatment plant upgrade will receive \$4.9 million this year and \$120 000 next year. The Margaret River Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service will get an upgrade, as will Margaret River Senior High School and Cape Naturaliste College. In the member for Bateman's electorate, funding will be spent on access from Kwinana Freeway to Murdoch activity centre. There is funding for underground power in the suburb of Alfred Cove. The member for Warren–Blackwood's electorate will also benefit. I have indicated that funding will go to Cape Naturaliste College. The Premium Food Centre in Manjimup will receive \$1 million. South Western Highway will be upgraded between Donnybrook and Greenbushes with funding in the 2019–20 and 2020–21 budgets. This is important funding for all members' contributions so far. Members in the Lib–Nat seats have sounded angry and claimed that there is nothing for their seats. They have claimed there is not enough pork going around and that it is happening only in Labor-held seats, but that is just not the case. I want them to know what is being delivered in their area.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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I refer to North West Central. It is after 6.00 pm, so clearly the member is not here. In 2019–20, \$2.3 million will be spent on minor works at the Port of Ashburton; in 2020–21, \$1 million; in the forward estimates, 2021–22, another \$1 million; and in 2022–23, another \$1 million. It is on page 564 of volume 2 of the budget papers. Port infrastructure construction will be done at the Port of Ashburton. There is also the Onslow power infrastructure project.

The Labor Party is the largest metropolitan and regional party in this Parliament. We represent more country seats than any other political party. It is fantastic to see us deliver, as we always do, for the regions and for the metropolitan area. The amount of \$2.8 million is for Carnarvon flood mitigation works; \$1.7 million for Carnarvon hospital; and \$5.7 million for the Carnarvon aged and palliative care facility. Other areas to benefit are Carnarvon Community College, the Carnarvon and Kununurra police and community youth centres; continuation of the north west drug and alcohol support program; and water programs in the Murchison region's water treatment facilities. I will send all members a copy of the *Hansard* so they can see all the information.

I do not want to leave out the member for Moore—I am sure he is waiting to hear—in case he has not had a chance to go through the budget. The member for Moore has a very large electorate. We are looking also at the wider Geraldton community. The Geraldton marine finfish nursery facility will benefit the member for Geraldton and the people who live in the areas surrounding the seat of Geraldton. I mention also the Geraldton Health Campus redevelopment; the step-up, step-down mental health facility; and Greenough Regional Prison, a great aspiration for all of us to attain at some point. There is \$4.3 million in the budget for Moora Residential College, just so that members opposite do not forget, and funding under the Road Safety Commission for Indian Ocean Drive. In the member for Central Wheatbelt's electorate, there is \$600 000 for strengthening cancer services at the Northam Cancer Centre, shown in volume 1 on page 282.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis** interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Hillarys, you have been persistent. I call you to order for the second time.

**Mr T.J. HEALY:** There is \$10 million for the wheatbelt safety review program of Great Eastern Highway.

I am conscious of the time and do not want to stay too late, but I wanted to confirm that it is fantastic that we have a budget that is delivering in all our electorates. For those members—not many—who remain, including the member for Darling Range, I am sorry I missed out all the fantastic funding for train lines, road extensions, Tonkin Highway and all those things. It is simple to say that this Treasurer and this government should be commended. This is a budget for all electorates—all regions of Western Australia—whether people live in the city or the bush. It is fantastic.

Finally, the member for Cottesloe also said that our speeches have been full of self-congratulatory media. I want to quote again from something the Premier quoted from today in the WAFarmers media release. It is not that we have created self-congratulatory media; it is a fact that our government has done the work and we have earned praise for doing our job. I would like to quote the WAFarmers media release of 9 May 2019, which states —

This is a credit to Minister Alannah MacTiernan as it is the first time in 20 years we have seen a Minister stand up to Treasury and not just hold the line, but push back and demand the level of funding support needed to help the industry grow.

It states further on —

...“credit is needed where credit is due, the Treasurer and Minister ... have delivered a good budget which will help set up agriculture for the next four years.”

They have also set up the state, not for the next four years, but for the next generation. Thank you, Acting Speaker, for the opportunity to make a contribution.

**MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka)** [9.54 pm]: I too rise to speak on this budget. I have been in this house 10 years last year and seen many budgets in here. I was extraordinarily impressed that we could deliver an operating surplus and keep fees and charges low. That is not something I have seen in the 10 years I have been here. I want to place on record, as I said to the Premier after budget day, how impressive that was for the communities I represent and the broader Western Australian community.

I would like to take this opportunity while I am on my feet to begin by placing on record my support for Anne Aly, the member for Cowan. She is a great advocate in the community I represent and in the broader Cowan community for fairness and equity for all her constituents.

Members, it is always concerning when people try to win votes or cause someone to lose votes by stooping low through hate and feeding fear in the community by taking things out of context and blowing them up. Making

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people fearful of someone in our community does all of us a disservice. If we know anyone who in any way seeks to do that when we are politically campaigning, we should seek to dissuade them and tell them that stooping to such lows does no good for any side of politics.

Anne Aly recently experienced plain and simply Islamophobia. Many of the people I represent have to deal with Islamophobia on a day-by-day basis. This is where the fear of difference and the misunderstanding of religion is peddled by people so that they begin to hate people just because of their beliefs. It is insidious and creates hate, misunderstanding and mistrust all through falsehoods. In the community I represent I have stood many times to hear people repeat the falsehoods they have heard around Islam and the beliefs around Islam. We are in the holy month of Ramadan, a very holy time, when these communities are considerate of their community; are faithful to their beliefs; appreciate their families; and take great pride in their country and the opportunities it creates for them. They regularly go through this period to give thanks for their good fortune. What do we see during this period? We see peddling of hate, and it is such an unfounded hate. I know Anne Aly; I know the good work she does. I know she does not deserve this at all. In this Parliament, we have to remember that WA has some of the only hate laws—there are only a few hate laws throughout Australia—in response to van Tongeren and his hateful, spiteful and dangerous, illegal actions against Asian families in our community. We should all be saying to people in our community that what we saw recently was wrong; it was unnecessary; it is not true; it is out of context; it wants us to hate people; and hate will always undermine our democracy. I, too, want to place on the record that I will stand up against that sort of intolerance and racism. Tim Soutphommasane, the former race discrimination commissioner, and now professor of practice in sociology and political theory at the University of Sydney, said that talking about racism is not divisive, responding to racism is not divisive, but perpetrating racism is divisive. He went on to note that Australians, particularly their leaders, have a predilection to talk about harmony, togetherness and diversity, when sometimes we just really need to have the hard discussions and deal with discrimination, and the issue that is at the heart of discrimination, which is racism.

I wanted to put that on the record while I had the opportunity, but I now want to return to the budget. I note that one of the big arguments out there at the moment is that Labor is not good at managing the economy. Well—look at us; we are Labor and we are managing the economy. Just look at the good job that we have done. Did that not just hit the Liberals straight out of the ballpark? It is not just me saying that; the *Australian Financial Review*, on Friday, 10 May 2019, in its “Winners and Losers” section, put the federal coalition government in the losers’ column, because WA Labor continues to undermine the federal coalition’s claim to be a responsible financial manager, ahead of the federal election, by improving the state’s bottom line and boosting the case for returning to a AAA credit rating. The *Australian Financial Review* was saying that it is a false argument in view of how well WA Labor is managing the economy.

Like many people in this chamber, I acknowledge that unemployment is unacceptably high. The small area labour market December quarter 2018 data tables show that while Western Australia had an unemployment rate of 6.25 per cent for 2018–19, Balga and Mirrabooka are under massive unemployment stress, with 21 per cent unemployment. Think about that—the rest of Western Australia is at 6.25 per cent but the suburbs of Balga and Mirrabooka are at 21 per cent. That has come down from a high, under the previous Liberal–National government, of 25 per cent, so then one in four people were unemployed, but it is still one in five, and it is still absolutely unacceptable. In Nollamara and Westminster the figure is 11 per cent, and in Alexander Heights and Koondoola it is at 13.2 per cent. People know that I have spoken in this place about youth unemployment, which is at unacceptably high rates in Balga, Mirrabooka and Koondoola.

With this budget setting and the forecast of 6.25 per cent unemployment for 2018–19, six per cent for 2019–20 and 5.75 per cent for 2020–21, there is a really clear need to address unemployment in Mirrabooka, Balga and places like that if we are going to be able to get unemployment down. I want the people of Mirrabooka to know that I argue that with my state and federal colleagues. I argue that the Jobactive system is not meeting the needs of the communities that I represent, and that the federal government’s employment incentive schemes are not meeting the needs of the people in Mirrabooka. I think all sides of politics are committed, but the WA Labor Party has put the runs on the board. I applaud this government for creating 37 000 jobs, including 27 000 full-time jobs, and the continuation of that and the target of 150 000 new jobs by 2023–24 gives me great hope and optimism that we are at the forefront of knowing that this is a vital aspect to our community.

I particularly applaud and welcome the employer incentive scheme, which is an initiative to increase training delivery for apprentices and traineeships, particularly given the high youth unemployment in the areas I represent. I believe that we need to get pre-apprentices picked up, particularly from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, where they do not have the networks. Networks are vital to the success of the employment journey. Networks provide the contacts for the employment journey. We have recognised this in the area of Mirrabooka

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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and Balga, and the broader City of Stirling, and created the Kaleidoscope initiative. I have spoken about the Kaleidoscope initiative in this place before, but it is important to continue to highlight the role it plays and the importance it has in our community to deliver a networking, mentoring and information sharing opportunity to newly arrived migrants endeavouring to build their lives in the best way possible in Australia. As we know, it is based on an employment model in Toronto. It has mentors and mentees who meet for at least 18 hours over three months. They set goals for the mentoring program and work together to meet the goals around applying for work, networking and developing career strategies. But it is more than that. It helps different groups set up their own networking capacities, business enterprises and employment groups and creates other opportunities. I thank the WA Labor government for the injection of a further \$180 000, as outlined in the budget statements, which will be highlighted during estimates.

I attended a stakeholder meeting of Kaleidoscope last night, and it reported that in the short 18 months that the program has been operating it has seen 62 per cent of the mentee participants in the initial intake gain employment in their field after three months of being in the program. I have met some of those mentees who, frankly, felt a bit hopeless. They felt like they had come to Australia and found it really difficult to get into the area of employment they had trained for. In the current second intake, around five mentees have already been employed. There have been 115 mentors recruited, and 14 employers are participating. There are 27 immigrant-led associations involved. Three tiers of government—federal, state and local—are involved, along with community employment agencies and employer and industry bodies. It is what we will probably call now, because it seems like it is the phrase of the moment, a hub. But it is a hub of people working together, because they want to see successful careers for people who have come to Australia to make their futures. The importance of mentoring for newly arrived migrants in Australia should not be understated, as it uses a relationship between individuals, one more experienced, to enhance the learning and development of the less experienced individual. Often, however, it is not about the fact that the mentee is not experienced in their field of work or qualifications, because often the newly arrived migrant has experience in the workforce, a level of expertise or qualifications greater than the mentor, who has established themselves in the Australian workplace. A great asset of Kaleidoscope is the capacity to work with someone who is working in an Australian environment, utilising that goal setting and interpersonal rapport to give those people struggling to enter the Australian workers the confidence to prevail and the ongoing resilience. When people front up to a workplace with all their qualifications and capacities and are told, “Oh, you just don’t have experience in the Australian workforce”, this program can give them the capacity to feel that they are included and wanted in the workforce. We have had some great results; 64 per cent of people who have participated in this program have found employment in the areas in which they wanted to be employed.

This seems to be self-evident and a no-brainer. I googled a recent survey by the American Society for Training and Development, which found that 75 per cent of executives believed that mentoring had been critical to their career development. We all know how important that mechanism is. In fact, the Master Builders Association in Western Australia offers mentoring because it says it improves confidence, offers experienced guidance and support in the industry, builds networking opportunities and helps professional growth and career planning. Mentoring works, and Kaleidoscope works as a mentoring program. It needs to be continued. It has three years’ federal base funding, and I keep working with it to find other areas of funding. The hope is that, like the Toronto model, it will get support from businesses because for businesses it is a portal for finding a diverse workforce.

I put it out there that it would be worth considering for inclusion in the employer incentive program that the government is about to launch to deliver training for apprentices and traineeships. It is a great initiative, for which \$182 million has been allocated, but I am thinking about a similar mentoring mechanism for culturally and linguistically diverse communities so that they can transition into apprenticeship schemes. That would be really good. I can give an example from my experience, which I have talked about before. A young woman in my community did a traineeship in carpentry. She really wanted an apprenticeship and got a scholarship so that she could take the money and take that scholarship to an employer, which would reduce the cost of her apprenticeship. But she did not have the networks; she did not have the capacity. Despite going around to businesses and putting her CV in, she is yet to gain an apprenticeship in carpentry. Of course she is despondent, but if she had been mentored and there were networking opportunities, it is likely that she would have had the same success that Kaleidoscope participants have had.

I will finish by saying that I have in my electorate schools that work really hard in this area to get their students out into the community to build those networks. I was particularly pleased to see that the government made a commitment to one of those schools, Balga Senior High School, of \$90 000 towards the upgrade of its sports courts. I am very pleased that Melita Markey, the Labor candidate for the federal seat of Stirling, took up the cause of the sports courts; they can no longer be safely used because the asphalt is cracked and in disrepair. Should the

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Shorten Labor Party win government on Saturday, that investment will ensure that the students of Balga Senior High School will be able to use those facilities once again. I wanted to particularly put on record my thanks for that commitment to our community. I thank the house.

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Parliamentary Secretary)** [10.13 pm]: I rise to speak on the 2019–20 budget. I want to start by reporting on an observation by Brad Thompson of *The Australian Financial Review*, who said of the WA state budget, and I quote —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY**: I would like to remind members that I showed the courtesy of listening to all other members in silence, so I expect the same courtesy to be returned. Brad Thompson of *The Australian Financial Review* said of the WA state government budget —

WA Labor continues underline the party's claims to be a responsible financial manager ahead of the federal election by improving the state's bottom line and boosting case for a return to a AAA credit rating.

Conservatives often parrot the great Australian political myth that the conservatives are somehow superior financial managers. It has never been true. If we look back at the history of governments in this country, we can see that for quite a period the Labor Party has been the superior financial manager in this country. We go back to the Hawke and Keating governments that laid the foundation for 30 years of growth in Australia—a miracle in the western world. We go back to the Rudd government and its response to the global financial crisis that meant that the Australian economy was a rare bird indeed and one of the only modern western economies to escape the recession and massive unemployment. We look back at the achievements of Labor generally, in policies such as superannuation and Medicare, and we know that Labor is a party that has brought a lot to the Australian landscape in financial achievement. The reality is that governments of both stripes have been better and worse managers of the economy. An example of a particularly bad one was the last Western Australian Liberal–National government, which won lotto and still blew it all, and then extended the mortgage on top of it.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY**: I will repeat that for the benefit of members who might not have heard because of the interjection. What did the previous Liberal–National government do? It won lotto, blew it all and then extended the mortgage. That is the story of the previous government. The 2019–20 budget papers are evidence that the current state government has a particularly good record as a financial manager—page by page the evidence is there. Independent voices throughout the state validate this view. These third party voices know the value of a moderate, sensible, mainstream and careful government that insists on living within its means while doing more for those facing the burden of a lower income. The truth is that because of this great myth, the bar is always that much higher for Labor. Elections tend to be lopsided, with Labor always subjected to greater scrutiny compared with the conservatives. That might not be fair, but we accept it and plough on. We see an example of this greater scrutiny of policies in the lead-up to the federal election. We accept this. We know that the bar is always higher for us to establish our credentials and we plough on and, in the case of the last state election, we win government. The outcome of the federal election this Saturday remains to be seen.

In Western Australia, the last Liberal–National government well and truly exploded the old myth forever through its appalling mismanagement of the state's finances. Most Western Australians will agree, regardless of their political leanings—this has happened time and again when I meet people in the community—that the previous state Liberal–National government was a disaster when it came to money. It is not enough for our opponents to make a mess. We have to be equal to the challenge of cleaning it up. Let us look at this budget. The McGowan government has turned the state's finances around. The state budget is officially in surplus this year, for the first time in five years.

Western Australians are the beneficiaries of our good financial management, with the lowest rise in fees and charges in 13 years. The WA economy is strengthening, with 37 000 new jobs created since this government came to office, compared with no new jobs over the second term of the previous government. Of course, jobs remain the focus as we proceed with Metronet and road infrastructure projects and numerous other policies we are introducing across the state.

Strong surpluses allow the government to fund infrastructure projects, pay down debt and protect our economy against external volatility. In just two years, the McGowan government has delivered a \$3 billion turnaround from a \$2.5 billion deficit in the final year of the Liberal–National government to a healthy surplus this year. The opposition claims—I have heard opposition members say it this evening—it is all just luck. We got lucky that

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there was a tailings dam disaster in Brazil and the iron ore price has increased. What opposition members ignore is that the return to surplus was underpinned by reining in the previous government's wasteful expenditure. Had spending continued at the previous government's rate of 6.4 per cent, there would be no surplus now. Of course, the restoration of GST funding helped, but even without that change to get a fair share for Western Australia, surpluses would still be forecast in each financial year under this Labor budget. The state's net debt is more than \$4 billion lower than forecast under the Liberal–National government, saving Western Australians \$500 million in interest payments—that is dead money. Half a billion dollars that would have been out the door and lost to Western Australia has been saved to pay down debt even further and to help us bring other charges, such as electricity prices, down further.

WA is the only state in Australia with debt decreasing. The McGowan government is easing the burden on households, with electricity price rises limited to the inflation rate of 1.75 per cent. That is a 1.75 per cent increase in people's key electricity utility bill. It is an incredibly low increase and a rise for the average household of less than 10¢ a day. This is important to all households, but it is particularly important to households in the electorate of Baldivis, where we have the added issue of low house prices and in some cases households sitting on negative equity. We know that house prices across Australia have fallen; it is a national phenomenon aggravated by the flat economy and banks restricting their lending practices after the royal commission. It is always a balance with house prices; we want them to be affordable for new owners to get into the market but we also want them to maintain value and grow in value over time for existing homeowners. What will lift house prices and bring a recovery in the housing market is an improved economy and more jobs. There is no magic wand; it is a market economy out there and people need more coin in their pockets, more economic growth, more jobs and better wages, which have stagnated for far too long. That is when we will see a recovery in the housing market.

The budget also includes continued spending on road infrastructure. For many years, a huge issue in Baldivis has been congestion on the Kwinana Freeway. It seems that every day, every week and at almost every time of day, people driving north on the Kwinana Freeway run into congestion. It is a huge headache for the community. It is called the "Cockburn bottleneck". When approaching Cockburn Central, the freeway jams up and there is a knock-on impact on the freeway. At peak times, the traffic reaches all the way to Baldivis in the south. It is a big headache that directly impacts on the quality of life of people living in the communities that I represent. The Kwinana Freeway is the main arterial road servicing the southern section of the Perth metropolitan area and the south west. It has seen significant growth in traffic volumes in recent years, which has resulted in this congestion and the breakdown of traffic flow on the freeway. This is an issue particularly south of Roe Highway around Cockburn Central, as I described. Over 75 per cent of crashes on this section of road are potentially dangerous rear-end collisions involving a higher than average proportion of heavy vehicles. It is an issue not only of inconvenience, but also of life and death. The budget contains continuing funding for that roadwork to widen the freeway northbound from two to three lanes, and on one section of the freeway there will now be four lanes. That work began last year and is due to finish at the conclusion of this year. It is important to note that this was not automatic; it was not always going to happen. There was not money in the forward estimates under the previous government for this project. It took Labor working with the then Turnbull government to get this money redirected from other projects. A total of \$2.3 billion in a state and federal package included a \$1.6 billion investment from the federal government and a \$745 million from the state government. This announcement goes back to 2017, when Malcolm Turnbull was the Prime Minister. It was due to the initiative and hard work of the Premier and the Western Australian Minister for Transport, who took the very audacious plan to ask for money from Canberra. The response that came back was that the money would come. I want to quote the former Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull —

"We recognise the priorities of the new WA State Government and will work with them to deliver high quality outcomes for Western Australia," Mr Turnbull said.

"In particular, the State Government's METRONET initiative fits in well with my Government's Smart Cities agenda, and we will continue to work with the Premier and his team to help make it happen."

Thanks to Malcolm Turnbull and thanks to the Premier and transport minister here in Western Australia, that money was secured. As we drive north on the freeway today we see those roadworks proceeding round the clock. We are removing a huge headache for the people of Baldivis.

As members know, Baldivis is a very rapidly growing area—it certainly was during the boom—and that means a lot of young families call Baldivis home. Education is a local boom industry. Tens of millions of dollars have been spent on new schools and other associated facilities in the Baldivis electorate. I will list some new works. I admit that some of these projects were started under the previous government and have been completed

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recently. They include Wellard Primary School; the new Ridge View Secondary College in Baldivis—a second government high school for the suburb of Baldivis; big extensions to Mother Teresa Catholic College to include a secondary school; big extensions to King's College in Bertram; and new works at Peter Carnley Anglican Community School in Wellard, which is an investment from the private education sector. Currently, the state government has two new government primary schools either under construction or in the planning phase in Baldivis to meet the growing needs of our community. There are a lot of kids in Baldivis and they play a lot of sport. That is why the local city is building a brand-new regional sporting facility. The state government recently contributed \$1.5 million, which will be matched by federal Labor adding another \$2 million towards the cost of stage 1, which is a \$17.5 million stage of that massive project. It will provide football, cricket, basketball and other sporting facilities for our community.

I will not keep members too long, but in the remaining time I want to touch on an issue that is not specific to any electorate, but has a major impact on all electorates, and that is the scourge of meth in our community. Meth knows no boundaries. It respects no demographic. It is random and it is terrifying. Whether it is the loved one in your family you are at your wits end trying to help or the road-rager on the freeway who explodes in anger and violence at the slightest provocation, we are all impacted and we are all at risk. The Baldivis electorate is no more or less at risk from the impact of meth than any other. In this current budget, the McGowan government is investing an extra \$42.5 million towards its methamphetamine action plan. This investment will provide increased support for individuals and families in crisis. Since the McGowan government took office, it has invested a total of \$244.8 million to address methamphetamine issues in Western Australia. Along with all the other issues that I and other members have mentioned tonight, that methamphetamine initiative might just end up being one of the most important initiatives in this state budget.

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary)** [10.30 pm]: It is my pleasure to talk about the budget and also to congratulate the Treasurer for his prudent financial management, and in particular, curbing government expenditure growth.

I want to talk about one issue—homelessness in the city. It is an issue that is of critical importance to my electorate and to my community. I cannot stress this enough. I will be frank, it is from both perspectives: the issue of homelessness is very visual and it is very clear in our city. I congratulate *The West Australian* for its stories this week highlighting this issue facing our city. The statistics say that at a state level, approximately 1 000 people are rough sleeping in Western Australia. Ruah Community Services' Registry Week, last conducted in 2016, states that about 430 people are rough sleeping on the streets in the city. As I said, there are two perspectives to homelessness. I think we all share the first; that is, the despair that people, for very different reasons and circumstances, find themselves rough sleeping on the streets in our city. The reasons could relate to domestic violence, the loss of a job, or being disenfranchised from families and loved ones. It could also be related to mental health issues or alcohol or drugs. There are numerous reasons people end up rough sleeping. It is human despair. Many people I speak to want to help people who are rough sleeping in our city.

Another concern that has been shared with me, which should not be dismissed as a careless attitude, is that small business operators in the city, on a day-to-day basis, have to deal with homelessness in our city and some of the consequences of that. Day in and day out they arrive at their small business to find someone sleeping in their shopfront and they may be abused for asking that person to move on. These are the realistic consequences of rough sleeping in our city. We should not dismiss those concerns. It is very clear that everyone wants to find a solution to homelessness.

I want to say on the public record that an incredible number of service providers working with homeless people in our city do an outstanding job. They include Ruah Community Services' Ruah Day House, UnitingCare West's Tranby House, Tom Fisher House run by the St Vincent de Paul Society, St Bart's run by Anglicare, and the Passages Resource Centre. They are doing brilliant work. They are also involved in the End Homelessness alliance. Outstanding leadership has been shown by the homeless sector in driving and championing a strategy to end homelessness in our state. They should be applauded. Many other smaller homeless groups have popped up that are providing and addressing immediate need. These include, although not all are small, the Street Doctor, Homeless Healthcare and one of the more recent groups, the Perth Homeless Support Group. They are also doing incredible work in our city. We need to have critical discussions and debates about homelessness and our approach in the city. It is for this simple reason that so many providers are operating in the city and that a proliferation of smaller groups have now popped up. I understand that when people encounter homelessness, they want to do something straightaway.

Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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Often as I come through my door, there are people who want to set up a new group or organisation or hit the streets of Perth with a voluntary group. I understand that and I applaud the honourable intentions of those groups and individuals, but that can also have bad outcomes and bad consequences for the sector as a whole, because every time a new homelessness organisation is established, it takes away resources, time and money from existing credible providers that understand the field and have trained staff. Another element is the proliferation of smaller groups, which are often bound by social media, that develop clientele but do not go out for long periods and one day cease to exist. Their volunteers are not necessarily trained to deal with the complex issues of homelessness. We need—I am critical about this—an up-front and honest conversation with everyone currently working in homelessness in the city to ask the questions: “Do you need to be working there?” “Could you be working under another credible long-term provider or contribute your resources and energy to something better to deliver outcomes for the issue of homelessness in our city?” People do not like having these conversations because they challenge the status quo, but if we want to focus on the outcomes of the WA Alliance to End Homelessness, these conversations need to be had. It cannot be that it offends people or their sense of their contribution.

Complementing the work of the WA Alliance to End Homelessness, the Perth city summit identified that one of the top 10 actions that we need to take is to produce a homelessness action plan for the city that focuses on critical issues, such as removing the duplication of existing service providers and organisations, identifying the gaps that need to be filled and taking a coordinated approach. I am pleased that out of the Perth city summit and working with the City of Perth, we have established the city homelessness framework committee, which focuses on getting all the providers together. We have three key areas of focus. The first is the coordination of services into the housing-plus model—it is effectively the 50 Lives, 50 Homes project—which involves helping homeless people into accommodation that provides wraparound services for mental health, drugs and so forth. The second is the general coordination of services within the inner city. The third deals with the unsolicited distribution of goods and services in the inner city. We are working on those areas of focus now. I applaud the City of Perth; the director, Rebecca Moore; staff member Emma Landers; and the City of Perth commissioner, Gay McMath, who are doing an outstanding job championing this more coordinated approach. There will be some tough conversations because the City of Perth will be looking at an accreditation system for every provider that is operating in the city. Not everyone is going to like this because it will challenge the smaller operators in the city, which will be asked, “Should you be doing work there or could you be doing it better by merging with another organisation?”

We have also identified key gaps in the area of homelessness in the city, such as drop-in shelters. Homelessness services are provided from 7.00 am to 1.00 pm by the Tranby and Ruah Centres, and we also have the Passages Youth Engagement Hub, but it is clear that once it hits past one o'clock, there is a gap in services. If we are to address homelessness, we need a transitional shelter to which homeless people can go and engage in wraparound services. I was advised by United Care and Tranby Centre, which do an outstanding job, that if we can get homeless people into night-time services over three consecutive nights, we have a much better opportunity to engage them in wraparound mental health and drug and other services. This is the critical task. I am working with the City of Perth to champion the expansion of drop-in centre hours to 7.00 pm, with the main game being a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week homeless shelter in the city. I note for the public record that the one time we had a 24/7 homeless shelter was when the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was on. At that time, the state government was concerned about the appearance of homelessness in the city; and, as a consequence, it invested in a 24/7 centre that was able to provide a central area to which homeless people could go. That is only one part of the solution. Of course, the key solution is the work of the End Homelessness Alliance, and also the work being undertaken by the Minister for Communities, who is taking, for the first time, a 10-year coherent approach to homelessness across the strategy. I believe this state is at a critical juncture. There is momentum on our side. At the city level, all the groups are working together for a practical plan to fill in at the most basic level the gaps in services and provide better coordination. We have a sector, with the End Homelessness Alliance, that has been championing and showing the way. We also have an extraordinary minister—I say this genuinely—who has set a vision to create, for the first time, a coherent strategy for the state that will galvanise all those involved.

I now come to the budget. One part of the budget is particularly welcome. The Minister for Health announced before the budget was handed down that \$23.1 million would be committed, as part of the sustainable health review, to a pilot program for a 20 to 30-bed medical respite centre to provide much needed pre and post-hospital clinical care for homeless people with complex conditions.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr R.S. Love):** Attorney General, could you keep your voice down, please, because you are interfering with your own member.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** This is critical. This is a welcome initiative and is part of the state government's plan to address the long-term and chronic issue of homelessness in our city. Thank you.

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**DR A.D. BUTI (Armadale)** [10.42 pm]: I also want to make a contribution to the debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019. The member for Perth's contribution to the debate was very welcome. The member made a very well thought out speech. The problem with a lot of smaller non-government organisations is that it often becomes a territorial battle and a battle for resources. Therefore, that was a great contribution from the member for Perth. For the last couple of hours, we have had some very good and positive contributions from members on this side of the house. The member for Baldivis articulated a great argument about why it is a myth to think that the conservative side of politics is always the better manager of the state's finances. As he articulated, that is not true. We can get good governments on both sides of the political divide. The current Treasurer is, without doubt, the best Treasurer this state has had since the last Labor Treasurer in Hon Eric Ripper. The interlude between the two Liberal governments has been a financial disaster for this state.

I would like to commence by going to budget paper No 3. This is important, because for three or four hours today we have heard so much negativity from the other side. If the former Premier and member for Cottesloe were here, he would say, "You're just being so negative. Why don't you like this state?" Has the member for Vasse ever said anything positive in this house? The member for Vasse made a very interesting contribution. Without doubt, the member for Vasse is the number one opinion writer in this chamber. However, in her speech, rather than say, "I made this contribution or that contribution", she cited her own writings in the third person. It was quite interesting that she was citing her writing in the third person. It was very interesting.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Have you never quoted yourself, member for Armadale?

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** The member for Vasse may have quoted from an opinion piece, but I can quote from some books that I have written! I will not go down that road.

I refer to page 1 of budget paper No 3, the overview. I think the other side need to actually understand the overview of the budget, which states —

This Budget delivers a return to surplus (of \$553 million) in 2018–19, the Government's second year in office, and the first operating surplus since 2013–14.

This represents a \$1.2 billion turnaround from the \$674 million operating deficit for 2018–19 forecast in the Mid-year Review, and primarily reflects recent strengthening in the iron ore price (which is expected to be temporary) and a partial bring-forward of Western Australia's 2019–20 GST top-up payment into 2018–19.

It is interesting that this budget actually talks about the increase in iron ore prices, in terms of what happened in Brazil, as being a temporary measure. Unlike the previous government, we did not work on the assumption that the iron ore prices that we enjoy during the boom will remain forever. This Treasurer and this government are sensible enough to know that these temporary measures will not stay forever. I could go on about the overview's highlights. I recommend page 1 of budget paper No 3 to members opposite.

If anything further reinforces what the member for Baldivis said about the financial management of this government and the myth that the conservatives are the great financial managers, it is the discipline this government has maintained in expenditure. There is a lovely graph—I am sorry it is not big enough—that shows that between 2010–11 and 2016–17, there was average growth in expenditure of 6.4 per cent under the previous government, compound. Due to the discipline of the Treasurer and the government, expected growth in expenditure is much, much less—it averages 1.3 per cent going forward over the next three years. That is average growth in expenditure of 1.3 per cent compared with 6.4 per cent under the previous government. When the other side tells us that the operating surplus is due to only a temporary increase in iron ore prices and a bring forward of the GST, that is wrong; it is also the result of the fact that we have kept expenditure down. The member for Nedlands asked us to tell him which projects we would not have agreed to that the previous government enacted. The whole debt was not the result of capital expenditure; the previous government was borrowing to finance the operating costs of government.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** At the end.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** At the end, yes. That is the former government's greatest sin; it was borrowing money to finance the operation of government. Members opposite should not turn around and ask which capital projects we would not have funded. The member for Baldivis has blown a hole in the argument that the conservatives are always the best managers of finances. This Treasurer and the government need to be congratulated for producing a surplus now, not like the possible surplus that may happen under the federal coalition government in the future. We have an operating surplus now. Yes, there are some temporary measures as a result of the iron ore prices, which we are not banking on remaining like that, but a lot of it is the result of the discipline this government has engaged in.

I want to talk about another matter very shortly, but in the Armadale region some substantial maintenance work has been done on Cecil Andrews College and Armadale Senior High School. The government has committed to

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inject \$10 million to build a TAFE facility in Armadale, which has been matched by the Shorten federal opposition. If a Shorten government is elected on the weekend, there is a \$10 million commitment that will be added to the \$10 million from the state government for a purpose-built TAFE facility in Armadale. People would think that Armadale, a regional centre with the socioeconomic demographics of that area, would have a purpose-built TAFE. We do not have one at the moment. The federal Liberal government has been silent on the matter. Hopefully, the voters of Armadale, Burt and the other voters in Western Australia and Australia will ensure that there is a change of federal government on the weekend, and then we will have a joint commitment to the building of a TAFE facility in Western Australia.

The budget also mentions the issue of domestic violence. Over the two years that it has been in power, this government has done a considerable amount of work on domestic violence, through the Attorney General, the Minister for Police and also the Minister for Community Services. One interesting thing that was announced quite recently was the issue of an electronic monitoring trial for high-risk domestic violence offenders, something I think the house would applaud. In 2011, the current federal member for Pierce, when he was the state Attorney General and the Treasurer, mocked the idea that serious domestic violence offenders would have electronic tracking devices attached to them to provide greater safety to victims of domestic violence. This government has done many other things in the domestic violence sphere, including the funding of two domestic violence one-stop hubs, where victims can go to obtain all the various services. They are being established in Mirrabooka and Kalgoorlie. There is also \$1.1 million for continued funding of the Kimberley family violence service and \$415 000 continued funding for the Pets in Crisis program, which is incredibly important. Often victims of domestic violence do not want to leave their pets and, therefore, they stay in dangerous situations. That is a very important measure by this government. This government is serious in the domestic violence sphere. It is a curse on our society and it will take a long time to try to overcome that scourge on our society.

Last week, the member for Scarborough made an appalling grievance to the Minister for Transport on the issue of on-demand reform, particularly in the regional areas. It is a very difficult issue. The member for Scarborough went on about how Uber was having an effect in Mandurah and other country regions. When Uber came in, the previous government was in power. As the member for Dawesville has openly admitted, he is a champion of Uber. He even had potential Uber drivers at a meeting. I am not sure whether it was in his electorate office.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** No.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** No, but he had a meeting with Uber drivers, encouraging them into the market. There are many fans of Uber. But the member for Scarborough is in another land when she stands up and accuses us for being responsible for Uber entering the market. She is like President Trump's adviser Kellyanne Conway and her reference to raising alternative facts. No, there is only one set of facts; there are no alternative facts. The fact is that when Uber came into the market, the previous government was in power, not the Labor Party. In opposition, the shadow Minister for Transport always made clear that we would come up with a set of reforms that would include an industry-funded buyback scheme. We have come about that with a temporary levy, but not one that will stay forever. Of course, many taxi plate owners have complained that it is not enough and members of the public are saying we should not worry about it because business can fall over due to technology coming into play and they have to be able to cope with that. However, the taxi industry is a different market because it was very regulated by government, so we felt an obligation to ensure that we helped the small business operators. The Minister for Small Business often receives questions from the member for Vasse about small business. We are the government that is helping small business operators in the taxi industry. Her side did nothing; it only made the matter worse.

Regarding infrastructure such as roads and transport in the Armadale region, this government has been on the front foot since it got into power. Anyone who travels on Armadale Road can see the dualling of the Armadale Road from Armadale to the freeway, which will be very important. I refer to the Denny Avenue intersection, which an RAC survey rated as the most dangerous piece of road in the metropolitan area. For year after year, since I have been a member of this Parliament, my plea to the then government to do something fell on deaf ears and the former Minister for Transport, the member for Bateman, refused to meet onsite, not only me but also the late Don Randall, the federal member for Canning. We campaigned together for something to be done and that has been taken up by the member for Burt and me. The first commitment the Minister for Transport made about removing level crossings in the metro area was to do something about Denny Avenue in Kelmscott. We have a plan to remove a number of level crossings on the Armadale railway line and other railway lines. The grade separations on Tonkin Highway that have been earmarked in this place are also very welcome.

Another matter I want to bring up—I do not think I will need a lot of time—is that last year the member for Roe said in part —

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Funding of \$500 000 is required for Moora college while Armadale dog park, Aubin Grove dog park and the Chihuahua dog rescue—three fantastic projects in Local Projects, Local Jobs—have been given funding, the tally of which would cover the \$500 000 Moora community needs for Moora Residential College. How do members opposite sleep at night when they look at those type of projects?

I replied —

I sleep very well because I know that dogs in my community are having a nice time!

That was taken up also by Hon Michael Mischin in the other place and he had a go at me on a Facebook post because we funded a dog park.

Funnily enough, this poster advertises “Dingo Park” in Newman, funded by royalties for regions and the government of Western Australia. Is it okay for the dogs in Newman and the dogs in the regions to be looked after and exercised, but not good enough for the dogs in Armadale to have an exercise park? What does the member for Roe think? Is it okay for Newman but not Armadale?

**Mr P.J. Rundle:** I will have to analyse it a bit closer.

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Why? It is called Dingo Park but it is actually a dog exercise park. I am not sure why it was called Dingo Park. Maybe there are dingoes there; I do not know. It is funded by royalties for regions and the Western Australian state government. That is okay! I wonder how much that cost. It was probably more than \$40 000 of state funding. Members in the National Party and my good friend the member for Roe have to be a bit careful criticising any funding in the metropolitan area. I think funding for the regions is very important, but funding for the metro area is also important—for humans and animals.

**Mr I.C. Blayney:** Especially dogs!

**Dr A.D. BUTI:** Dogs are included. I can sleep very well at night knowing that the dogs in Armadale are being well looked after. I will sleep even better tonight now that I know that the dogs in Newman are also being looked after. I think it is important that dogs in Western Australia are looked after very well.

In conclusion, this budget shows that once and for all, it is the Western Australian state Labor team that knows how to manage the economy and the state’s finances. All members have to do to see that is compare the expenditure and operating surpluses in the last Liberal government with today’s state Labor government. I congratulate the Treasurer, the government and the Labor Party.

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie — Parliamentary Secretary)** [11.00 pm]: I believe I might be the last speaker tonight on the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2019–20) Bill 2019 and the Appropriation (Capital 2019–20) Bill 2019. I will not speak at great length, but I will begin by congratulating the Treasurer on this outstanding budget and highlight some points that other members have also touched on. It is great to think that we now have a surplus—a projected record \$553 million general government operating surplus. It is the first time we have had a surplus since 2013–14. The growth in government expenses is only 1.5 per cent. During the whole time of the Liberal–National government, the state had a growth rate of 6.4 per cent. The indicators before us tell the story that economic management is best left to a Labor government. That is how to get good economic management in this state.

I was especially impressed by the increase in investment spending in the agricultural sector. We will spend an extra \$131.5 million in the Department of Agriculture and Food. About 80 per cent of our trade and economic wealth comes from the resources sector in the regions. However, the next highest export earner is the food and fibre sector. The previous government seriously neglected the sector and cut back funding. It thought that it would all be fine if it was left to the market—those companies that sell fertiliser or are involved in farm machinery or what have you—to provide technical expertise and advice to landholders about how to most productively and sustainably manage their land. That was a false idea.

A member interjected.

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** It is very important that the Department of Agriculture and Food is able to guide people so we are not reliant on, as the minister said, Monsanto or other companies that have their own priorities. Instead, we are investing in our Department of Agriculture and Food, so the state will have that expertise and can ensure we have strong biosecurity, which will underpin our world-class food production systems. We can look as well to new markets and to diversifying the types of production we are engaged in. That is critical.

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A sum of \$400 million will go towards a scientific research partnership with the Grains Research and Development Corporation, which is also very important. The concept of geographic indications is another area that I am particularly interested in because it can take us out of being mere price takers and producers of commodities, and make us price setters. We are already seeing this in the wine industry, with wines being marketed as coming from a particular region. Consumers are prepared to pay more if they know where a wine comes from and if they have some sense of connection with, or fondness for, the wine or for the region from which the wine comes. We need to expand that much more broadly; that, indeed, is a practice that we see elsewhere in the world. It is the way forward for our agricultural production. There are some wonderfully exciting opportunities there.

I want to turn now to matters closer to home for me in the Thornlie electorate, and talk about urban renewal. I am very pleased to see that that is a feature of this budget as well. Other members have touched on the work that is going on around the elimination of level crossings and the grade separation proposals. In my electorate there is a need for a road like Kelvin Road to be grade separated from the Armadale train line. That is something that is very much understood as we look to provide the Maddington area with a real town centre and to rejuvenate a very run-down area that is characterised by old industrial land. It is something that people see from the train line as they go past the Maddington train station and think of as an eyesore, but they also realise that it is an underused area of land. We can, through this budget, ensure a change of strategy and tactics to make sure that that land is properly developed to provide quality homes and quality living opportunities.

The budget also highlights a real feature of what could be an exciting part of metropolitan living, and that is the move away from the conventional use of private cars to get around. I note that \$146 million is dedicated towards various cycling infrastructures. Again, we see that there are all kinds of opportunities and multiple benefits that could come from that. Obviously, there is the immediate benefit of getting cars off the road, because we will be enabling people to use a bike rather than a car to get around, so there is the decongesting value of that \$146 million spend. Then there is the health benefit, when people are able to incorporate a regular bit of intensive cardio activity into their day. The recommendation is that all of us should be doing that for at least half an hour every day. If people can include that in their daily commute, they will be well on the way to a healthier lifestyle and thereby alleviate expenditure on our health budget and feel better within themselves. There are also the air quality benefits that will come with that. We will have cleaner and therefore healthier air. Again, that results in health and general wellbeing benefits.

It also has to be said that the construction of an extra \$146 million worth of bike network will provide us with an enhancement of our tourism asset. We know that many keen cyclists are now coming to Perth from South-East Asia; they realise that we have a good cycling environment here, and they will come in greater numbers when they realise that it is an even more expansive and safer network. There is a clear tourism benefit there as well.

Those are some of the highlights for me in this budget. The real thing, though, is the good economic management we have. But there are many other features, such as the expansion of the mountain biking trail network around Collie; I notice that there is \$10 million to be spent in the Collie region on those trails, and that is of course another tourism endeavour. It is also a sign of just how trends can come about. For example, we know that for a long time the Margaret River area was renowned for its surfing. I am sure it still is, but I understand from some tourism operators in the Margaret River area that more people go there now for mountain biking than they do for surfing; I am sure the member for Vasse would be able to correct me on this if I am wrong, but it is my understanding from tourism operators in the Margaret River area that they now see more people coming to the region for mountain biking than they do for surfing. Our commitment towards mountain biking trails in the regions in the south west is a very sensible tourism endeavour and a great way of diversifying the economies of the south west. There are many other opportunities as well, but I want to return to that, for me, headline item of the boost to the agricultural sector. We are looking at providing different market development opportunities and good opportunities for scientists and agronomists in developing the grain crops of the future. We have really arrested the decline that we have seen over the past 10 years in our Department of Agriculture and Food so that we can turn around that situation and our department can lead farmers, property owners, into new industries and help them become really significant players in our economy. When we think that there is such demand for our food and fibre around the world, it makes great sense to do this. It will be a great investment.

This budget has many great ideas and initiatives, but above all else, it is a sign of great economic discipline. I am thrilled to support this budget and I congratulate the Treasurer again on this great work.

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.A. Templeman (Leader of the House)**.

*House adjourned at 11.11 pm*

**Extract from *Hansard***

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 14 May 2019]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Mr Tony Krsticevic; Mr Vincent Catania; Dr David Honey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr John McGrath; Mr Kyran O'Donnell; Ms Mia Davies; Mrs Alyssa Hayden; Ms Libby Mettam; Ms Lisa Baker; Mr Mark Folkard; Ms Josie Farrer; Mr Terry Healy; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr John Carey; Dr Tony Buti; Mr Chris Tallentire

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