

Mrs Liza Harvey; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Colin Barnett; Dr Mike Nahan; Mr Peter Katsambanis; Mr Paul Papalia; Mr Terry Redman; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Margaret Quirk; Mr David Templeman

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY

Motion

Resumed from 24 May on the following motion moved by Ms J.J. Shaw —

That the following Address-in-Reply to Her Excellency's speech be agreed to —

To Her Excellency the Honourable Kerry Sanderson, AC, Governor of the State of Western Australia.

May it please Your Excellency —

We, the Legislative Assembly of the Parliament of the State of Western Australia in Parliament assembled, beg to express loyalty to our Most Gracious Sovereign and to thank Your Excellency for the speech you have been pleased to address to Parliament.

MRS L.M. HARVEY (Scarborough — Deputy Leader of the Opposition) [9.08 am]: It gives me great pleasure to rise in this place and contribute to the debate on the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's speech on the opening of Parliament. I would like to congratulate all members who were elected, and the Labor Party on its success in the election on 11 March, and congratulate all those people who have been appointed to the ministry. I would also like to thank the Liberal team of volunteers and the many members from the classes of 2008 and 2013 who worked hard and advocated passionately for their local communities, and whose company and comradery I will miss.

I would like to say thank you to the former Premier, Hon Colin Barnett, MLA, who made a tremendous contribution to this state over his two terms as Premier. Leaders will always have their critics; however, the achievements of the Barnett-led government have set up the state for many years into the future. Under the member for Cottesloe's leadership, we have rebuilt the state right across the regions and metropolitan Perth. We experienced significant population growth and expansion of the mining sector, which resulted in a significant state government demand for investment in economic infrastructure. There were projects such as the Gateway WA project, the NorthLink WA project, the Forrestfield–Airport Link project, the freeway and railway extensions north, new schools, new hospitals, hospital and school upgrades right across the state, and new and upgraded police stations to accommodate our expanded police force. We put investment into agriculture and water to help diversify the economy, along with important tourism infrastructure like the new stadium, Elizabeth Quay and new hotels through our hotels incentive policy. I also mention the amenity upgrades to regional towns and communities in Esperance, Albany, Geraldton, right through the south west, Carnarvon, the Pilbara and the Kimberley. They all received upgrades to foreshore areas and other important pieces of tourism infrastructure so that the visitors to those regional towns and communities could experience better caravan and camping facilities. The upgrades expanded the opportunities for tourism regionally, and also improved the amenity for local communities, once again diversifying economies right across the state. We also worked effectively with our federal colleagues, notably Senator Linda Reynolds, to pull together the companies within the Henderson and related precincts to show the commonwealth defence industry the breadth of our experience and our capacity to bid for the sustainability contracts for the new vessels. In addition to this, we drove down crime per capita and we drove down the road toll per capita by investing in police, improving laws and introducing penalties for criminals that reflect community expectations. We also invested in road safety education and awareness, improved roads right across the state, improved school zone signage and made significant road improvements for safety through the diversion of the red-light and speed camera fine revenue directly to improving road safety and road safety initiatives. I believe that once the dust settles on this election, the community will remember Hon Colin Barnett as the right leader at the right time. Growth economies need decision-makers. Although much is made of the state's financial position, when we came to government there were schools, hospitals and social and economic infrastructure screaming for investment, and a Labor government that was criticised for sitting on a pot of gold while letting the state languish in underinvestment. We needed to rebuild and grow to accommodate the population expansion we were experiencing, and we did, with many of the commitments and investments that were made now contributing to improved quality of life and amenity for Western Australians no matter where they live.

I absolutely acknowledge that we lost the election, and there are reasons for that. Many people, both Liberals and non-Liberals, have expressed their views to me on those issues. Indeed, these reasons will become apparent as part of the process that has been put in place by the Liberal Party itself so that we can learn from this experience and rebuild our trust with the community. I do not intend to commentate on those matters further except to say that, small opposition team that we are, we will continue to receive feedback, listen to the community and take on board every view, so that we can be an effective opposition and ensure that the new government, elected so overwhelmingly, does not get lost in that success and forget about accountability. That is now our job, and we willingly take it on.

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I would also like to use this opportunity to thank the agencies I worked with in government. Dr Karl O'Callaghan, APM; Dr Ruth Shean; Kim Papalia; Jennifer Mathews; and David Eaton—you were amazing directors general and commissioners. Their teams, who I will not name individually as I do not want those opposite to note their names and send them off to the wait-until-you-want-to-quit lounge on level 4 of Dumas House, were equally amazing as their leaders. The agencies I worked with never feared providing frank advice. We did not always agree, but I respected my directors general for their views and I believe the end product was a much better one as a result. To those opposite who are lucky enough to be ministers, do not fear strong DGs. Do not boot them out of the public service. In the long run, they will make you a better minister because of their experience.

To all those who worked in my ministerial office, we went through a lot together. I would like to thank my two chiefs of staff, Gary Hamley and Ben Allen, for steering the ship. They are two tremendous individuals who have made a great contribution to this state in their roles. I would like to thank all those who worked for me for all they did in supporting me in my role as a minister.

The opposition portfolio areas of transport, planning and lands are areas I have always been interested in and are certainly areas in which the government has made many commitments but with no clear plan on how they will be funded and no clear plan on how the infrastructure will be sustained into the future. I await the budget in earnest. Indeed, I expressed over the last few days in the discussion on the Loan Bill my disbelief and frustration that the government could have the audacity to ask for such a large line of credit when it could be asking for a much smaller amount, with the remainder being requested in the context of a defined spend. It is simply not good practice to ask for a line of credit that may not be needed. I do not understand the Treasurer's stance on that, and I await the budget papers to see whether there is an explanation of why he has arrived at \$11 billion for his open cheque.

I mentioned our investment in economic infrastructure and the new government's act of planning and economic vandalism in the cancellation of the Perth Freight Link project. The only saving grace out of this decision is that the Turnbull Liberal government has generously decided to allow its \$1.2 billion commitment for infrastructure to be repurposed. I am glad that the federal government changed its mind. The state needs the jobs from the Perth Freight Link. More than 6 000 direct and indirect jobs would have been created out of the entire project into the future. Thankfully, those workers on the state government payroll via the contractors, who have had their contracts ripped up, have been able to start work on other projects. However, let us revisit the Perth Freight Link project in detail and why it was so highly regarded by Infrastructure Australia. An assessment brief from Infrastructure Australia stated that the Perth Freight Link project sought to address problems that needed solving, such as —

- Growth in freight traffic on mixed use routes is adversely affecting public safety and social amenity in Perth's southern suburbs;
- Sub optimal access to Fremantle port and key strategic industrial areas is leading to reduced freight efficiency; and
- Fiscally constrained government resources are limiting the ability to address the freight and productivity issues.

The project aligned with eight key state strategic priorities, being the "State Planning Strategy 2050" and the metropolitan region scheme; Directions 2031; the Murdoch Specialised Activity Centre structure plan; the draft "Moving People Network Plan"; the "Western Australian Regional Freight Transport Network Plan"; the draft "Perth Freight Transport Network Plan"; the Fremantle port "Inner Harbour Port Development Plan"; and the draft state port strategic plan.

The assessment brief states —

The Business Case clearly outlined the problem and the problem is well understood.

This is Infrastructure Australia's assessment of this project. It identified the five root causes of the problem, which are —

- location of Fremantle Port Inner Harbour;
- high levels of economic growth in Western Australia;

A good problem to have. It continues —

- population growth in Perth and southern suburbs;

Another good problem to have. It continues —

- expansion of trade through Fremantle Port Inner Harbour;

An excellent problem to have, and —

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- constraints on increasing truck productivity within the existing road network.

That is not a good problem to have. The assessment continues —

There is currently heavy congestion and significant delays to freight journeys with Level of Service below D for many sections of the route. Impacts of this include inefficient freight movements which limits productivity and economic growth, higher than average crash rates involving heavy vehicles and dis-amenity for the nearby community.

The assessment also identifies —

...volumes —

Of traffic —

at key locations in the project area, percentage of heavy vehicle crashes along key freight corridors, intersection overall Level of Service, maximum peak period queue lengths, reliability of travel speeds and modelled future traffic volumes.

These are also key issues that need to be resolved. The assessment continues —

For example, within the PM peak, travel time variability means that more than 80% of trips have travel times greater than 20% more or less than the average for the PM peak.

This is my warning to the government, because the government has not proposed a solution to these problems. The assessment states —

The problems are expected to persist and worsen into the future driven by economic and population growth and subsequent growth in licensed motorised vehicles and expansion of trade.

This preferred option, the Perth Freight Link, was selected from 12 shortlisted options. All 12 shortlisted options were assessed against selection criteria and the preferred option was selected from a list of four highly rated options. The options considered included pricing and efficiency using the existing road infrastructure, investment or subsidisation of a rail and other road investment options. Other options were looked at and the Perth Freight Link option was chosen by Infrastructure Australia as being far and away the best solution for the vexed problems facing the southern corridor. I will keep the pressure on the government to solve those problems to ensure that the port can reach its full capacity; that road safety outcomes in the southern corridor can be improved; and that commuters who are stuck in gridlock, having crashes with heavy vehicles, causing all sorts of delays and congestion problems, will have a solution proposed to them by the government. Currently there is none on the table that would be anywhere near the superior result that the Perth Freight Link would have delivered.

I move on from that to my electorate. I would like to thank all my constituents for putting their trust in me to represent their issues and concerns in this place. I really love representing my people in Scarborough, Trigg, Doubleview, Innaloo, Gwelup and Karrinyup and also the many businesses and employees who work in the Osborne Park industrial area. My constituents are very much looking forward to the completion of work on the Scarborough foreshore, and to the redevelopments that are proposed for the Innaloo and Karrinyup shopping centre precincts, which have been able to occur only as a result of the changes the Liberal–National government made to the restrictive shopping centre supermarket policy that had been constraining expansion and development for quite some time in Western Australia. That will be a big employment boost locally in construction and a big employment boost also once those shopping centres come online and the new restaurants, cafes, retail outlets and cinema complexes are operating. Some high-rise residential is proposed at the Karrinyup site as well.

Over the term of the previous government we welcomed three new primary schools; brand new rebuilds at Lake Gwelup Primary School and Deanmore Primary School, and Doubleview Primary School is currently underway. We have had significant improvements and upgrades to all our sportsmen's clubs—the Innaloo Sportsmen's Club Inc, the Doubleview Bowling and Recreation Club Inc and the Scarborough Sportsmen's Club. Abbett Park has received a lighting upgrade. We have had upgrades and contributions to West Stirling Neighbourhood House. A Lotterywest grant is helping it to deliver services to families at risk, particularly fly in, fly out families in my electorate who need some support. West Stirling Neighbourhood House does a terrific job helping with financial counselling for people who find themselves with financial management issues.

The Scarborough Beach Road–Grand Promenade intersection was upgraded, with a much-needed set of traffic lights installed there so that the elderly and children crossing the road to get to school or the Scarborough Autumn Centre can do so safely. The Mitchell Freeway upgrades have been fantastic for commuters moving in and out of the city. That has been a great congestion-busting initiative and I am pleased that the government delivered on that commitment. All of the schools in my electorate have had electronic school zones signage installed so that locals who may not necessarily have kids at school know when the school zones are operating and slow down

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accordingly. They are not getting pinged for speeding infringements, which is great for them, but they are also aware that kids will be crossing the road and that it is time to slow down and keep a lookout for our kids. Five of the primary schools in my electorate have become independent public schools—Deanmore, Doubleview, Newborough, Lake Gwelup, Scarborough and Yuluma. There has also been lots of investment into Churchlands and Carine Senior High Schools, which are the two biggest feeder schools in my area. Upgrades to the Scarborough Police Station have also been made to allow for an expansion in the number of officers who can operate out of that station. That has been complemented by closed-circuit television upgrades to various precincts where we have seen some crime emerging.

Speaking of schools in the local area brings me to another bizarre act of planning vandalism of this Labor government; namely, the abandonment of the western suburbs secondary school strategy and the bizarre idea with respect to Perth Modern School. This reeks of opposing for the sake of it. I implore the Premier and the Minister for Education and Training to reconsider their decision to use Perth Modern School as a far inferior solution to that proposed through the strategy. Members will appreciate that the western suburbs high school issue has been of significant concern, not only for my electorate but for the members for Churchlands, Carine, Perth, Nedlands, Kingsley and Balcatta. There has been infill in these areas over the years. Combined with the success of Hon Peter Collier and his steering of the education portfolio we have seen a massive shift to publicly funded education because the standard is so terrific.

[Member's time extended.]

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: The solution proposed was quite neat. It was that the Japanese School in Perth and the International School of Western Australia, currently located on the old City Beach high school site, would move. The international school will be welcomed into the Doubleview community and will occupy the old Doubleview Primary School site to complement the brand new \$15 million school being built there. Just so that members are aware, I point out that the international school is a fantastic school. It is ranked third in the state for primary schools and is in the top 20 secondary schools in the National Assessment Program — Literacy and Numeracy league tables. It also achieves above world average results in both its International Baccalaureate diploma and the advanced placement programs. The international school will also be building a gymnasium. It will offer use of the gymnasium and its language program to the students of Doubleview Primary School, who will be located adjacent to that school. In addition to that, the international school has a large number of local students—approximately 30 per cent of its student base is local—and it offers a 30 per cent discount for local students who choose to take advantage of that baccalaureate and advanced placement program. It is a very good boon for my electorate to have the international school move there. It will be a great complement to the very good standard and the high levels that I am seeing in the students graduating from Doubleview Primary School.

The other part of the western suburbs strategy—it was very well thought out—is that stage one was to build the new City Beach college. The then government put additional capacity into Churchlands Senior High School; that is, a \$38 million investment. Shenton College received \$49.5 million to expand capacity there. Carine Senior High School would have a gifted and talented program focused on science, technology, engineering and mathematics, which was an \$18.8 million investment for Carine. The construction of the Doubleview Primary School was also part of that strategy. In addition to that, there are other satellite schools that also feed into the western suburbs. A \$60 million redevelopment was proposed at Balcatta Senior High School, expanding it to 1 200 students, with STEM facilities and a specialist soccer program and also expanding the opportunities for design and technology and a range of other areas. An amount of \$39.1 million was proposed to expand Mount Lawley Senior High School. I implore the government to change its mind about asking the parents from my constituency to send their kids into the city or into the old Perth Modern School site. The reason I say that is that the former government proposed a neat solution. Although the decision to build Doubleview Primary School was controversial locally—obviously the property owners living adjacent to the school did not want to see construction of a school on what was previously an oval, and we would expect some opposition to that—the Doubleview Primary School was built in, I think, 1951 and it was desperately in need of reinvestment.

The other issue that I would like to raise about this western suburbs strategy, which I really took great umbrage at, is that during the election campaign Hon Sue Ellery and Hon Alannah MacTiernan came into my community, stirring up locals about the western suburbs high school situation. When Hon Colin Barnett was Minister for Education a number of western suburbs schools were closed, and they were closed for a good reason. Scarborough Senior High School had ageing infrastructure. It had 340 students enrolled but it had capacity for 1 000. It closed at the end of 1999 as a high school because a school with 340 students in year 8 through year 12 simply cannot offer a quality education program to children. At the time, City Beach Senior High School and Swanbourne Senior High School had similar figures. That was why the very correct decision was made to close those schools to ensure that those children could go to Churchlands Senior High School or Carine Senior high School.

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Mr C.J. Barnett: City Beach Senior High School was not closed at that time.

Mr D.A. Templeman: When was City Beach closed?

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: In 2005.

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: City Beach was closed in 2005.

We had an issue with the delivery of quality education to such a small cohort of students. The furphy that was put about in the community was that the problem we had in trying to find a western suburbs high school location was that the Scarborough high school site had been sold off by Hon Colin Barnett. That was not true. Scarborough high school was closed and that was the correct decision. The decision was made in June 1998 and the school was closed in June 1999. Members will recall that in 2001 a Labor government was elected. In March 2002, LandCorp finally purchased the Scarborough high school site. It divided the site into 126 residential lots. Between 2002 and 2006, 117 lots were sold under the signature of Hon Alannah MacTiernan. Had the government of the day decided not to try to make money from selling the old Scarborough high school site—no doubt to fix some kind of budget black hole at the time—that site would have been available to construct the western suburbs high school that is now required because of infill development throughout Doubleview and Innaloo, and areas of Wembley Downs with the Perry Lakes development. Masses of people and families have moved to the area. That was not predicted in 1998. The primary school enrolment figures did not indicate that the figures for Scarborough Senior High School would lift anytime in the near future. Had the Scarborough high school site property not been sold off and subdivided so that the government of the day could get some money in its pocket, it would have been a potential site for a new high school. That is all by the by now; it is ancient history.

I implore the government to come clean with the community about what is being proposed for the City Beach high school site. The International School of WA will relocate and the Japanese School has gone. I put to members that that site is probably a high-value site should it be subdivided into residential lots. Should the government choose to take advantage of that, it will limit options for future expansion or development for educational facilities in the western suburbs. The state will find itself in the same situation again—Groundhog Day. I am in favour of the old City Beach high school site being repurposed into a brand-new facility to service the children of the western suburbs. The solution that we proposed was well thought out and quite neat. Parents in the Doubleview community who lament the loss of their oval and did not particularly want construction of a brand-new primary school opposite them are unanimous that they do not want their children to go into the CBD or travel to Perth Modern School; they want their children to go to high school locally. That is the view in my community and I know it is the same in the electorates of the member for Nedlands and the member for Churchlands. They want them to be able to ride to school. Children cannot ride to school from Scarborough, Doubleview or Innaloo to Perth Modern School; they cannot do that. I thank members for their indulgence and listening to my contribution. I would like to move an amendment to the Address-in-Reply.

Amendment to Motion

Mrs L.M. HARVEY: I move —

That the following words be added to the motion —

but regrets to inform Her Excellency that the new government is ignoring the significant concerns being raised across the community about the lack of consultation undertaken by the McGowan government on its Education Central policy, particularly the proposed relocation of the state's only fully academically selective senior high school, currently at Perth Modern School, to a high-rise inner-city school within the Perth City Link

MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands) [9.35 am]: I rise in support of the amendment. Perth Modern School is a Western Australian icon. It rivals all the private schools in Western Australia. It has a rich history. I even found that this morning, Mr Speaker, that you are a proud Modernian from Perth Modern School. I am sure you would be upset if Perth Modern School's history was destroyed and the school was moved to the CBD. I will start by highlighting the significance of Perth Modern School and its graduates. How many schools in Western Australia—I include Christ Church Grammar School, Aquinas College, Hale School and some of the esteemed girls' schools such as Methodist Ladies' College and St Hilda's Anglican School for Girls—have a book that highlights some of its amazing graduates since 1911? It is a celebration of contribution. It covers only the years 1911 to 1963 but it is an amazing book. Unfortunately, Mr Speaker, you are not in it. If we have time later on, I will explain why; it will take about five minutes. This book covers only the period up to 1963. Members do not have to be historians to go through the list of people in it. They are household names. I will name a couple from 1911 to 1919. "Nugget" Coombs is an Australian icon.

Several members interjected.

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Mr W.R. MARMION: For the younger members of Parliament, “Nugget” Coombs was the Under Treasurer of Australia.

Mr D.A. Templeman interjected.

The SPEAKER: Do not get the member for Dawesville to talk. He is not in his seat.

Mr W.R. MARMION: From 1911 to 1919, the list includes Sir Paul Hasluck, and Digby Leach, who was commissioner for Main Roads. From 1922 to 1929, there was Margaret Battye—the Battye library was named after her; Vincent Serventy, the conservationist; and Sir James McCusker. From 1930 to 1939, there was Kim Beazley Snr, and Andrew Cole, a terrific chemist at UWA who taught a lot of the medical students. Moving on to the 1940s, there was Hon Joe Berinson, Bob Hawke, Philip Playford and John Stone. From 1950 to 1959, there was Len Buckeridge—he might have voted for the Liberals; Janet Holmes à Court; Malcolm McCusker; Ken Michael; Margaret Nadebaum, a very successful educationalist in both the private and state sectors; and Daryl Williams. Those are just a few names, but I want to go further and list the politicians who have come out of Perth Modern School. No school in Western Australia—I am sorry to say, member for Churchlands, not even Aquinas College—has the list that Perth Modern has. I will go through the list of politicians who have attended Perth Modern School. From the Labor side, there is Kim Beazley, Joe Berinson, Ron Davies, Julian Grill, Judyth Watson and Peter Watson. It falls down a tiny bit on the Liberal side, but some notable Liberals also attended, such as Wilson Tuckey, Sir Paul Hasluck, Daryl Williams and Ray Young, to name a few. The list goes on and on, including former judge Alan Barblett—members know him. “Nugget” Coombs is mentioned again. There is Ross Garnaut, a very famous person, and Ian Temby. There are pages of this, including Clarrie Isaacs, a notable Australian Aboriginal activist. I mentioned Vince Serventy. David Black also went there. Members know David Black. Brian de Garis, a Rhodes scholar and historian—I think he also did law—attended Perth Modern, as did Tom Stange, another notable Western Australian historian. Moving to Rhodes scholars, possibly a high indicator of a school’s success, Perth Modern has produced 14 Rhode scholars. If I combined all the Rhodes scholars from private schools, it would be lucky to total 14.

Another important point is sport, which is forgotten about. The Speaker, a notable sportsman, came from Perth Modern, but he was not alone. Alan Barblett made two Olympic hockey teams, I think in 1956 and 1960. Even the modern-day netballer Caitlin Bassett went to Perth Modern School. That is just Perth Modern’s history. All those people have a link to the physical structure that exists where it currently is.

I was amazed and saddened that four weeks before the election, the Labor Party announced it would move all the students at Perth Modern School to the CBD. Many questions have been asked across the floor to the new Premier. He is convinced that because he won the election, he has a mandate. Because everyone voted for the Labor Party, he believes he can do anything that he raised. He could have said, “We’re going to put people on Mars”, and he would build something to put on Mars! Just because he won the election —

Ms J.J. Shaw interjected.

Mr W.R. MARMION: No—I accept that Labor won the election but I do not accept that people voted in the election for Perth Modern to move to the CBD. I do not accept that. I accept that the Labor Party got all the Greens votes. I can tell members straightaway that Greens voters do not support this. If the Labor Party had gone to the election on this issue alone, it would have no Greens votes—none at all.

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr W.R. MARMION: How silly. The Labor Party won the election. No-one is in denial. The Labor Party cannot build a case that everything it put forward —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Nedlands, speak through the Chair.

Mr W.R. MARMION: This issue —

Several members interjected.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Mr Speaker, I cannot even hear myself talking.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Several members interjected.

Mr W.R. MARMION: For goodness sake!

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Mr M. Hughes interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Kalamunda!

Mr W.R. MARMION: A Premier has to show leadership and make the best decisions for Western Australia. Sometimes an opposition does not have all the facts. After a party puts a proposal to the electorate before an election and goes on to win it, it receives advice from government departments but may find that perhaps there are some flaws because it did not have all the information. There is nothing wrong with finding out, when becoming a minister—that is a bit of advice to all ministers—that the previous government was going down a certain line that you did not agree with, but suddenly they find, “Oh, that’s why they are doing that” because the director general had been providing advice and that is why initially he or she might have wanted to go down the same track. But there is a reason. It is okay not to take that advice of course, but ministers suddenly find—Perth Modern will be an example, which I will get to in a minute—there are lots of reasons that moving Perth Modern School to the CBD will be a huge problem. There is nothing wrong with building a new school in the CBD. The reason I believe the government said Perth Modern will go there is that it can take control and make people go there. Students have a choice. If a student has won a scholarship to attend Perth Modern, terrific, their parents will be happy; the consolation prize, though, is they have to go to the CBD. Perth Modern is currently very well located, as the Speaker himself knows. It has great ovals —

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

Mr W.R. MARMION: It is irrelevant. Listen to what I am saying, without interjecting.

Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

Mr W.R. MARMION: I have not even started my speech yet because of these stupid interjections, Mr Speaker.

The SPEAKER: Member, let us just get back to the motion, please. You have been going for nine minutes; I think you have gone pretty well.

Mr W.R. MARMION: Everyone realises that Perth Modern School is a good school. I have heard what the Minister for Education and Training said on this topic. I have also heard some people say bad things about the minister for education—that she does not care for kids. That is totally wrong and inflammatory. I know the minister for education cares about kids. I know she probably thought this was a good idea during the election campaign, but it is not a good idea now—now that we know the facts. I will provide some of the facts. The Premier and the Minister for Education and Training will not change their minds on what I say; I am only repeating what the parents and the teachers have told me. Teachers cannot tell ministers what they think because they might lose their jobs. Let us look at some of the issues. The first is the cost. Goodness me, I prepared two business cases for schools for the previous Labor government when I was in the private sector. We are looking at about \$50 million to \$70 million to build a major high school. Quite often the variation is around the value of the land. If the government owns the land, that is a bonus. The government owns the land at City Beach, at Scarborough, and at a whole lot of other places. I guess we have a problem from an urban development point of view in the CBD where we might own some property, but this is not a solution that can be forced on people. I imagine to build a school in the CBD would be double the cost of a normal high school.

Dr M.D. Nahan: No doubt.

Mr W.R. MARMION: There is no question. It would be at least double. Two high schools could be built for the price of one. Why would the government build one state high school? Let the private sector build a high school in the CBD and make it work. Why would the state government build a high school in the CBD when it can build two outside the CBD? That is one issue.

I now refer to the location itself. It sounds good in theory and it might have sounded good four weeks before an election. The intake for Perth Modern School comes from the brightest students in the metropolitan area. There is a central train hub in the CBD—that makes sense. Students who catch the train can get straight to the CBD. They do not have to get a Clipper or another bus or train to West Perth. It sounds good from a transport point of view if a student catches the train. The member for Mirrabooka interjected during the member for Scarborough’s speech to say that not many kids take the train. She is right. I have actually driven past Perth Modern in the morning and seen a massive queue of cars. Perth Modern has a fantastic drop-off location. It must be about 600 metres long. Cars can be driven in and about 600 metres of cars can queue. Nevertheless, they still queue along Roberts Road. Just imagine that same situation in the CBD along Wellington Street, Northbridge. How will the government find a 600-metre drop-off point in the CBD? That would cost a fortune. The location is a problem for the parents who have to drive their children to school.

Mrs L.M. Harvey: If their kids have instruments, they have to.

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Mr W.R. MARMION: That is another point.

Dr M.D. Nahan: All of them.

Mr W.R. MARMION: All the students. Two Fridays ago I attended a music night at Perth Modern along with two previous Governors, Ken Michael and Malcolm McCusker. It was amazing. The standard of music was just sensational. It was just amazing. In fairness, a lot of them practise four days a week after school. In the winter, some will be going home on the train—if they catch the train—at night and have large musical instruments that they have to carry with them. What will happen is, they will not catch the train; their parents will pick them up. The parents will be driving into the CBD at peak hour to pick up their children. That is just one issue for parents.

We know that teachers were really well paid under our government, but they are not massively so. The last thing they want to do is pay for a parking place. Another thing the government will have to think about is how many of the teachers at the “new” Perth Modern School in the CBD will get a parking bay. When ministerial officers were in the CBD, only two or three people got a parking bay because they could not afford them.

Dr M.D. Nahan: It’s on top of the train line, so how can you put parking in?

Mr W.R. MARMION: Good point, Leader of the Opposition.

Parking bays will have to be purchased around the area. That is what happens for businesses in Perth if they cannot get enough parking bays under their building. If the school is lucky enough to have parking bays under the building, I am sure it will be only the senior masters who will get a parking bay. Unfortunately, another cost is the City of Perth parking levy. It gets quite complicated.

One of the good things about Western Australian teachers is that they not only work very hard at teaching students, but also engage in after-school activities—quite often sport. We are so lucky because a lot of teachers volunteer to coach junior sporting teams, as you would know, Mr Speaker; you probably have done it, Mr Speaker. Quite often, at the end of school, they jump into their car and drive off madly to coach a junior footy or netball team in the outer suburbs or away from the school, and they need their cars. They will not be catching the train because they might have pre-school activities or after-school activities that they need to get to quickly and so they will need a car.

I move on to the design of the school. There are a lot of challenges. If we look at the grounds of the current Perth Modern School, apart from not having a 50-metre swimming pool, they match any private school in Western Australia.

[Member’s time extended.]

Mr W.R. MARMION: I had better get to another point I want to make in the next few minutes.

My point is that it is a great school and it works; do not wreck something that is already working.

One point that people have not even touched on is the timing and transition. It took our government, through a very complex deal, two years to get a solution. We could start construction right now, and in two years we will have a solution to the problem of needing a new school in the western suburbs. The current government’s plan is to start all over again, and it does not even have a business case yet. When it gets its business case, which will show it will cost twice as much as to build an ordinary school, it will then have to get it approved, it will then have to go through a procurement process, and it will then have to start construction. It will be four years—that is if it was fast-tracked—before a school gets built in the CBD. That is another four years of no solution to the overcrowding in the western suburbs. Let us say everything works out really well, and in four years there is a new school in the CBD that can cater for 1 200 students, with a drop-off zone, car parking bays for all the teachers, and somehow an oval has been found somewhere—it would have to be in Langley Park, through all the traffic lights; who knows, there might be a nice tunnel to get there. After all those problems have been solved, the government says, “Okey-dokey, how do we start it off?” In four years will there just be a year 7s transition intake, or the year 8s and year 9s et cetera? It is a massive problem. All the kids cannot be brought in straightaway.

To conclude, parents are already voting with their feet. They will be sending their kids to the academic talent programs at other schools like Shenton College and Churchlands Senior High School; they will not want to send them to the new Perth Modern School.

MR S.K. L’ESTRANGE (Churchlands) [9.55 am]: This is a very real concern for the people of Western Australia. This issue is the first real test in the public arena of Premier McGowan’s leadership style. Although some might frame this issue and think it is just about the Perth Modern School community or just about the western suburbs school community, it is broader than that. It is broader than that because it gives the people of Western Australia who elected Premier McGowan a real opportunity to understand how he leads on issues of big concern to people. People might not be directly involved or engaged in the problem, but they are engaged in who

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leads the state. That is something we all must bear in mind. It is not only about the lack of consultation undertaken by Premier McGowan and his government on this. I pick up on the interjection the member for Swan Hills made on the member for Nedlands' speech, when the member for Swan Hills said, "We took it as a policy to an election." Yes, that is exactly what the Labor Party did: it took it to an election as a policy. But normally when a government or an opposition formulates a policy to take to an election, part of formulating that policy and getting it together is about consulting with all stakeholder groups to work out a change management plan. That change management plan can then be implemented to create the desired effect after being taken to the election with the support of the core group of people who will be affected. The way the government has gone about this is simply by saying, "This our policy", and by coming to this place after the election and confirming to this place that it actually did not consult; we have it in *Hansard* that Premier McGowan actually said, "I didn't consult because I took it as a policy to an election and got elected." They are two distinctly different things, members. I think all members know full well that, as elected members of Parliament, if that is the approach they took with the people of their electorates, they would pretty quickly start to get some backlash. People would pretty quickly start writing to the local newspapers—not *The West Australian*, but the local papers—about their members' leadership style, and about the fact that they are not listening to them, they are arrogant and do not care about their points of view. I remind members that, yes, the Labor Party took this policy to an election, but we have it on record that, no, the Labor Party did not consult. That is a concern.

Anyway, here we are with a new government proposing to do what it is proposing to do; that is, to ignore the former City Beach Senior High School site and the growing population in those western suburbs. I will share some statistics with members, because this is how we define the problem. First and foremost, the problem we are trying to solve is the growing student numbers at, specifically, Churchlands Senior High School and Shenton College in the western suburbs. That is the problem. Let us not get sidetracked about other issues; I will get to Perth Modern. The problem is the population increases in those two schools.

The SPEAKER: Can you speak through the Chair, please.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: Through the Chair, the situation is that Churchlands Senior High School currently has 2 581 students. I will say that again—2 581 students. That is a big, big number. I do not think any of us went to a school with that number of kids. Most of us went to schools that probably had around 1 200 kids if we went to a big metropolitan high school. Imagine going to a school that not only has more than double that number of students, but the site was originally designed for only 1 200 kids! That is what Churchlands Senior High School is dealing with now. The number of students attending Shenton College in 2017 is 1 970. They are the two western suburbs schools. They are big, highly populated schools. Clearly, that is a problem. An even bigger problem is what those school populations will be in four years' time. In 2020, Churchlands Senior High School—these are Department of Education statistics—will have 3 251 students. I will say that again: it will have 3 251 students. That site was probably designed for 1 200 students. In 2020, Shenton College is tipped to have 2 271 students. We should think about this. If a child is in year 6 and is about to start high school, they will be sent to a school that will have an enrolment of either 2 200-plus kids or 3 200-plus kids. It is not about money, socioeconomic status, or religious or ideological beliefs. None of those things matter. When it comes to kids, the number one thing that parents are concerned about is their child's welfare, safety and well-being, and they want them to have a good education. I am deeply concerned that these student numbers may get in the way of that outcome. That is the problem. What caused the problem? As the member for Scarborough mentioned, the problem was caused by past governments closing down a number of western suburbs schools. Admittedly, two of them—Hollywood Senior High School and Swanbourne Senior High School—were merged to become the new Shenton College. Shenton College was designed to absorb those two schools, which was a decision made back in 2000. Scarborough Senior High School was closed in 1999, as we know, with no plan for where those students would go if they came back. That should probably have been given more thought at the time. Now we are left with Churchlands Senior High School having to bear the brunt of pressure out that way. That is the problem.

Was it wise for our forebears to close what I consider to be the state's strategic education sites? In hindsight, it was probably not. At the time, they probably thought it was wise because some of these schools had only 80 kids, like City Beach Senior High School, I think, but at least that site was reserved; it was not sold off. Maybe that was linked to public education endowment trust requirements around that site. That was kept open and maintained its status as a school. As the member for Cottesloe pointed out, it was taken over as a school by the International School of Western Australia.

Mr C.J. Barnett: It was a middle school working through Churchlands.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: It was a middle school working through Churchlands at the time, so the City Beach site continued to be used. Notwithstanding this, the member for Scarborough raised a very important point; that is, we should view these sites as strategic sites for education in the future and we should never allow them to be anything

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but school sites. In the interim, if the student population really slows down in those areas, we might lease them for another purpose but always reserve them so the government can bring them back to be used as an education site in the future. That is a lesson we can learn out of this exercise in history.

What is the solution? We have an opportunity to reopen the one remaining western suburbs site of those that were closed for a public state high school—that is, the remaining City Beach site that was closed in 2005. That is a 10-hectare campus with beautiful trees all around it. It has ocean views; it sits on top of a ridgeline overlooking the ocean. In fact, it is a 10-minute walk to the sand of City Beach. It is a beautiful site. It sits adjacent to 437 hectares of Swan coastal plain bushland in Bold Park. I would argue that we would struggle to find a better state government high school site in metropolitan Perth. It has ocean views and 437 hectares of bushland adjacent to it. At the end of the street on which the school is located is a 50-metre heated pool that it could use.

Ms A. Sanderson: It has terrible public transport.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: That can be fixed. Public transport issues can be fixed by simply getting the Public Transport Authority to come on board with the Department of Education to put on special buses that can move straight down an arterial road. Oceanic Drive, which becomes Cambridge Street, is a key arterial road on which the school site is situated. West Coast Highway is right next to it. Getting public transport access throughout metropolitan Perth is not an issue.

Ms A. Sanderson: My parents live right around the corner from it.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The member would understand how beautiful the area is. The site has a 36-hectare golf course at the end of its street. There is so much public amenity that can be used for education programs and it worries me that this opportunity could be missed and that kids will not be put into the facilities on this site. It is really quite questionable. I do not understand it. Part of that whole western suburbs school plan was also linked into that. I have no doubt that the new government will also see the opportunity to revamp Carine Senior High School and Balcatta Senior High School to help ease pressure on the increase in student numbers in the western suburbs moving towards Scarborough, Carine and Balcatta. There is certainly an opportunity there.

As we heard from the Premier the other day in this place, the government does not want to use the City Beach site; it wants to embark on a different course of action. The course of action that the Premier is embarking on with Education Central is trying to solve something else. It may have merit in innovation, information and communications technology and science, and offering an advanced curriculum in that space, but it is solving a different problem. It is not helping to solve the problem of the population pressures on these western suburbs high schools. That solution exists in City Beach. Maybe the government can look at these creative alternatives to a select school status academy-style approach around science and innovation later. I really think this opportunity with the City Beach site should not be missed.

Then we get to the poor old Perth Modern School community being wedged in the middle of this. On the one hand, we have what to me seems to be the Labor government wanting to do something creative with education—I do not fault it for that endeavour. On the other hand, we have the population pressures of the western suburbs that I have just articulated with massive increases in student population in these two schools. Wedged in the middle, we have Perth Modern School, which has been used to try to solve the problem of the government wanting to progress this innovative academic school but at the expense—this is the real issue—of all that history, tradition, culture and ethos of the Perth Modern School community. That is of deep concern to that community. As I said at the start of this speech, it cuts to the chase of the leadership style of the Premier if he thinks that he did not need to try to win over that community to convince it to move the academic selective status of arguably Western Australia's most prestigious state government high school into a high-rise building in Northbridge, shutting down all the fabric of that culture and history and moving it into some other building. We do not even know what it will look like yet because it has not been designed. This notion that we can move curriculum from one set of buildings to another and not make any difference has been missed here. We know it has been missed because so many people have been writing letters to the editor about this particular issue, none more so than former Governor Malcolm McCusker, who has been right on this to try to understand the logic of what is going on. It must be incredibly frustrating for them, because they are trying to see it as a linear problem to solve, without realising that it is two separate questions, and they are stuck in the middle. That is the dilemma they face.

The significance of green spaces to a child's education should never be overlooked. As I mentioned earlier, the City Beach site has magnificent open green spaces to be able to put kids into. The current Perth Modern School site does not have the amenity of the City Beach site. It has its program and its history, but it also has some space. It has the capacity for kids to feel safe in a school precinct, to be able to do their physical education lessons and their sports classes, while also being able to play and have space around them.

Dr M.D. Nahan: The Princess Margaret Hospital for Children site will be empty soon, and that can add to a significant expansion of the school site.

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Ms A. Sanderson interjected.

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: No doubt, Leader of the Opposition and member for Morley, there are many different options in and around the city for pursuing the government's innovative program, but I will get back to the importance of green space. A news article titled "Benefits of outdoor play for positive mental health" analysed the results of 19 studies in perceived mental health from the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Lithuania, Australia, New Zealand and the United States, about the benefits of having green spaces in the environment. These studies found that providing opportunities for outdoor physical activities, social contact, building relationships and relaxation was really important, so these open spaces can help people to learn and grow. Enclosing kids in a building, when we do not need to at this point, is probably not wise.

We talked about the consultation effort. Members opposite should start to realise that the petitions being lodged in this place and the other place, and letters to the editor of *The West Australian* on a daily basis, are all evidence that people want to be heard. This is honestly not about Liberal-Labor. This is about trying to solve a problem. I would be the first to say, if my opinion was sought on how to advance some sort of new academic program in some new creative technology and technology-type building, that I am happy to agree to that. However, first and foremost we do not need to throw the baby out with the bathwater with Perth Modern School. It is an outstanding school; it has an outstanding history. As the member for Nedlands articulated, numerous people who have attended that school have done exceedingly well. I know that there have been periods in that school's history in which it was not an academically selective school. It was totally non-academically selective for about five years, but outside of that, academic programs have been attached to the school. There have been periods of a more general than academically selective intake, but the great history and tradition of the place, irrespective of the times I just mentioned, is that it is a school of excellence. That history can continue by allowing the school to be academically selective now and into the future, at its current site. One letter to the editor the other day stated that thinking we can just move this school's status to another school somewhere is akin to closing down Oxford University and moving it to a high-rise building in London. It does not feel right; it does not fit.

We are looking to the government, the Premier and the Minister for Education and Training to admit that the people who are concerned have a point. We can sit down and work through a solution for the population pressures in the western suburbs. We know that solution is the City Beach high school site, so we can deal with that as a separate issue—put that one to bed—and then we can have some conversations about how we can make Perth Modern School, on its existing site, a better school in the future and advance its academic status even further. The third thing we can do is say that we are very keen and motivated to do something creative with innovation, information and communications technology, and science, so let us create a separate academy somewhere else, but on a better site than Northbridge. It should be a site close to a park, some open space and trees, and also close to the city and to public transport, to achieve that aim as well.

MR C.J. BARNETT (Cottesloe) [10.15 am]: I want to make a few comments about this. Education is a fantastic portfolio. I was fortunate enough to be Minister for Education for five years. There are some things ministers can do that will be universally popular. They are the easy things. Building and opening beautiful new primary schools and high schools in the outer suburbs and in growing areas of the state are the easy decisions. The previous government built 44 schools. That is the easy part—to build schools in new areas. New schools built in Western Australia over the past 15 to 20 years are magnificent; they lead Australia; they are superb.

Ms C.M. Rowe: Come to Belmont City College.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am happy to do that. It is sometimes hard to have a serious conversation in this place, but I will have another attempt.

That is the easy part. Other things that I was involved in, such as introducing universal kindergarten for four-year-olds and universal preprimary for every child in Western Australia in both government and non-government schools led Australia, and the rest of the Australian states still have not caught up to that. Again, they were popular and welcome moves, but when we need to make changes that affect parents and children, it is more difficult. My first experience of that was changing the school entry age, which made it uniform across Australia, and also recognised that children in that age group were ready for school. That was difficult and contentious, and took about a year of consultation, but it was done and it worked.

Probably the most difficult decisions—Perth Modern School is an example—are when we want to change an existing school. Many of the high schools in Western Australia, principally in Perth but also in regional areas, were built during the baby boom and immigration period of the 1950s and 1960s, and into the early 1970s. They were built to a pretty poor standard. It was considered at the time that they would probably last only 20 to 30 years. They were not built as long-term projects. By the 1990s, those schools were starting to fail. They had all sorts of structural defects, asbestos, leaking roofs—all of those sorts of problems—and they did not have the physical facilities needed for a modern education. That was particularly apparent in secondary schools and in upper

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secondary. If we go back to the 50s and 60s, not that many children went on and completed secondary school. A very different ethos had emerged by the 80s, 90s and so on. The schools also had small numbers of students, and they did not therefore allow viable class numbers to provide a wide curriculum, particularly in secondary and upper secondary.

During that time, we started to give effect to this decision. Over the course of one day in 1998, probably the greatest and most significant reorganisation of secondary schools in Perth took place. I will not go through it all, but it affected obviously Hollywood Senior High School and Swanbourne Senior High School, which was in my electorate. Hollywood was where I went to school. It was a good school and performed well. Swanbourne was struggling with small numbers of students. Bringing those schools together into Shenton College, although it was controversial and people in Swanbourne opposed it, was a great success. Kim Beazley also went to Hollywood. I remember on the night we closed Hollywood Senior High School, I turned up and coincidentally Kim Beazley turned up at the same time. He said, "You're a brave man, closing this school; I wouldn't have done it." Coincidentally, we happened to walk out at the same time, and he said, "Everybody agrees with the decision; you were right." That was accepted, but it took a year of talking to people to get it accepted. It was a similar situation with Scarborough Senior High School, which affected this decision. It was a difficult decision to close Scarborough, but the enrolments had plummeted. Parents were not sending their children to Scarborough Senior High School, as the member for Scarborough said. There were lots of angry meetings out there. I cannot remember her name, but one of the parents who led the campaign to protect and preserve, as she put it, Scarborough Senior High School, but the numbers and programs were so depleted that she withdrew her own children from the school, and that was the moment that the rush became an exodus. Everyone realised that Scarborough was not doing it. They wanted to go to Churchlands Senior High School or Carine Senior High School—both of those schools were upgraded. City Beach Senior High School geographically sat in the middle. Swanbourne Senior High School had closed; Scarborough had closed. The member for Churchlands at the time urged strongly—she was right—that we not close City Beach, and we did not, but it did not have viable numbers in the upper secondary part, so it was made into a middle school and connected as part of Churchlands. That lasted for a while, and then the following Labor government ultimately closed that school, but the site remains in government ownership.

Other areas included the growth areas around Mandurah with the creation of Halls Head. That had its own unique situations. There was also the south east corridor, with the rebuild of Canning College, Sevenoaks Senior College, and what used to be Maddington Senior High School and is now Yule Brook College. All those came out at that time. Similarly, Kewdale Senior High School was closed. The Kewdale school community was probably the most aggressive group of people to deal with. I remember a police officer grabbing someone's hand just as they were about to let fly with an egg at me! There were massive, very angry meetings, but people were good. It took about a year, and the decision to combine Kewdale and Belmont Senior High School into Belmont City College was well received, as was the new Canning College and Sevenoaks. It was more than consultation. There were parents, teachers and local governments, and they all had something to contribute.

With regard to this decision that the Labor Party seems intent on pursuing, it is, for reasons outlined by members who have spoken earlier, the wrong decision. It is not a good outcome educationally. When all the parents and all the teachers are against it, it gives us a pretty good idea that the government has got it wrong. It is a pretty good indication. The government has not undertaken discussion and consultation. Former Governor Malcolm McCusker wrote an excellent article warning that some of the best students will drop out. The member for Nedlands tells me that some parents are already taking their children out, or making decisions for them not to go to Perth Modern School, because they do not want them disrupted. I am not a scaremonger, but I can tell members right now that a lot of parents would be very apprehensive about their sons and daughters going to an inner-city school. They will be very apprehensive about that. As we heard from the member for Scarborough, these are very talented kids—not only academically, but also in music, languages and all sorts of other areas. They will have after-school coaching, rehearsals and everything else, but there will be parents who will withdraw their children from there.

Another thing that will happen will be that many private schools will increase their scholarships. These kids will be drawn out of the government school sector and will go into the private schools, particularly in the western suburbs. That is what will happen. One of the outcomes of building Shenton College out of Hollywood Senior High School and Swanbourne Senior High School, and the massive upgrade of Churchlands, is that those schools with their now superb facilities are competing with the private schools in the western suburbs. If we look at the academic results, they are right up there; they are not tailing along behind, as they used to be in my day. We had a few bright kids, but not the sort of depth that those schools have now in terms of their results and their outstanding students. Parents are making a choice. They can say, "Well, we don't need to spend \$20 000 a year on fees; we can get an equally good education at a Shenton or a Churchlands or in other parts of the city—Applecross and so on—because there are schools all around the place." Public education has fought back and is competitive with what have historically been the best schools in the state.

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Another aspect is that many people have been moving into particular areas, attracted by the schools. This is the same phenomenon we have seen for a long time in Rossmoyne, Applecross and other schools in the southern suburbs. Good schools attract people; they come in because they have decided, "We'll spend more on our house and move into the more expensive western suburbs, but we won't choose to send our children to a private school". All those factors are in play, and we need to respect what children and parents want to do.

Another part of this that I also want to talk about very quickly is one that has not yet been mentioned. The Labor government's intent is to also put Scitech into this new building. Scitech in Western Australia is not up to scratch. That is something I recognised quite some years ago, and we had a lot of discussions with Scitech. Scitech is not a government body, but the vast majority of its funding comes from the state government, one way or another. Popular though it is—I am sure most people in this chamber, including me, have taken their children there over the years—and a terrific place, it is very much pitched at the early childhood, early primary school and primary school ages. If we look at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney, yes, it caters for young children, but it also pitches to higher level of science at secondary levels. That is terrific, and we want to encourage more science in education, but do members think that the kids going to Perth Mod will go to Scitech? They are going to be above that. They are the elite kids; they are the elite ones.

Several members interjected.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I do not know why the member is laughing. Scitech is pitched —

Mr P. Papalia: Because he's a teacher and knows what he's talking about.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I will tell the member what Scitech is about, because I have had a bit to do with Scitech over the years. Scitech is about extending a curiosity, an ambition and an interest in science to kids who would not otherwise get it. I can tell members that the kids at Shenton College and Churchlands get that. Science has always been strong in those schools, but it has not been strong in many of the schools in the outer suburban areas and many of the schools in lower income areas. Scitech reaches out and tries to give those kids an interest in science. We are not going to get the kids from Shenton College at that level; their science programs are very strong, as they are in other schools. Members can snigger, but to put Scitech into a high-rise building is the wrong decision. Over the last few years the former government worked with Scitech and its current lease goes through to 2021.

Ms E. Hamilton: This is snobbery 101!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: The member may call me a snob, but I went around to the schools in the electorates of many members opposite and started child and parent centres, which had not previously happened in this state—20 of them, for the most disadvantaged, low-income people in this state, and the member calls me a snob! I am not a snob. I have done more in the electorates of members opposite than any other education minister.

Mr P. Papalia: It's not about you, Colin!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I did not use the "snob" word!

The SPEAKER: Member for Cottesloe, I call you to order for the first time. I am on my feet. Members, just let the member have his say.

Withdrawal of Remark

Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE: The member for Warnbro referred to the member for Cottesloe by his first name in his interjection. That is actually not parliamentary. He should refer to him as the member for Cottesloe.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I withdraw.

Debate Resumed

Mr C.J. BARNETT: I am not offended by being called Colin!

The whole vision of Scitech is to pitch science to kids who might not otherwise get that opportunity. That, I think, is a good objective; that is what it has been about. In my view, although it has been very successful and hundreds of thousands of kids have gone there, Scitech needs to also pitch to an older age group—upper primary and lower secondary, in particular. They are still children, 13 and 14-year-olds. We do not see many of that age group in Scitech—they are young children, early childhood, pre-schoolers, up to year 5 or 6 at the most, probably. We do not see high school kids going to Scitech in significant numbers, yet we want to reach those kids and get them interested in science. In the discussions that have taken place over the last few years with Scitech, a lot of potential

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sites for a future Scitech were looked at—probably about 10 or so in total. The conclusion was the right conclusion: the new Scitech, whenever it is built—it is probably still three or four years away—should be located in the Perth Cultural Centre Precinct and, in fact, located adjacent to the new Museum that is going to be built. Scitech would be pitched at a child level and kids could also be taken into the Museum. The two of them would be integrated in that cultural precinct. A group could also be taken into the Art Gallery of Western Australia at the same time. That is the whole purpose of the cultural precinct. We have gradually seen a lot of improvement take place. The State Theatre Centre of WA is also part of that precinct. Why would the government not use the existing site, which has history, and the Museum, the great scientific collection of the state, the State Theatre, the State Library of Western Australia and the Art Gallery. That is the logical place for Scitech to be located, not in a high-rise building. That is another flawed aspect of this decision.

Scitech—it does not have a government board; it has a private board—reached the conclusion that the best location for a new Scitech would be the Perth Cultural Centre Precinct, and there is space there. There is some unused capacity around the library and there are places next to the new Museum. It would be a fantastic place for science to be promoted. Also, from a visitation and tourism point of view, it would be a fantastic centre.

I understand how difficult it is. Having been through it lots of times, I know it is very difficult to change existing school structures. I think the Labor government has got this wrong and I really hope it rethinks it and does it better.

I will finish on this aspect, even though I did not intend to say this. There is another problem. I had a pretty rough time reorganising schools. Most of it worked out, but not all of it worked out perfectly; I concede that. But there is another big problem in metropolitan Perth. Under the previous Liberal–National government, some schools were rebuilt, such as Applecross Senior High School, Willetton Senior High School and others.

Ms C.M. Rowe: None in Belmont.

Mr C.J. BARNETT: Yes, maybe there is more work to be done in Belmont; I do not deny that. Do members know where the biggest urgent need is? The biggest need in secondary education in a physical structural sense is at the schools immediately to the north of Perth. I am not talking about the new growth areas; I am talking about the 20 kilometres to the north and north east of Perth. Obviously, Mount Lawley Senior High School has been done and it is fantastic, but there are a lot more out there. Those schools were built in the 1960s and 1970s, their facilities are poor, and their student numbers are too low as they are too close together. There are 500, 600 or 700 students in those high schools. A good high school—it depends on the demographics and socioeconomic factors in the area—needs at least 800 kids. An ideal number would probably be 1 200 and, yes, if it is a relatively easy group of kids to manage, they are motivated and social issues do not impact on the school to any great extent, the number could go up beyond 1 200 to 1 500 or so. That is the great need. I wonder whether this Labor government will have the courage to do the next job in the structure of secondary education—that is, to address those schools to the north of Perth.

DR M.D. NAHAN (Riverton — Leader of the Opposition) [10.33 am]: I would like to make a couple of comments on this issue from a variety of perspectives—firstly, as the local member for Riverton; secondly, as a person concerned about education; and, thirdly, as a person who knows about finances. I represent an area that is intensely aspirational educationally. I was told—I cannot confirm it—that I represent an electorate that comprises 20 per cent of the Perth Modern School student body. I also represent an area that has an intense interest in public education. We have Rossmoyne and Willetton Senior High Schools. Combined, those two schools have 4 500 kids. They are huge. The community basically has a large migrant population and those people move there for the schools. The schools are the heart and soul of the community. As I indicated, a large number of people in my area are educationally aspirational. I think 300-plus kids from my electorate go to Perth Mod. No issue, other than perhaps the issue of finishing the building at Willetton Senior High School, was a more major issue during the election, even including Roe 8. People are passionate about it. I urge the government to rethink this decision. It would be a sensible thing to do.

As the members for Churchlands and Cottesloe pointed out, three issues are getting mixed up. Firstly, there is the Perth Mod selective school. It was one of the great moves of, I think, Alan Carpenter as education minister to remodel Perth Mod into a selective school, not only because it addresses issues —

Mr P. Papalia interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: No; it was a decision by Carpenter.

The importance of it is that it caters for the whole of Western Australia, so that students who are educationally aspirational or are high achievers can be addressed and students in areas where educational aspirations are not appreciated can find a school to go to. It has a fine history. That was a really good move. In fact, we should think about having a selective school south of the river somewhere.

Mr P.A. Katsambanis: And one north of the river.

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Dr M.D. NAHAN: Perhaps, yes. They are an excellent idea and they have provided a foundation.

As the member for Scarborough pointed out, we have had a renaissance in public education over the last 10 years. We have seen the market share of the public system grow; that is, people are choosing the public system over the private system, at a cost to us because of course the state pays for the public system. That was a turnaround, because for years and years there was a flight of people away from the public system to the private system. The basis for that was a whole range of reforms that we put in place. The basis is the large secondary schools that excel—Rossmoyne, Willetton, Churchlands, Applecross and Mount Lawley Senior High Schools and Shenton College. They are pulling in not only kids, but educationally aspirational kids who are lifting up the whole group. That is vital for the public education system. It is a really positive thing. We are dealing with these schools, as well as Perth Mod, which is the top academically performing school in the state and is first or second in the nation.

This is the wrong policy because of the way it was formulated. We listened to the member for Swan Hills' inaugural speech, and it was an impressive one. She is an impressive new member. I have worked with her in years past. She emphasised the need to link with, talk with, understand and represent the community. It is very important, and all of us, as local members, know that. We know that in almost all communities, particularly mine, the schools are the heart and soul of those communities. The Labor Party obviously did not have any discussions of any significance with the community of interest that surrounds Perth Mod and the community in the western suburbs. In fact, when we asked the Premier whom he talked to, he waffled. He said, "I don't need to. I have a large majority for the whole population of Western Australia", which he did and that was sufficient for him to say on this particular issue, "I didn't need to talk to people." That is wrong on many fronts. Firstly, it leads to wrong policy. Secondly, it leads to ignoring the people who are involved in this important institution of Perth Mod and who live in the western suburbs. The government is ignoring information that it could otherwise make a basic decision upon. Imagine if the government said that it was going to close Rossmoyne Senior High School in my electorate and move it. There would be riots. That is what it is doing with Perth Mod. It is actually outrageous.

Let us talk first about the Perth Mod site. I have spent hours and hours talking to constituents about this. I note that students start at 12 years old in year 7. Perth Mod has certain characteristics. All the kids do extracurricular activities. It has been a specialist music school for years, and it continues as a selective school. The school gives scholarships for music in addition, I believe, to selection. All students do extracurricular activities. They stay after school; they do not go home at 3.30 pm. They stay at school until 5.30 pm or so. Students need to bring musical instruments to school and they leave at nightfall when it is getting dark at 5.30 or 6.00 pm. The key thing the parents are worried about is that the kids, as young as 12 years old, will be leaving the school in Northbridge at night with musical instruments and other things. That is a concern. Because of the appointed location of the new school above the train station, down by Yagan Square, parents will not be able to get access to the school by car. There is no parking there and no way to drop off or pick up. Students would have to get to the train station, sometimes with large musical instruments. This feedback was ignored, but it is real.

A lot of these kids are academic. They are often referred to as nerds, which I think is a gross exaggeration. That is what they are. They need as much access to green space and places to talk as every other Western Australian kid. They need space. One of the beautiful things about Western Australia is that we have space. We have designed our schools for space, whether on the edge of the city or in the suburbs. There are playing fields, exercise areas, walking areas, places for kids to sit down and talk, and places for teachers to have outside educational systems. We are blessed with space. We use space in our schools but the government is ignoring this aspect for these selective schools. Parents do not like it; listen to them.

Another issue is that one of the strengths of this school is that it has a long history and has produced some of the most outstanding Western Australians. Over that time it has sought and received donations of substantial magnitude. I think the musical centre received millions of dollars' worth of donations from old Modernians, of whom there are many in my electorate. They donated because they wanted to give back to the school something that the school gave them. The school gave them a future, accommodated them, facilitated their achievements and high expectations, and helped them get on with life—so they gave back. This will be taken from them. They do not want compensation; they want their donations to be used by future young Modernians. The government did not talk to them. The government is basically taking old Modernians' donations, and the assets that those donations acquired, away from them without discussion. They are not asking for money back—they do not want that; they gave it away. But the government is basically taking their property away from them because it did not have discussions with them.

There is another issue. A Singaporean or someone from a city that has high-rise schools, whom I have talked to, will first of all ask, "Why would you do that in Western Australia? Why would you build a school in the middle of the city with all the space you have? Why would you do it? We have to do it because we are Singapore or New York. Are you mad?" Maybe. The Singaporeans built a sports school in the city—because Singapore is only

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a city—and they also built, I think, a specialist arts and culture school in the city because they had no choice. Singapore is actually claiming land from the ocean now because it is running out land. The Singaporeans I spoke to said there were some problems. They said it was very expensive, because one thing about schools, especially secondary schools, is that every 45 minutes, in this case, 1 500 kids get up and move; they just move. There have to be elevators like aircraft carriers to carry large numbers of people up and down. If the school is going to work at all, it will have to be specially built with the technology to lift that number of kids up and down. Then there is the problem of having Scitech at the bottom of the building, so the school has to be way up there, and there is a cost to moving people up and down in elevators. The Singaporeans asked why we would do it. They said it was mad and had not been thought through.

The idea for the school was not even determined or conceived for education. It did not take into consideration the people using it—the mothers, fathers, students, teachers and whatnot. The idea has nothing to do with Perth Modern School as a selective school; it is a symbol for urbanisation created during an election. Unfortunately, Perth Modern and its community were just pawns in this act of symbolism, and it is wrong. These are our future leaders. From my perspective, yes, a lot of my constituents are complaining about this. Do members know what students will do? Instead of taking a scholarship to Perth Modern, they will go to Rossmoyne Senior High School or Willetton Senior High School. Why not? Parents can drive their kids to those schools. This government and previous governments have invested heavily in those schools. They are excellent schools. Students will be driven out of Perth Modern.

I want to talk about schools in the western suburbs. As Treasurer I went through that need to invest in schools in the western suburbs, and it is a big issue. I wish we had not needed to do it, but it was a sign of success that we had to. Children in the western suburbs who historically for many decades had been going to private schools had come back to public schools in large numbers for a variety of reasons, including the clear signal to them, as the member for Cottesloe indicated, that instead of paying \$25 000 year to go to a private school, they could go to Shenton College, Churchlands Senior High School or Mount Lawley Senior High School. Why not? Those students have gone to those schools. The problem, particularly for the member for Churchlands, is that Churchlands is, if not our finest public school—I cannot say that because Rossmoyne Senior High School will get angry!—one of our finest public schools. Churchlands Senior High School has over 2 500 students, Willetton Senior High School has 2 300 students and Rossmoyne Senior High School has 2 100 students, so these are big schools and they are growing. The problem is that by 2026 there will be a shortfall of 4 000 places. The Labor Party might say, “Who cares? The western suburbs are dominated by Liberal voters”, but governments have to govern for all Western Australians, not just their own constituents. Yes, the western suburbs are predominantly Liberal, but not all of them—Balcatta is not.

We came up with the program to allocate \$182 million for schools in the western suburbs. There would have been stage 1 at City Beach Senior High School and an additional \$38.8 million invested in Churchlands Senior High School. Shenton College would have received \$49.5 million and Carine Senior High School would have received funding for a gifted and talented education program worth \$18.8 million. There would have been the construction at the Doubleview Primary School, which would have facilitated the move of the international school and the Japanese language school to Doubleview. The total allocation for those things would have been \$182 million. There would also have been additional money eventually committed to Balcatta Senior High School, which the government has also done, and \$39.1 million committed to Mount Lawley Senior High School, all to accommodate demand. I think the current government has committed about \$1.5 million to Mount Lawley Senior High School. The program put together by the government for the Education Central program allocates \$45 million not only for the western suburbs schools, but also the moving of Perth Modern School.

Mr W.R. Marmion: Is that all?

Dr M.D. NAHAN: That is the only money that the government has identified in its costings. In total, we allocated \$270 million to address this real issue for Western Australian families and children, and that excludes moving Perth Modern. This government allocated only \$45 million.

Mr W.R. Marmion interjected.

Dr M.D. NAHAN: It does not add up. I did some figures while I was talking with my mates in Singapore to calculate what an inner city school would cost—even with cut-price elevators; the aircraft carrier ones are pretty expensive—and I found that there would not be any change from \$160 million. The government in its costings says that it will lease this building at about \$14 million a year—yeah, right! Someone is going to build a \$160 million school, fit it out and lease it to the government. Good luck. It will have only a five year lease. That means it could be moved. The whole costing was absolute fiction. It was insulting, but the Labor Party got away with it. Now the Treasurer will have to deal with the reality.

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Let me go to Scitech. Colin Barnett, the member for Cottesloe, went through this, importantly, and, as Treasurer, I sat down there and tried to avoid the insistence to move Scitech, because it involved a lot of money. It is essential to encourage young people to get involved in STEM—science, technology, engineering and mathematics. It is not only in the centre, but it also has a beautiful outreach centre for all schools in Western Australia. It is a fine facility. It has to move from where it is. I think the lease on it is coming up. It is getting tired. We looked at an area, and Scitech looked at a whole raft of areas. It has an independent board, which went through a process and said, “You know, the best place is the cultural centre.” We found already-built space for it above the library. Therefore, we could have put additional money into new equipment, more staff and greater outreach for schools. The Labor Party decided, for pure symbolism reasons, to put it at the bottom part of this so-called “education centre” down by Yagan Square, in the middle of the city. It had no justification for doing that, and we can only conclude that the Labor Party did not talk to the many communities surrounding Scitech.

The Minister for Science indicated, amongst other things, that the CEO of Scitech is leaving after 17 years. I put it to members that he is leaving because he saw this dog of an idea undermine the operations that he so much loved and dedicated 17 years to. The Labor Party did not talk to the people involved. It is not just the CEO, the board and whatnot; it is the many thousands of kids and mothers and fathers who rely on Scitech to stimulate an interest in science in our children. The Labor Party came out with a thought bubble. That might have got the Labor Party on the front page of *The West Australian* and *The Sunday Times*, and might have titillated people’s views about its urban dreams, but the reality is that it failed to talk to the communities more intimately involved in Scitech. Therefore, the Labor Party failed to do what is essential for government—to represent the public with expenditure of government money. The government might build this thing, but Perth Mod will struggle and students will come back to Rossmoyne. The schools in the western suburbs, Churchlands and others, will be hugely oversubscribed, with almost 30 demountables already threatened at Churchlands Senior High School, and we will have an inferior product in Scitech.

MR P.A. KATSAMBANIS (Hillarys) [10.57 am]: I rise to associate myself with this amendment and to indicate my strong support for maintaining Perth Modern School at its current site. I particularly want to speak today to put the perspective of the people of the suburbs. I indicate that this is not just a matter for the western suburbs—the sometimes so-called well-heeled western suburbs, although we know that is really a truism rather than true. I put the perspective of the people I represent, the people of the northern suburbs, and people across the suburbs of Perth, and say how important an institution such as Perth Modern is to all the residents of Perth. I do so as a product of a selective school education. I went to Melbourne High School, which is the Victorian equivalent of Perth Modern—a very similar and storied history to the history that the member for Nedlands read out about the great products of Perth Modern School. Having heard that and having found out more about the history of Perth Modern School in the last decade or so—I will explain that in a minute—I would say that my school, Melbourne High School, with its wonderful and proud tradition, pales into insignificance compared with the number of successful products from Perth Modern. From Governors-General, governors, academics, Rhodes scholars, at least a couple of Prime Ministers and heads of federal Treasury in there, and right across the fields of academia as well as politics, to members of Parliament, ministers and the like. It has an absolute proud history. But it is a living history. It is a history that has not been set in stone or time. It is a history that continues to be written. The recent products of that school and its current students continue to write that history in its hallowed walls. When we learn about institutions such as Perth Modern School, we learn very quickly that an institution is more than just bricks and mortar. An institution is more than just desks and Bunsen burners. I do not think they still have Bunsen burners, but the equivalent today of what Bunsen burners were in our time to learn science and the like.

Mr C.J. Barnett: How about inkwells?

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: I just missed the inkwells, but, my goodness, my masters told me the stories, member for Cottesloe.

Dr M.D. Nahan: They were still there.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: They were still there in the desks when I first started—yes, that is probably true. We wondered what they were there for and we found very unique uses for them sometimes.

I digress. It is more than just bricks and mortar. It is more than something that can be picked up and transferred to a different place. It is an institution that develops over time. I know from my education at my selective entry school that you are guided by history, and it surrounds you and engulfs you. It spurs you on. It particularly spurs you on because of the type of character of the students in those schools. They are students of aspirational families, who perhaps would never have had the opportunity to get a very, very high-end concentrated education in the areas that they were particularly interested in and good at if they had to simply rely on going to their local

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school. They are the most gifted and most talented, but not the most well-heeled. They cannot afford extra tutoring. They cannot afford to go, perhaps, to a non-government school. In many cases, they cannot even afford to accept a part scholarship or a half scholarship to a non-government school, because they cannot afford the other half. They are migrant kids, kids of battlers, kids of people who place a real store in education and kids who want to get a leg-up in life. A former leader of the federal Labor Party described it as the ladder of opportunity. That ladder should be provided wherever possible; it should not be taken away. This government, by revealing its intent in this Education Central idea, threatens to take that opportunity away from so many kids and families. It threatens to destroy the fabric of a school that is working fantastically well. It wants to unpick this school, tear it apart and move it to what is an idea. To move it to what is currently fresh air—a vacant block of inner-city land adjacent to Yagan Square, which is being built right now. There is no culture, no history and no school buildings. There is no design of those school buildings and no indication of the number of children who may be accepted into that school. There is no indication about whether the school will be picked up in one big lot and taken over there, or whether it will be transitioned across over one to six or whatever years. There is no indication of what facilities will be provided on that site. The public of Western Australia, parents of kids who are at that school today and parents of children who aspire to get to that school are wondering whether it will be worth it. Yesterday at Parliament House I had the pleasure of hosting two year 6 groups from Sorrento Primary School in my electorate. Usually I am asked jovial questions and the like, but in both groups I had year 6 students, 11 and 12-year-olds, expressing their concern about what would happen to Perth Modern School—a school at which they have siblings today and a school they aspire to go to. One student told me they had sat the selection test and were awaiting the result. I wish them every success in that. I have had letters and emails from constituents of mine and people coming into my office from Padbury, Craigie, Kallaroo, Hillarys and Sorrento—parents of students at Perth Modern—who are worried about the uncertainty of what will happen to their children. Will they be dislocated during their latter years of learning? Will they be told that at the end of the year they will pack up and move from that school, where they are well settled, and go into a brand-new experiment, into a high-rise urban school? They might be concerned about their year 11 or year 12 studies, but do not worry about that—the government is going to see whether this plan works. It is going to see whether it is a really good idea to put schoolchildren into an urban environment. The government is going to do that whether they like it or not, and if they do not like that, well, they can wander off to their local school.

There was no consultation with the Perth Modern School community, the old Modernians, the current students, the current parents, the teachers and the other staff of that school before the Education Central plan was released. Parents say to me that given the lack of consultation that took place—that did not take place—before the policy was released, how can those parents take the government at face value when it says it will consult with them about how they do the move, what it puts into the school and all the other stuff that comes with it. The parents got no say in whether the school was going to be moved—none whatsoever—and now they are offered some sort of sham consultation in the future about where the desks are going to be positioned and how many lifts there might be in the building. They are not offered anything concrete about the creation and availability of open space—open space for active recreation, a school oval. The school will have to bus kids to a school oval every single time they need to go to an oval. How about the passive recreation—the ability to kick a football or a soccer ball around at lunchtime; the ability to have their lunch under a tree and contemplate the world for a while and de-stress? They are not going to be able to do that adjacent to Yagan Square. What will happen with a gymnasium? How is the government going to build a gymnasium in the middle or upper storeys of a high-rise building?

Mr W.R. Marmion: It is possible, with two storeys.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: Engineering-wise it can be done, but it is a purpose-built high-rise building with a double storey space in the middle of the building. I can defer to the member for Nedlands who understands the engineering behind that and the additional costs.

Mr W.R. Marmion: It has been done before for the fire brigade building in Perth.

Mr P.A. KATSAMBANIS: It has been done before, at significant cost. Again, it comes back to the limited education budget. We hear the Treasurer and the Premier come in here every day and tell us how times are tough and that we have to be careful about how much we spend and when we spend it. The government is going to be spending extra funds on building a new revolutionary type of school and it will be denying those funds to other schools that really need it; schools like Churchlands Senior High School, or the two high schools that were part of the cohort that the member for Cottesloe talked about, or the schools that parents in my electorate send their kids to—Duncraig and Carine Senior High Schools and Belridge Secondary College—that urgently require an upgrade to their facilities, upgrades that were promised by the previous government and were going to be delivered in this term. It is incumbent on this government to deliver them. However, if it is spending additional funds that it does not need to spend on an experiment on an inner-city school, it will be denying those funds to the schools of the northern suburbs and to the schools of the southern suburbs. I am sure that even Como Secondary College in the

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member for South Perth's electorate needs a bit of work. However, that school will be denied that work because this government will be pouring additional money into an experiment that it does not even know will work.

I do not have any grand philosophical objection to an inner-urban school. I think it is worth trialling. I do not think it is a horrible idea, but it should not be done at the expense of an existing school that is working. If the government wants to trial an inner-city school, let it start that trial. Let it come up with an experiment and open it up, whether it is set up as some form of specialist school—it could be a specialist music school, arts school or sports school—or whether it is done as a more broadly academic selective entry school or even a school just for general entry. I am sure that some parents would appreciate having their kids close to them if they work in the central business district. The government could open it up for local entry if it likes, but do not do that at the expense of an institution in Western Australia and a current, modern living school that is working fantastically well. Do not tear that apart and try to recreate it somewhere else. The government should set up something new. I for one would applaud the government for it. At the same time, do not deny reality. Do not deny the reality that the pressures that the government is trying to alleviate by the grand plan called Education Central are the pressures on those western suburbs schools, Churchlands Senior High School and Shenton College. That is clearly where the demand is. The figures that the member for Churchlands quoted in his speech were absolutely shocking. We are going to see over 5 000 children at those two schools in the next few years—enormous numbers to manage. That is where the demand is. The demand is in the western suburbs for many reasons, including the reason that the member for Nedlands pointed out to me earlier; that is, yes, sure, some parents might choose to buy in the western suburbs to be close to a good school and they make that choice to spend more on a house and not have to pay higher school fees in other places—swings and roundabouts. There is also another cohort—perhaps some of the people I was speaking about earlier in my speech—who value education very much and no matter what sacrifices they make, still cannot afford to buy in the western suburbs, but they make the choice to rent in the western suburbs to get into those schools. It is happening all over Australia. People are doing that because they value education.

I have a family link to Perth Modern. My mother-in-law went to Perth Modern just after the era of Bob Hawke. A few other people around at that time, who some are trying to airbrush from history, were part of Perth Modern as well. My mother-in-law, Diane Tilvern, or Diane Elliott as she was back then, was selected to go to Perth Modern and she made her way there from South Perth. As the member for South Perth well knows, before the Narrows Bridge was built, it was quite a trek from South Perth to Subiaco back in the 1940s, but she did that and she got an education that gave her a taste of and a love for the arts.

It inspired her to make an even bigger journey than the journey from South Perth to Subiaco—the journey to London to become an actress. She was one of those children I spoke about earlier; the children from aspirational homes—the bright kids. These kids can make something of themselves, but they require that extra oomph of being in an environment where being smart, being nerdy—as the Leader of the Opposition said—is not different, weird or to be scoffed at. I found that when I went to Melbourne High School from another high school. My high school started at year 9. Another great thing about Perth Modern School is that it starts at year 7, which is a fantastic thing and should not be changed. Kids like my mother-in-law, like me, like the thousands of kids who attended Perth Modern and all those other schools with the specialist programs, who were not told, “You're silly for being smart”, or “You're stupid for reading a book”, were encouraged, and were put into a bit of laboratory where all the other kids around them were pushing them to get even better. It is kids with those backgrounds who do not get into the high-fee-paying schools in the western suburbs whose futures the government is putting at risk by turning Perth Modern into a brand-new educational experiment that we do not know will work. By all means, build an inner-city high school—great, by all means do it, but do not do it at the expense of a wonderful school that we know is currently working and will continue to provide the leaders, great academics and great Western Australians of the future. Do not do it by creating uncertainty among the thousands of parents who have their children at the school today and who aspire to have their children at this school in the future. The government should not do it the wrong way. It should admit that it did not do the consultation correctly—it did not do any at all. It should admit that tearing down something that works is not the way to make our education system better, and be humble enough to say it got the policy wrong and that it will turn back. If the government does not do this, it does not risk the academic futures of the kids in the leafy western suburbs schools, the private schools or whatever; it risks the academic futures of those migrant kids, those aspirational kids, who know that if they work hard enough they will go to a school that will give them a springboard into their future and into their lives, and they will become the next set of donors that the member for Nedlands spoke about to continue this great tradition.

MR P. PAPALIA (Warnbro — Minister for Tourism) [11.13 am]: I represent the Minister for Education in the lower house.

It is extraordinary to sit here and listen to the content of the contributions from the opposition. I have one observation to make at the outset: not all academically gifted kids live in the western suburbs.

Several members interjected.

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Mr P. PAPALIA: I am sorry if I got the impression from the contributions the opposition made that it is defending people who can afford to buy a house in the western suburbs or who can afford to shift their house and buy a house there, or, according to the member for Nedlands, people who cannot necessarily afford to buy a house in the western suburbs to get a good education for their kids, but instead can afford to rent in the western suburbs to get a good education for their kids! It is extraordinary that the opposition would defend its argument against creating a school for the academically gifted in the centre of the city, where all children can access public transport in the easiest possible means with the shortest possible journey from wherever they live right across the state, but particularly in the metropolitan area, by referring to impoverished people who can afford a house in the western suburbs, closer to Perth Modern School, and the people who are so impoverished that they cannot afford to buy a house but instead they rent! That is an incredible argument!

I point out that students who currently attend Perth Modern and do not live in the western suburbs cannot just get on the train or the bus from the western suburbs to the school. If they live in the electorate of Warnbro, which I represent, they have to catch a bus to one of the train stations in my electorate, get on that train, travel into the city and change trains to another train, and then they catch another bus to get to Perth Modern.

Dr M.D. Nahan: And they're happy doing it.

Mr P. PAPALIA: They are happy doing it! There are a lot of caring parents who are aspirational and who care about their kids' education.

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr I.C. Blayney): Members, thanks!

Mr P. PAPALIA: They care about their kids' education just as much as the people who can afford to buy or rent in the western suburbs. In fact, I speculate that there are probably more parents whose kids are just as gifted and just as capable of passing the entrance requirements for Perth Modern, who live in the wide expanse of the suburbs beyond the western suburbs—in that huge population beyond the western suburbs—who choose not to send them there because they do not want their children to undergo the multiple changes of public transport to get there, and they are not going to drive their car to the Kiss 'n' Ride because when the kids get out after school —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING SPEAKER: Look, members, I want to hear the minister and the noise is getting too much. I will have to start calling people if it gets a bit too loud.

Mr P. PAPALIA: The other argument that was made that these kids remain after school—as they do in many other schools by the way—so parents driving to pick up their kids in the afternoon or in the early evenings will not be able to park near a central location that is close to public transport. What about the kids who come from the outer suburbs? Will those parents who drive in from Warnbro to Perth Modern at the moment be outraged because they will not get a park, or will they be happy because their kid can get straight onto the train and get back home in the easiest possible way? Is that the extent of the opposition's argument?

Dr M.D. Nahan: You will find out they do drive and pick up.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have been approached by members of Parliament in this place who represent suburbs further afield than the western suburbs. Children in their electorates are just as academically gifted, but they do not currently go to Perth Modern because their parents find it too onerous and difficult, and they are concerned about their kids making that long journey. If it is centrally located and more accessible to a greater range of children, we will get a more diverse range of children going there, and more parents can aspire to their child going to the Perth Education Central selective school.

Mr C.J. Barnett: If that is the reason, you put on a shuttle bus!

Mr P. PAPALIA: I am not saying that is the reason for the school; that is a by-product of the decision!

Several members interjected.

Mr P. PAPALIA: I have heard from the opposition. How many members opposite representing western suburbs seats have said they have been inundated with advocates on behalf of parents of children at that school at the moment? They are disproportionately represented. One-quarter of the children come from the member for Riverton's electorate. How many come from Rockingham? How many come from Kalamunda? How many come from Armadale? How many come from Joondalup? It will be easier for all the children who reside in the outer suburbs to get to a selective school where the train station is located adjacent to the new school.

As far as I can ascertain, the other argument, apart from advocacy from a smaller group of people concentrated around the western suburbs, is that —

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Mr W.R. Marmion: Cost.

Mr P. PAPALIA: No, it is not about cost. The opposition's arguments revolve around not wanting to shift Perth Modern because it has this tremendous history. From 1911 until 1958, Perth Modern was selective. From 1958 until 2007, Perth Modern was not selective.

Mr S.K. L'Estrange: No; there were only five years in that period that it did not have a selective program.

Mr P. PAPALIA: It was not academically selective between 1958 and 2007, when the now Premier made it a selective school again. During all the years of the previous Liberal government, it did not change it. It had the opportunity but it did not change it. The other thing that was not changed is the increased threat of overcrowding at western suburbs schools. That was not addressed throughout that period. That problem was essentially created by the previous Liberal government. The Court government created the problem by closing western suburbs high schools, creating the overcrowding that we now have to address. During the entire eight and a half years of the last Liberal government, it did not address the problem. Now we have to address it and the opposition is upset that we are addressing it. As far as I can tell, the most solid argument that it has against this decision is that we are keeping an election commitment. I know that is confronting. I know the suggestion that a party might go to an election, make some promises and commitments a month out from the election, tell everybody, undergo a debate, face the public, face the electorate and then decide to keep its commitments is a really challenging concept for the opposition. I know that is not something with which the Liberal Party is very familiar.

The Liberal Party of Western Australia does not see any obligation to keep commitments that it makes prior to an election. For instance, in 2013 I recall a front page headline "The Science Premier". What drove the editor of *The West Australian* to put an enormous photo of the then Premier, the member for Cottesloe, on the front page of the paper, with the headline "The Science Premier"? I recall that that related to a promise to shift Scitech from its current location to Burswood. That is why he was on the front page of the paper in 2013. What happened immediately after the election? Nothing happened. The Liberal Party broke that promise.

Mr C.J. Barnett: They said they didn't want to go to Burswood; they wanted to go to the cultural centre.

Mr P. PAPALIA: So it was a thoroughly researched and considered decision to move to Burswood, which was reconsidered immediately post the election, and it chose not to go ahead. I understand that it is difficult for the opposition to conceive of the idea that we will keep a commitment that we made before the election. That is what we are doing now with respect to the —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Minister, if you could direct your comments to me. Members, I just ask you to interject a lot less, thank you.

Mr P. PAPALIA: With respect to the parents and families whose children currently attend Perth Modern, I can understand that change is confronting and that they are concerned. The government understands that. All the challenges that were articulated by the member for Hillarys, I think, with respect to timing, when the move would occur and whether it would be done en bloc or in stages will be worked out in consultation with the affected families. The government will do that. The Minister for Education is talking to those communities and those things will be addressed.

Education Central will provide a fabulous new facility close to public transport to allow far greater access by a much greater range of children than is currently the case in the easiest possible way. That is a good thing. We cannot deny that it is a good thing to reach out to those academically gifted children who do not reside in close proximity to that school at the moment, giving them greater opportunities and reducing the hurdles that confront those same aspirational families. It was pretty insulting to listen to the suggestion that the aspirational families or the families that value education do not reside in those suburbs. That is what members opposite did not say. That was really quite insulting. There are far more children from those families out there whom we are currently not engaging with. We cannot do that because those people are choosing not to send their kids to Perth Modern because it is difficult and challenging to get there. If we open up the opportunity, open up access and provide greater and better public transport access, more of those children will be able to attend.

Ultimately, we are going to build Education Central, as promised. It will create 500 new jobs, as promised. We will establish Perth academic college as an academically select school for 1 500 students, set to open in 2020, as promised. We will co-locate Scitech in the new Education Central building with purpose-built facilities—far better facilities than is currently the case, as promised. We will re-establish the Perth Modern School site in Subiaco as a new local intake school to address the overcrowding in the western suburbs high schools. That is a good thing and it is as promised.

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[ASSEMBLY — Thursday, 25 May 2017]
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Division

Amendment put and a division taken, the Acting Speaker (Mr I.C. Blayney) casting his vote with the ayes, with the following result —

Ayes (17)

Mr C.J. Barnett	Mr Z. R. F. Kirkup	Mr J.E. McGrath	Mr P.J. Rundle
Mr I.C. Blayney	Mr A. Krsticevic	Dr M.D. Nahan	Ms L. Mettam (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms M.J. Davies	Mr S.K. L'Estrange	Mr D.C. Nalder	
Mrs L.M. Harvey	Mr R.S. Love	Mr K. O'Donnell	
Mr P. Katsambanis	Mr W.R. Marmion	Mr D.T. Redman	

Noes (37)

Ms L.L. Baker	Mr W.J. Johnston	Mr S.J. Price	Mr D.A. Templeman
Dr A.D. Buti	Mr F.M. Logan	Mr D.T. Punch	Mr P.C. Tinley
Mr J.N. Carey	Mr M. McGowan	Ms M.M. Quirk	Mr B. Urban
Mrs R.M.J. Clarke	Ms S.F. McGurk	Mrs M.H. Roberts	Mr R.R. Whitby
Mr R.H. Cook	Mr K.J.J. Michel	Ms C.M. Rowe	Ms S.E. Winton
Mr M.J. Folkard	Mr S.A. Millman	Ms R. Saffioti	Mr B.S. Wyatt
Ms J.M. Freeman	Mr Y. Mubarakai	Ms A. Sanderson	Mr D.R. Michael (<i>Teller</i>)
Ms E. Hamilton	Mr M.P. Murray	Ms J.J. Shaw	
Mr T.J. Healy	Mrs L.M. O'Malley	Mr J.M.C. Stojkovski	
Mr M. Hughes	Mr P. Papalia	Mr C.J. Tallentire	

Amendment thus negatived.

Motion Resumed

MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren–Blackwood) [11.34 am]: I rise to make my contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate, although, interestingly, we have already had three or four debates in this house, so I have been able to put out a chunk of the agenda that I intended to discuss in this debate, so I am hopefully going to value-add on some of those comments. I will start by congratulating the new Speaker, the member for Albany, on his appointment in that role. It is good to have a regional person in that position. I think the last one of those was Grant Woodhams, the member for Greenough at the time, and a member of the National Party. I have mentioned it already, but I welcome all the new members to the house, particularly the regional members. There are seven regional members from the Labor Party, as well as the regional members on this side, in the member for Roe and the member for Dawesville.

Mr K.M. O'Donnell interjected.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: Also the member for Kalgoorlie—I think I missed you the last time, so I will pick you up in the pass this time! Congratulations to you as well. What unites our thinking, and that of the country members in the government, is that we support a part of the state that is sometimes forgotten, and we need to make sure that it gets its fair share of resources and support to ensure that the things we value in regional Western Australia keep on going.

I congratulate the government again on a very resounding win. The government has every right to come into this place and lay out an agenda on the back of the last election. That said, I still think the National Party performed quite well. We took to the election a very bold policy that played out as it did. We have nine members, including five members in the lower house. Given the change and shift in favour of the Labor Party, including in many of our strongly conservative regional seats, the National Party still performed very well and in my view is still a strong force in this Parliament, supporting outcomes for regional Western Australia.

I want to take this chance to reflect on the past a little. I made a few comments already, but I particularly refer to my ministerial team. I was a minister in the Liberal–National government for eight and a half years, coming into government after the August 2008 election. I was one of only about three people, I think, between this house and the other place, who were ministers for both the full terms, covering eight and a half years. It is a huge privilege to be a minister of the Crown, to sit around the cabinet table to support and make decisions to improve outcomes in this state and, from our perspective, to support outcomes for regional Western Australia.

I want to thank my ministerial team. I will not go through all their names but I will mention my three chiefs of staff over the course of those eight and a half years. The first was Scott Mitchell, who went on to become federal director of the National Party, although he has finished in that role now. He was our coach. He was a coach for me as a new minister, but he also coached many other people in my ministerial team to be an effective team to make effective decisions and direct resources to make a difference. Scott was foundational in supporting my growth as a minister, and also that of the broader team that supports a ministerial office. My second chief of staff was Carissa

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Buckland, who came into my office first as my media adviser. She was a fantastic and outstanding media adviser and when Scott moved on, Carissa took up the position of chief of staff. She had been working with Scott before her time with me; at one stage with a senator from the Northern Territory. Both Scott and Carissa spent some time working for a former Deputy Prime Minister, Mark Vaile. I thank them both for their efforts. I also thank my last chief of staff, Jamie Henderson. Jamie had worked with both Scott and Carissa, and I am sure he got value from their experience, as I did. Those three chiefs of staff have been very effective in managing an efficient and effective ministerial office. All those around them, including me, have valued their leadership and their contribution to ensuring that we can make a huge difference.

There are a lot of other very talented people I would like to thank. I am a bit like the Deputy Leader of the Opposition. I do not want to say their names in this place, because they need to go back, in some cases, to agencies and other organisations. Although I have no idea who they vote for, their loyalty and commitment to supporting me to be an effective minister was unsurpassed. I thank all of them for that; they did a fantastic job and I pay tribute to them. I have a couple of people in my electoral office. People say that they are the people who get us elected. At present those people are Jeanette Trent and Debbie Rice. Until about 12 months ago, my previous electoral research officer was Beverly Mulvihill. Those three have made an outstanding contribution to my electorate office. When I was a minister, they were actually the front line. I would sometimes go into communities—I do not say this very often—and someone would come up to me and say, “Well done with what you did; you were very effective in making a change” and I would have no idea what they were talking about, because the office had managed it. They were doing the yards, particularly when I was a minister, and picked up a lot of that load. It is changing now, of course. I give them a bit more support than I did then, but they effectively got me elected. Of course, I thank all those people in the campaign teams in the Manjimup, Denmark and Mt Barker branches who played a role in supporting my very effective grassroots campaign and for the efforts they put into election day that ensured I got across the line. I am also pleased that I now have a more considerable margin than I achieved last time, which, obviously, is a good outcome as a member of Parliament.

I think we made a substantial difference in our term in office over eight and a half years, particularly in regional Western Australia. As a member of Parliament and a former minister in the National Party team, that is the bit that I am most proud of. We effectively put on the agenda a level of regional development and decentralisation that had not been on the agenda in this state for 100 years. The significant level of resources in royalties for regions has really shifted the dial in a range of investments. Different people will critique the value of that or the decisions that they think should or should not have been made, but I make one point as a collective—that is, the level of confidence that has now been built up in regional Western Australia is way ahead of where it was when we first came into government in 2008. By having a structure, strategy and gated program on how that resource can be deployed, based on strong input from local decision-makers about what the priorities should be that will support growth and development in the regions, it has instilled confidence in that program. Private sector investments have come in on the back of that, and that is the bit that has really moved it along. Governments cannot build communities and they cannot put money on the table and buy an economy, but they can make investments and instil confidence so that others can come in and make those choices and provide those opportunities for private sector investment, and from that things actually change. There is a level of confidence in regional Western Australia now that certainly did not exist when we came to government in 2008.

I know that the member for Bunbury will probably say some words in this place about regional development, given that he was a chief executive officer of a development commission; however, a significant outcome of the Duncan review was the need for a higher level of strategy around the direction of the royalties for regions resource—that is, the blueprint process. Each of the nine commissions had a regional economic and social investment blueprint that was a guiding light for the drivers of those local economies and the investments that would unlock the potential of the regions. Once the process hit the ground, every royalties for regions investment pretty much post-2011–12 had to go back to the blueprints as a reference point for sound investment and process. I think that has been a strength. It would be an absolute tragedy to lose and/or dismiss the value and opportunity that that work in developing those investment blueprints has had on supporting investment in regional Western Australia and the level of capacity that has been built up, not only in the commissions, but also in the broader community, in supporting that process that has developed and grown regional Western Australia. One of the big highlights from our perspective as National Party members is what has happened in regional Western Australia on the back of sound, strategic investment and on the back of building confidence in our communities to support, with their own investment, the growth and development of regional Western Australia.

I have already made comments in this house in the debate on the Loan Bill about the state of the state’s finances. I will reiterate this point quickly. I have heard a lot of criticism directed to this side about what happened in our term in government, but I do not think I have heard it once said in any of the debates in the past two weeks what should not have happened, what investment should not have been made, what hospitals should not have been built or what child-care service should not have been funded. No-one has mentioned that. However, the global comment

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that has been made is that we were the ones who wrecked it. I do not accept that. If we ever have a broader debate—this is not the forum for that—I would be happy to defend in this house what we did in our two terms over eight and a half years.

The challenge, and it is the same challenge that many have commented on, is for the government to now manage the budget. The Labor government came into government on a platform of fiscal responsibility and it, therefore, now has responsibility to adhere to the measures it took to the last election. It has made commitments worth \$5 billion. I actually think that it has overcommitted. I do not think that politically it needed to do that, but it has. Therefore, the challenge is, can it actually do that? Can it deliver on what it said it wanted to deliver and keep the confidence of the people of Western Australia on the back of that election campaign?

The government has said that it is going to deliver on its commitments with no asset sales and no new sources of revenue. But, in fact, it is pretty close to an asset sale because it is choosing to get rid of public servants. Our people are assets, and the government is getting rid of public servants, so there will actually be an asset sale if members want to get down to tin tacks. That will raise a concern around our agencies' capacity to deliver services to the people. As a minister who sat around the Economic and Expenditure Reform Committee table for three years, I know how hard we pushed the public service to get to a level of efficiency to keep a level of frontline service. Public servants are in the crosshairs of this government and, rightly, they should be somewhat concerned.

I just said that the government is not pushing for a new revenue source, but it actually is—it is seeking to increase electricity prices, and I am sure that increases in water prices will follow closely behind come the September budget. The government will be having an asset sale and it will be seeking a new revenue source. Unfortunately, that asset sale will be the sale of our public servants and the revenue source will be increases in power and water prices. That is the strategy of the government and it will be interesting to see how that plays out. Either one of two things will occur: it could result in the government breaking its election commitments—we are already seeing something of that in the proposal to tax investment properties—or there will be signals around what is expected to come in the budget, if not before, to increase power prices. That will break from the government's campaign promise to not sell part of Western Power because it will result in power price increases. That fear campaign was very effective at the election. One of two things will happen: one, there could be a break from the government's election commitments—and we are seeing some signals around that—and the other, of course, is increasing state debt; again that is a platform on which the government came into office. There will be a level of commentary about state finances over the next four years because of the campaign that the Labor Party took to the election and the level of commitment it gave to a range of projects. That will not come off the agenda any time soon.

I now want to talk about regional development, coming off the back of what I have just mentioned about the investments we made as a government in the last eight and a half years. The government committed to maintaining royalties for regions, and whenever commentary was made in the campaign, royalties for regions was highlighted. In fact, let me refer to the more specific subject of the Country Age Pension Fuel Card. Clearly, the 40 000 or 50 000 country pensioners who would have been affected by any change to that scheme were concerned about what might happen, so the Labor Party committed to continuing it. I am sure it will not change that commitment. However, there was a broader push for supporting royalties for regions and supporting regional development. The member for Cannington has stood up a couple of times to talk about the number of country Labor Party members in this house. Yes, there are more by number as an individual party, but I think the collective on this side of the house still outranks the other side, and that those who walk in regional footsteps will have the challenge—I refer to the member for Collie–Preston, who is now a minister—to ensure that their party adheres to its election commitments, particularly for royalties for regions.

I briefly mentioned yesterday that I was interested to see which seats in regional Western Australia had a Labor Party plan. I remember the member for Collie–Preston said a few times that the National Party has been pork-barrelling in seats.

Mr M.P. Murray: I had a message from the Mir Space Station the other day, wanting to know what all the shiny roofs were doing out in the National Party electorates. There were plenty out there.

Mr D.T. REDMAN: I think the minister makes a good point by interjection, because the definition of pork-barrelling is putting money into a member's own electorate. If we look at where resources went in our first term of government, we put significant amounts of money into the Pilbara on the back of need. That was not our electorate. Of the near on \$7 billion of royalties for regions funds spent over eight and a half years, I think nearly \$1 billion went into the Kimberley, which of course has been held by the Labor Party and probably will be for many terms to come. I do not think National Party members can be accused of pork-barrelling their seats, because of the nature of the investments. I am sure the member for Mandurah could make some comments about what his electorate received, but I think it is very difficult to draw a comparison of regional development needs between an

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electorate that sits at the end of the Mandurah railway line, which goes into the CBD of Western Australia, and the Kimberley, Pilbara and Central Wheatbelt and the goldfields.

A number of communities had a Labor Party plan. There is a Labor Party plan for Albany. There is a Labor Party plan for Collie–Preston. There is a Labor Party plan for Bunbury. There is a Labor Party plan for the Pilbara. There is a Labor Party plan for the Kimberley. There is a Labor Party plan for the goldfields. There is a Labor Party plan for Geraldton. However, there is no Labor Party plan for North West Central. There is no Labor Party plan for the seat of Roe. There is no Labor Party plan for my seat, Warren–Blackwood. There is no Labor Party plan for Vasse. There is no Labor Party plan even for the seat of Mandurah. There is no Labor Party plan for the seat of Central Wheatbelt. There is no Labor Party plan for the seat of Dawesville. There is no Labor Party plan for the seat of Murray–Wellington, and I do not think that was expected to hit the mark. Of course, there is no Labor Party plan for Moore. If the Labor Party is genuine about regional development, it needs to go beyond having plans for half of the seats in regional Western Australia. I do not think the National Party, or the Liberal–National government in the last eight and a half years, can be accused of pork-barrelling. This is clearly a campaign agenda.

I hope that as the government rolls out its regional development vision with the Minister for Regional Development in the other place, there is in fact a genuine strategy that supports growing and developing the regions as a whole and that it is not measured on equal amounts to equal areas. I will be the first to admit that, and I never said that when I was minister. It is not about equal investment in equal areas; it is about looking at need and strategy, and how potential can be unlocked with unique investment, which royalties for regions is.

There are two issues with royalties for regions that have the potential to emerge under the new government. One is what I call the integrity of the royalties for regions program. The legislation was introduced to this house in 2008 or 2009 to dedicate an extra resource to regional Western Australia to support growth and development. The Labor Party and the Liberal Party supported it and it went through both houses. In fact, the current Minister for Agriculture and Food; Regional Development was part of that debate and supported it. Now she is in the seat and has a strong role in allocating that resource. I hope we do not see what I call substitution. I hope that we do not see significant investments in areas that have currently been invested in from consolidated revenue. I will use a couple of simple examples. About \$100 million a year is spent subsidising or supporting a school bus service for regional Western Australia. To me, it would be wrong and a breach of the intent of royalties for regions if those funds were used to pay the annual subsidy for school bus services in regional Western Australia. It would be a breach of the intent of royalties for regions if those funds were used to pay for the tariff equalisation contribution.

[Member's time extended.]

Mr D.T. REDMAN: The integrity of royalties for regions is an important component. We will be watching very closely to ensure that the integrity of the program is not breached.

Of course, there is the issue of regional input to decision-making. I have made a couple of comments about the regional development commissions, which have been the platform for identifying those investments that can unlock potential and the opportunity to grow and develop regional Western Australia. Local decision-making and local ownership of that is critical to its success. The signals so far around the development commissions do not give us confidence that that will be the case. We are hearing that the development commission CEOs have had a letter saying that they will finish up at the end of June. We are hearing that there will be some sort of structure that holds up the integrity of the act of Parliament that puts the commissions in place, but everything so far says that there will be a little hollowed-out shell, with the staff coming in under the Department of Regional Development, which means that the authority will come from Perth. There might be regionally located staff, but the authority that they sit under will be in Perth, and therefore there will not be the level of advocacy that would normally be seen from the regional development commissions. That was a pain in the backside for a minister, as there were nine development commissions advocating for their position. That was not easy to manage, but it was a pretty good process, because it put tension in the market for them to push for and pursue the things that would make a difference in their area against all the other priorities that came forward. The two issues are the integrity of the royalties for regions program and, of course, regional input to and regional support of the decision-making process on the investment drivers and where the investments should be made. What we are seeing with the development commissions is a bit of a concern.

From my perspective, the jury is out on the super departments. Yes, I understand the argument around efficiency. One of the things that we did when in government was to make the Department of Regional Development considerably bigger than it was previously, simply because of the nature of the royalties for regions investments. Of course, the royalties for regions program funds the Department of Regional Development. In my view, it would be a breach of the act if royalties for regions funds were to fund the Department of Agriculture and Food, which will come in under the act. If that is on the agenda of the Minister for Sport and Recreation, as a regional representative I would be seriously concerned about the royalties for regions program. That is what I am talking about when I talk about the integrity of the royalties for regions program.

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The Labor Party has said that it supports royalties for regions and it went into the election campaign on that platform from a regional perspective, but we are not hearing the royalties for regions language. The media releases that I have seen so far do not refer to whether royalties for regions funding is being used, and in some cases I know it is. For example, the Minister for Tourism made some announcements recently with the Minister for Regional Development about the regional events program. One event that will happen pretty soon is the Ord Valley Muster. It is a fantastic event showcasing the Ord River developments and that part of Western Australia. There was no reference in the announcement to royalties for regions.

Mr M.P. Murray: Do you want us to put a green and gold flag on everything?

Mr D.T. REDMAN: No. If the Labor Party went to the election and was committed to royalties for regions, why did it not say so? Be proud of it. How are regional Western Australians and, indeed, the opposition able to hold it to account? That is the first thing; we are seeing the language change. I have not heard it in the inaugural speeches of the member for Bunbury and other regional members. In fact, the member for Pilbara mentioned it once, but it was mentioned in the context of a critical comment that he made about one of the investments. I do not think the member for Bunbury even mentioned royalties for regions. If that is language that has been banned in the Labor Party, I have a concern.

The member for Collie–Preston will be aware that there is a map on the website of the Department of Regional Development that shows every town where royalties for regions investments have been made in the past and will continue to be made in the future. I hope that is maintained, because that is a signal for anyone living in those communities about the decisions that the government is making around royalties for regions investments in their particular community. It took a bit of effort to get that map together. It has been really well received, so it would be unfortunate if that were to disappear.

The member for Collie–Preston is the person I will be talking to today, because he is in the house and he is a regional member. The budget will come down in September. The member will be aware that there is a chapter 7 in the budget; the whole royalties for regions program comes under chapter 7, which defines where the investments go. I hope that does not disappear. I hope that does not get folded back into the numbers, which, the member will know as well as I do, are very difficult to read for the best of us. Having a separate chapter 7 that defines where those investments go makes it easier to read and gives a level of transparency to government decisions around this very unique program, which the member has supported.

Of course, we have the John Langoulant review coming up. I do not have a problem with having a review. All governments should do them. The government should assess that. I am sure that John Langoulant is as competent as anybody. As a former Under Treasurer, he is certainly over his brief in that regard. I am not concerned about the process; the review will cover process and procedural matters to a large extent. When I was minister we always butted up against Treasury over the fact that just about anything done in regional Western Australia does not work if only a straight-out business case is done. That is because of distance, the challenges of financing the services or whatever it might be—it is always very challenging. Anyone who takes a very pragmatic and rationalist approach to decision-making on resources in the bush loses, and I hope that will not be an outcome. I hope that the review does not direct criticism to areas that make a difference even though sometimes their cost-effectiveness can be questioned. We are waiting to see.

One thing I took pride in is the royalties for regions program being used for reform—to change how we do business. The Minister for Housing is here and he talked about some of those state–federal relationships with the housing commitment for remote communities. He was quite right that the payoff was \$90 million. The state did not have too many choices, unfortunately, but that is the amount that fell out. We put a lot of work into the Regional Services Reform Unit. The unit was headed by Grahame Searle and some very, very competent people were involved, and it did some fantastic work. If the government can hold the integrity of the “Resilient Families, Strong Communities” road map and keep it going, I will be the first member on this side of the house to support its position. I am sure the government will not agree with everything in the road map, but if there is a significant departure from the principles that it lays out, there will not be change. The plan has to span consecutive governments; it has to be supported by investment, and investment has to be made in areas that fundamentally make a difference to the people who live in the affected areas. Some of it will be difficult. There is now an alignment of Aboriginal leadership that supports this. If we lose the support and goodwill that has been built up, we could roll ourselves a long way back. If this issue becomes a political football that keeps getting kicked around this room, the changes we need to have will not be made. Different people will have different ideas about that, but I think there has been some great work done. I would like to see that issue progress and move forward and I would like to be able to support it from where I sit today.

In the last couple of minutes I have left I would like to very quickly mention a number of programs in my electorate. In Denmark there is a water recycling project with \$15 million to divert the water that normally goes from the effluent plant to the inlet to the golf course and other projects. That is a great project and I do not want to

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see it stop. There is the Denmark light industrial area project and the bridge project, which is worth \$7.5 million. There is the hospital project in Manjimup that is going ahead, as well as the SuperTowns project. Some of these are to do with amenity, but amenity is needed to attract people to live in communities, whether in Perth or regional Western Australia. I do not accept the “paving, bricks and petunias” argument; there will be other days to have that debate. Of course, there is the Manjimup Water for Food project, with 15 gigalitres of water. If that were to come on stream, it would be worth about \$100 million of agricultural production and would be a significant driver of jobs. That should be supported by the Labor Party platform. There is \$5 million towards the Margaret River town centre development. There is the hub of entertainment, arts and regional tourism project—HEART—with a cultural centre in Margaret River; again, that is a significant project. There is the Busselton–Margaret River airport, which is a really significant investment. That is happening now and I hope that does not change or get put on hold. That will unlock opportunities in the south west part of the state, including the area of the member for Collie–Preston. Of course, there is also the issue of aged care, and the member for Collie–Preston is the Minister for Seniors and Ageing. Aged care and independent living units are canvassed in the “Ageing in the Bush Report”, which is worth the minister getting a copy of and going through, if he has not already read it. It lays out some of the issues and where investment might be made to make a difference in regional Western Australia. Lastly, there is the regional grant scheme through royalties for regions that enables little projects by little community groups. They add a huge amount of value and make a significant difference. That is my Address-in-Reply contribution and I hope I get the support of the house for my commentary.

MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands — Deputy Speaker) [12.04 pm]: I thank my colleagues on both sides of the house for letting me speak now, because I think I jumped in in a different order than I was supposed to. I am sorry. I thank members for agreeing to me giving my Address-in-Reply now. I am thankful for this opportunity to talk about my vision for my community and to demonstrate my appreciation for the people in the community who have granted me permission to work with them over the last nine years and supported my work with them. It is my great pleasure to be able to expand my role in this Parliament to that of Deputy Speaker of the Assembly, and I am greatly looking forward to the responsibility that position brings me in the next four years. I am also really happy to congratulate my colleague the member for Albany for his appointment to the role of Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

In my role as Deputy Speaker I want to particularly pursue an agenda I have worked on comprehensively in the last nine years—that is, to increase the contribution of women to this and other commonwealth Parliaments. As the representative of the Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians for this state, and now in the role of Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to commit to continuing my work in this area and I welcome the views of my new colleagues from all parties on how we might improve gender participation in this house and make this a more diverse and inclusive Parliament. Of course, this is a historic Parliament for women. We have more numbers than we have ever had in the past and I am terribly grateful for the contributions that will be made to improving the Parliament of Western Australia.

I am also overwhelmed by the talent we now see in this house with the new members. It is really fantastic and I want to congratulate all of them, most notably my dear friend and now colleague the member for Swan Hills, Jessica Shaw. I am really looking forward to working with the member for Swan Hills in the coming years. I congratulate the member for Kalamunda, Matthew Hughes; the member for Morley, Amber-Jade Sanderson; the member for Mount Lawley, Simon Millman; the member for Perth, John Carey; and also the member for Burns Beach, Mark Folkard. I mention them specifically because it was my great pleasure to support each of their campaigns during this election period. I am so grateful to have all of them onside as we move forward.

I am overwhelmed by the optimism and sheer determination for change that was shown at our recent state election campaign and I certainly commend our new Premier, Mark McGowan, and the new shadow ministry for the direction in which they are committing to move Labor in the next four years. I am very proud to have been able to contribute nine policies at the last election and I am very pleased to be able to move those policies forward. It is work that I have already started to do and which I will mention a bit later. I would particularly like to mention the new ministers: Rita Saffioti, Ben Wyatt, Alannah MacTiernan, Dave Kelly, Sue Ellery and Simone McGurk. I would also like to mention the parliamentary secretaries: Alanna Clohesy and Chris Tallentire. I also mention my very great friend and supporter Tim Hammond, the wonderful new federal member for Perth, who is a bit like he is out of a *Where's Wally?* book. He came and popped up everywhere to support all of us on our way through this campaign, so thank you very much to the new federal member for Perth, Tim Hammond. I would also like to thank WA Labor's party office and all of those involved at campaign headquarters for delivering this impressive campaign. It would not have happened without the guidance of state secretary, Patrick Gorman. I must mention the truly wonderful assistant secretary, Lenda Oshalem, and the staff, David Cann, Emma Gibbens and Julie Bogle. I thank all of those staff for the work they did in pulling off this win. I cannot deliver my speech without mentioning my 20 campaign organisers and over 300 volunteers and Maylands Labor branch members for the countless hours they spent speaking to people on their doorsteps, staffing phones and event stalls, and pre-polling at election day

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booths in my electorate. Thank you so much to all of you. To Rachel Macy and Dan Bull who worked together to direct a tightly run and very, very effective grassroots campaign in Maylands, thank you for all that you have done. I would also like to thank Maylands residents Scott and Meredith McDonald. I was in danger of breaching International Labour Organization conventions on child labour on many occasions because Audrey McDonald continued to help me all the way through my campaign and I had to keep telling her parents, Scott and Meredith, that I had to be careful because I could go to jail over this! Audrey did a fantastic job as well. Carol Thorogood, Jenny Taylor and Eithne O'Doherty are all irreplaceable and wonderful human beings who helped me along the way in this election.

I have been very proud to see my electorate officer of the last four years move into the role of press secretary at the Attorney General's office. I would like to thank Jordyn Rados and her two girls, Kodi and Tori, and the three dogs for the joy they have given me in my office over the last four years. I count Jordyn as a friend. Good luck, Jordyn! For each and every one of the 300 people who worked with me, thank you so much. All those people have family commitments, other jobs and other responsibilities, and I have no doubt about their personal commitment to WA Labor's policies and also to me. I am so pleased that they brought their ceaseless energy and determination to the campaign, which meant that the 15 per cent swing to Labor has left me sitting on an 18 per cent margin in Maylands—woo hoo!

It was nine years ago that I stood as the newly elected member for Maylands and it was a pretty hopeful time in world politics. We had just seen the election of Barack Obama to the American presidency. The Australian federal Labor government at the time was weathering a storm around a global financial crisis, and doing that work better than any other international government of the day. Conversely, in Western Australia, it was a difficult time for Labor. We had just lost a close and hard-fought election after eight years in state government. I remember that when we handed the books and the state of WA to the incoming Liberal-National government, it was on the back of eight consecutive years of budget surplus. I listened with interest while the former Premier spoke yesterday about the budget future of this state. I must say that things must have changed remarkably and fundamentally economically in Australia if he thinks that this state cannot be brought back to a budget surplus at some time in the future. It is going to be sooner rather than later, and it will certainly be achieved by a Labor government.

Assessing the global, federal and state situation now—even just looking at the many new Labor faces—it is abundantly clear to me that things have changed. We won this election on the back of our refocus on the priorities that mean a lot and are incredibly important to Western Australians, particularly jobs. We do not have the luxury of budget surpluses anymore. We have to move ahead with sound policies that bring people along with us, and that is what the McGowan government is about. This means education that works for families, putting education assistants back in our schools, and rebuilding ageing and asbestos-ridden schools that were put on a list and forgotten about under the previous government over the last nine years. This means bringing health services forward that work for families, opening up new medihotels to deliver quality rehabilitative care and to keep hospital beds open for priority cases. This means transport systems that work. The government will be busting congestion by fixing level crossings such as the one at Caledonian Avenue in my electorate and delivering the first new train lines to be built since the previous Labor government, both of which—the Forrestfield-Airport Link and the Morley-Ellenbrook line—will provide tremendous benefits to the people in my electorate.

The McGowan government will also give small business the space to compete with national giants. I refer in particular to providing provision for the licensing of small bars and addressing loopholes currently being used by the giants in this industry—Coles and Woolworths—to put liquor warehouses on our residential streets. It means preserving our environmental resources for years to come. It means policies that listen to overwhelming community response and stopping Roe 8 with no loss of jobs—well done to the McGowan government. It means saving local wetlands in Maylands—Bayswater's Eric Singleton Bird Sanctuary and adjacent blocks—from redevelopment. These are absolutely profound policies that people in my electorate support.

It is my pleasure to be a member of a party that takes a commonsense approach to bringing our laws up-to-date with the rest of the world. I draw the attention of members in particular to our commitments on improving animal welfare outcomes in Western Australia. Improving animal welfare in this state is of interest to most families and most Western Australians. We deserve a higher standard for the way animals are treated in every situation in which we interact with them. We have already seen movements in the agriculture industry on this front from our new Minister for Agriculture and Food, Hon Alannah MacTiernan. I am very proud to help progress the McGowan Labor government's pre-election commitments to stop puppy farming and to contribute \$2 million to the RSPCA, given the high demands of enforcing animal welfare in this state. In addition, I would like to mention that Labor has made commitments to eight small charities that deal with animal homelessness and welfare in this state. I am very proud that the government has committed some funding to help them with their tireless work in combating cruelty and saving animals, whether they are companion or stock animals, or animals involved in science, health, sport, food, wildlife or marine environments. These groups include Greener Pastures Sanctuary, which is a farm

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animal sanctuary down in the member for Murray–Wellington's electorate; Perth Veterinary Bill Assistance—well done to Tammy Rodrigues and her wonderful organisation; GreyhoundAngels of Western Australia, which is in the new member for Swan Hills' electorate; Perth Chihuahua Rescue, which is a specific group down Rockingham–Cockburn way that does an amazing job with those tiny little critters; WA Pet Project, a wonderful group that rehabilitates sick animals; Native Animal Rescue out in Malaga; Pets of Older Persons—it does not take much to work out that the acronym is POOPS WA!—which does an amazing job, so well done to Richard and his wife for the work they and the group do across Western Australia; and, finally, Saving Animals From Euthanasia—I have to mention SAFE Broome, Karratha and Port Hedland—for the wonderful work that they do. These groups are horribly underfunded. If we could do anything to improve animal welfare, it would be to see better general inspectors and a better presence in our Kimberley and northern areas.

Mr B. Urban: The WA Rottweiler association!

Ms L.L. BAKER: The member for Darling Range has a vested interest in seeing that Rottweilers are supported because he shows his Rottweiler—Obi is his name, I think, having met him on the weekend.

Mr B. Urban: Thank you.

Ms L.L. BAKER: It is my pleasure.

I would like to talk a bit more about jobs, transport, education, health and the environment in my electorate. It was such a clear shift by the voters in my electorate to support Labor. In fact, the legendary undecided vote was almost insignificant or missing in my electorate, which in itself is quite a profound outcome. Nine years ago I spoke about the trend of apathetic voters in my electorate and the need for members of Parliament to take more interest in their local community. Personally, I have worked hard in that time to participate at a local level by engaging in and helping to work on local campaigns on issues that my community and individuals care about. I have successfully advocated in my community to see improvements in public safety, transport, education and the environment, and for long-term improvements in Maylands. I am confident that the Labor McGowan government will deliver against all of those. As the member for Maylands, I know just how hard my community has worked and will continue to work to achieve these positive outcomes, particularly in transport. The McGowan government has rewarded this hard work with not one but six major transport commitments in my electorate. The first is to scrap plans to take more land from private owners along Guildford Road. I am very pleased that our new Minister for Transport made it very clear that that would not be supported under a Labor government, so that is simply not going to happen. The community has been very clear on this issue and we have listened. I thank the Minister for Transport once again for this commitment and for confirming it in the first few days of the McGowan government.

The second commitment is to deliver the Forrestfield–Airport Link project. That line is expected to join the Midland line near Bayswater and bring huge improvements to my electorate. We are looking forward to the new gateway to Perth that will come right through the middle of my electorate, along with significant improvements to the Bayswater train station and the general town precinct around Bayswater. The third commitment is the delivery of a second train line. Our new McGowan Labor government will bring the second train line to be delivered since the last Labor government; I am talking about the Bassendean–Morley–Ellenbrook line. The Minister for Transport has already made huge steps in progressing this. Congratulations to her for negotiating with the federal government to see this line progress. It will ease congestion filtering down through my electorate, undoubtedly improve station access on the Midland line and give northbound commuters from my electorate a transport option that will significantly improve their daily lives. The fourth transport commitment I am proud to facilitate will be the Morley station, which will give Morley, Embleton and Bedford residents in my community the train access they have so sorely needed.

[Member's time extended.]

Ms L.L. BAKER: The fifth transport commitment is an additional \$40 million to redevelop the Bayswater train station. That project is much anticipated by my community. These commitments are all in stark contrast to the previous government's failure to deliver even a public toilet to my electorate.

Dr A.D. Buti: Really?

Ms L.L. BAKER: Yes.

Dr A.D. Buti: Disgraceful.

Ms L.L. BAKER: It is absolutely disgraceful. Finally, I would like to mention the Caledonia Avenue crossover that runs in Maylands across the railway line. This fix will address congestion and improve commuter times for Bayswater, Maylands and Inglewood residents.

Community action groups such as the Bayswater traders, the Baysie Rollers, Bayswater Deserves Better, Future Bayswater, Maylands Ratepayers and Residents Association, Local Arts and Community Events and

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Inglewood on Beaufort have increased in confidence and create markets and place-making activities; I am supporting that into the future as well. This will vastly improve the Maylands, Bayswater and Inglewood village hubs. As a part of the McGowan Labor government, I am able to commit to installing toilets and improving traffic and lighting in Maylands, addressing safety concerns in Maylands and Inglewood and improving amenities and community activities in both those centres.

Since becoming the member for Maylands I have had great pleasure in being on the boards of John Forrest Secondary College and Maylands Peninsula Primary School and in the close working relationships I have established with schools in my electorate, including Hillcrest Primary School, Embleton Primary School, Inglewood Primary School, Bayswater Primary School, Durham Road School, and our local private schools Saint Columba's Primary School, St Peter's Primary School and Chisholm College. Through the hard work and determination of parents and citizens associations, parents and friends, boards and staff, I have successfully achieved the McGowan Labor government commitment to spend \$50 million on rebuilding John Forrest Secondary College, create a new nature playground for Embleton Primary School and save the Inglewood Primary School oval. Sporting groups have also benefited from this government's election, and I am very proud to support the Bayswater Tennis Club's expansions and work with the Bayswater City Soccer Club, which is an iconic club in Western Australia. They do amazing work and I am very proud to support their youth development program into the future. Bayswater bowling clubs, Maylands tennis and sport and recreation clubs as well as the Morley Windmills Soccer Club are not possible without the efforts of volunteers and members. I have also been very proud to support the Western Australian Ballet and the WA Youth Jazz Orchestra in my electorate for the rich cultural additions they bring to daily life in Maylands.

Before I move on to a final few comments, I would like to recognise my partner, who has managed to make it here today, and recognise that without her support, I am sure that none of this would have been possible. When I said to her that I was standing for election again, she groaned quietly. For those new members who have just come into this chamber, all I can say is that they will understand what I mean in nine years. It is a long haul and I deeply appreciate the love that she brings to my life to help me do what is sometimes a very rewarding job, but at other times, a very challenging job. Thank you, Kathleen. I always forget to thank her, so I thought I better get that in.

I want to turn to a subject that is pretty contentious in the many times that it is mentioned, but it is a subject that the WA Labor Party has a distinct policy platform to address, and that is live export in this state. I want to talk specifically about regional jobs and the opportunity that a better construction of this industry would have for workers in regions of Western Australia and indeed the industry itself, which suffers on a weekly basis from significant risk because of the public's changing attitudes and views about this industry. The Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union put out a media release last week outlining how local jobs are disappearing at a rapid pace in local communities that are feeling the pinch as more and more cattle are shipped overseas for processing in places such as Indonesia, Vietnam and Kuwait. More than 40 000 meat working jobs have been lost since 1990. WA generally has 10 per cent of those jobs, so we can say that 4 000 jobs were lost. Thousands of meat workers are out of work around Australia. We unfortunately have a federal minister who likes to talk about these people very disparagingly and he makes some really awful comments that belittle workers in this industry. That is not at all positive for regional jobs in this state. Youth unemployment in meat working towns is through the roof, and kids who once got a start working on local abattoirs find themselves without those jobs. In 2011, the meat working industry across Australia was taking in more than 7 000 trainees. In 2016, that number was docked to almost nothing. It is a shameful situation. The AMIEU press release states —

it's not surprising that —

Our federal minister —

Barnaby Joyce is willing to let Australia's rural youth go hungry. After all, he made his views on meat working as a profession quite clear ... he think it's disgusting ... So disgusting, in fact, that second-class international workers need to be flown in to do the "unpopular" work ...

Under this federal government. Those are shameful facts. It is really time for us to stop these unfair taxpayer-funded subsidies that allow jobs to be continually pushed offshore and local work to be denied.

I turn to the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System arrangements that are in place around live exports. I do not know how much members in this house know about this industry; I will try to be dispassionate about it. Professor Clive Phillips from the University of Queensland, who explains the incredible length of the journey involved in live export for the animals involved, said —

"It begins with the mustering of the stock, often on remote properties, and it ends with animal slaughter in the country of destination. In between, the stock will be handled at least a further five or six times and the whole process is likely to last between one and two months. Little is known about the cumulative

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effects of these combined stresses on the welfare of the animals but it is possible that multiple stressors could make the animals anxious, depressed or enter a phase of learned helplessness.”

Before animals board a ship, they may have already been deprived of food and water. They are shipped for up to 50 hours, experiencing high stocking densities and high temperatures while being transported. I believe it was in Doha last year, when 3 000 sheep died in a very few hours on board a live export ship from Western Australia. Three thousand sentient lives were lost. Unfortunately, the industry tends to talk about this as a group and does not tend to recognise that these are individual sentient creatures. To talk about them as a group pretty much ignores that. Tens of thousands of animals die in transit every year, yet the live export industry argues that it is achieving good welfare outcomes because these animal deaths are a small proportion of the total number shipped. The fact remains that as many as 20 000 animals die at sea from disease or injury each year. Their deaths are no less tragic or unethical because their peers survived. Furthermore, those mortality rates do not reflect morbidity. Many more animals are likely to suffer the diseases and poor states of welfare I have described without dying and becoming a statistic.

I want to talk about the Exporter Supply Chain Assurance System because I think we pin lots of hope on that system being able to address some of these problems. I want to put some of the challenges with ESCAS into *Hansard*. I know that our Minister for Agriculture and Food is onto this and that she is very keen to see ESCAS implemented effectively. These are some of the concerns that I have around that. Before a series of questions are sent to the agriculture minister about whether she agrees with my views or not, I point out that these are my views—so members opposite can save themselves the trouble. ESCAS requirements include transport, handling and slaughter, which comply with the World Organisation for Animal Health—OIE—welfare standards and control traceability through the supply chain and independent auditing. The issue is that in some respects, when taken together in practical terms, ESCAS actually means that the only obligation imposed on an exporter is to enter into an arrangement with a third party in the importing country that evidences the intention of that third party to do something in accordance with the OIE recommendations. For people who do not know about the OIE recommendations, they are just recommendations; they are not mandated and they are not mandatory. Taking slaughter as an example, the OIE recommendations allow some of what is commonly known as the cruellest sorts of procedures, including restraining boxes that invert cattle and the use of devices that trip cattle before slaughter. They also allow slitting an animal's throat without stunning the animal.

Responsibility for monitoring compliance is in essence delegated to the exporter. The only people who are checking on compliance in countries that I can find that are independent of the industry itself are those with the animal welfare charity Animals Australia. The last review of compliance with ESCAS covering the period 1 December 2016 to 28 February 2017 refers to 12 complaints that were investigated. However, the complainant on nine of those 12 occasions was Animals Australia. The high success rate for compliance with ESCAS reported by the department was based on an unrepresentative and biased sample. It is pretty clear that we cannot talk about success unless there is independent and unannounced inspection of facilities and unless there is in situ monitoring of ESCAS compliance by the regulator in the importing countries. The sanctions for non-compliance with ESCAS are risible. They uniformly have involved putting conditions on ESCAS or, at worst, suspending an ESCAS temporarily. Despite the department's claim to the contrary, there is no provision in the legislation per se that allows a department to exert ultimate sanction, which is to suspend or revoke an exporter's licence.

I could go on in more detail but these are just some of the concerns that I would like to put on the public record. I quote former Justice of the High Court of Australia Hon Michael Kirby, AC CMG, —

The paramount consideration must now be the ethical one. The live export trade as currently carried out is indefensible. It must stop.

Labor has a very clear plan to transition this industry and I look forward to moving it forward.

MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen) [12.34 pm]: It feels as though it is groundhog day. When I gave my inaugural speech, I was the very last speaker, and it feels much the same now. I start by acknowledging the traditional custodians of this land, the Noongar people. I pay my respect to their elders, both past and present, and future for they hold the memories, the traditions, the culture and hopes, not just of Aboriginal Western Australia but of all Western Australians.

I congratulate the Premier for his outstanding election victory. He has worked assiduously and diligently for that outcome for many years. I will of course do whatever I am able to do to assist the government to translate policy and election commitments into reality, thereby making this state a better and fairer place for all Western Australians. It is trite to observe that the Premier would not be in this position without the majority of seats in this place now being occupied by Labor members. I heartily congratulate all of those hardworking newly elected members of the Labor team, and of course my colleagues who were returned at the election. They all gave their utmost and were not deterred by the daunting margins, which have now been smashed in any event.

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Before I continue I would like to welcome St Stephen's School from Carramar in the public gallery.

I find myself in a position to be able to offer my newly elected colleagues an open door at any time for any advice or assistance they need. On more than one occasion over the past week, I have been deeply moved by the personal stories of those giving their inaugural speeches. It is those significant life events recounted that will give those members the passion and humanity to sustain them and to become excellent representatives for the communities they serve. I am also pleased that those diverse backgrounds will help to keep it real—an attribute that an increasing number of the community expect and demand of their political representatives. I counsel new members to maintain their curiosity and to question everything. Just because we have always done things a certain way does not mean that it should necessarily remain that way.

I am reminded of the member for Kimberley's election in 2013. As a new member, she constantly asked questions of her colleagues and challenged the status quo in a quietly persistent but always respectful way. It was in that manner that the member for Kimberley ultimately convinced members on both sides of the house to revisit the long overdue formal recognition of Aboriginal Western Australians through legislation.

I cannot mention the diverse class of 2017 without saying how delighted I am that the members for Jandakot and Pilbara and the member of the Legislative Council for South Metropolitan Region Pierre Yang have joined the team. The first two were born in India and the latter is of Chinese ancestry. Western Australia is a diverse state with one in three of us having been born overseas and one in two of us having a parent born overseas. Despite this, our institutions like Parliament and the public service do not reflect the same diversity as exists in our community. It is my firm belief that there are systemic barriers to greater equity. We need more equitable employment and fairer recruitment practices.

I firmly believe that service delivery agencies like the Western Australia Police and the Department of Fire and Emergency Services unconsciously discriminate and exclude. Some may regard these comments as divisive or unhelpful. I am not saying that there are not good intentions, but these are not translating into outcomes. Clearly there are systemic barriers.

I reflect on a little more than a year ago how solitary and lonely things were for a northern suburbs Labor member, with only myself and the very distant member for Butler, and little else in between. Since then, Labor has reclaimed the federal seat of Cowan. Dr Anne Aly is a wonderful addition to the team and now I have state colleagues to join us. For that reason, I make special mention of the recently elected members in the northern suburbs in the members for Kingsley, Wanneroo, Burns Beach, poor old Balcatta that never gets included in the north metro area, and, of course, Joondalup, as well as the indefatigable Hon Alannah MacTiernan in the Legislative Council—quite a formidable crew.

It is with particular pleasure that I take my seat on this side of the house, not just because we return to government but because I face north towards my electorate. This serves as a constant reminder of my fundamental responsibility to represent the people of Girrawheen to the best of my ability. I thank my constituents for their ongoing support and confidence that I can ably represent their interests and concerns. The Girrawheen campaign team was hardworking and enthusiastic and I thank them for their great commitment, forbearance, patience and good humour. In particular, I thank Domenic Zappa, my sensational electorate staff—Michelle Sweet and Ingrid Telikostoglou—Patrick Turner, Hope Smith, Lara Mittic, Bobby Banovic, Hugh Nguyen, Tran Le, Mukesh Jain and my booth captains and all volunteers whose enthusiasm was sustaining and very welcome.

Like other members who have spoken in this Parliament, I thank Labor's state secretary, Patrick Gorman, and Lenda Oshalem for their considerable efforts in the overall campaign. I thank them in particular for their trust and minimal interference in our local efforts. I extend my felicitations to those government members who were fortunate enough to be chosen for cabinet. I trust that each of you will find the privilege to be fulfilling and worthwhile. You have the rare opportunity to make a material difference and to influence the lives and futures of our fellow Western Australians. In my eight and a half years of working closely with ministers in shadow cabinet, I know firsthand the level of commitment and ability that this group possesses. I thank all those groups and stakeholders who over those years in opposition gave so generously of their time to talk about their issues and to brief me on budgets, the plights of individuals and policy concerns in their sector. I value their assistance and friendship enormously.

I congratulate the member for Albany, who extremely reluctantly assumed the position as Speaker. As a former Olympic athlete, that foot dragging was barely credible! However, I know that he will serve the office with distinction as he has done in the role of Acting Speaker. I feel confident that there will be fewer "quirky" interjections and absolutely none from the cantankerous member for Albany. As such, his job will be considerably easier than it was for his predecessor.

This is a natural segue to reflect on the standards of our Parliament. In the book *The Trust Deficit*, author Sam Crosby makes the following observations —

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In the 'common man test' a politician's behaviour is compared with our own. It is not a bad test, but it ignores one critical component: most ... people live in civil, polite societies. Politicians do not.

Tim Watts is a Victorian MP who was elected in 2013. Upon taking his seat in the chamber, what struck him was not the rancour, or the pettiness, but the noise. He downloaded a noise-meter on his iPad and discovered the level peaked in Question Time at more than 130 decibels—about the same level as a four-engine jet from a distance of 30 metres. This cacophony of invective is the standard workplace for ... politicians—they live in a world of unbridled aggression and hostility and contest.

Nothing focuses the mind on the need for openness and accountability in government more than sitting on the opposition benches for the past eight and a half years. On the commencement of the fortieth Parliament, it is timely to consider in what ways the McGowan government can do better in open government than its predecessor, the Barnett government. Premier McGowan recently committed that under his government, a gold standard of transparency will operate. Last week this comment was mocked and derided by the opposition so it is timely to record its record. In Western Australia there are a number of mechanisms to ensure better transparency. The primary role of Parliament is to minimise potential conflicts of interest and ensure the proper oversight and elimination of corrupt practices. The contempt with which these checks and balances were treated by the previous government was one of the factors leading to its electoral demise. Western Australians were fed up with a lack of responsibility and accountability, and with the omissions and opaqueness of the former government. Even more galling was the advertising campaign costing millions trying to convince the punters that the bigger picture was all they needed to know. It is little wonder that there is such widespread cynicism and mistrust of government.

During the currency of the Barnett government, the Information Commissioner, Mr Sven Bluemmel, noted often the significant increase since 2008 in freedom of information requests made of ministers and agencies by members of Parliament and the media. In a 2010 review of the Freedom of Information Act, the Information Commissioner noticed a large backlog developed as a consequence, with the average response time blowing out to 200 days. This state of affairs is symptomatic of the systemic and entrenched resistance under the Barnett regime to providing information. Information was not volunteered unless absolutely necessary. The bureaucracy took its direction from its political masters and together they did much to subvert and frustrate the explicit intent of freedom of information laws to provide full and complete access wherever possible. This stance was bolstered by some eccentric and broad interpretations of exemptions on appeal in which only the most determined and persistent ultimately prevailed. Moreover, the timeliness of receipt of information is also a key to its usefulness, and long delays and obfuscation in this process were universally the norm. Likewise, the response to parliamentary questions was also far from comprehensive or edifying.

In the final years of the Liberal–National government, the number of formal refusals to answer parliamentary questions by ministers increased markedly, with a total of 24 refusals between the 2014 and 2016 financial years. I suspect there were additional ones after the reporting period. Such refusals were often based on claims of commercial confidentiality or legal professional privilege. In one matter that I pursued, the refusal was founded on a claim of legal professional privilege. On inquiry by the Auditor General, who has responsibility to examine such refusals by ministers, the minister's office was unable to locate any written legal advice nor any details of the date and persons involved in an alleged telephone conversation in which legal advice was said to have been given. Of course we should always remember that, in any event, it is the government's privilege and it can waive it. Of course referral of such a refusal, breach of standing orders or any other improper conduct by a minister or member of government to the Procedure and Privileges Committee occurs only by motion of the house itself. By definition, such a motion by the opposition will never be successful as it does not possess the numbers to win when the vote is taken on the floor of the house. In this respect, I think the role of media is quite important.

Given recent comments by the Corruption and Crime Commissioner, Justice John McKechnie, I consider it is likely that in coming months, the precise powers of the privileges committee to sanction members for corruption to the exclusion of that corruption body are likely to be the subject of closer analysis. The Barnett government was also found wanting in its procurement practices, which were far from transparent. Routinely closed tenders were used when they should have been the exception rather than the rule. These kinds of tenders could not be accessed for examination. It removed its competitive nature, had the potential to foster corrupt practices and did little or nothing to support local business.

So too parliamentary committees can be another way in which government can be scrutinised. They do valuable and detailed work on public policy and agency conduct. Unlike the more visible and adversarial operations of Parliament in the chamber, they are largely characterised by bipartisan, detailed and cooperative deliberations on serious issues affecting Western Australia requiring serious responses. However, in the last government, committee recommendations on a wide range of issues were either ignored or honoured in the breach. In my experience, the failure to act on committee recommendations in a timely manner or at all does not attract any sanction or even cause for adverse comment. I briefly refer to two such recommendations from the Community

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Development and Justice Standing Committee report “In Safe Custody: Inquiry into Custodial Arrangements in Police Lock-ups”, tabled on 28 November 2013.

Mr C.J. Barnett interjected.

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am not inviting interjections from the former Premier.

This inquiry report “In Safe Custody”, tabled on 28 November 2013, reviewed compliance in police lockups with the recommendations made by the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody more than 25 years earlier. I want to refer in particular to two recommendations. Recommendation 1 states —

That Western Australia Police provides 24-hour, 7 day a week medical coverage at the Perth Watchhouse and improves arrangements for on-call medical assistance (including mental health) at all lock-ups.

Recommendation 5 states —

That Western Australia Police develops a consistent policy regarding access to family members and/or other third party supports by detainees in lock-ups.

Mr C.J. Barnett: What about Mr Ward?

Ms M.M. QUIRK: I am going to talk about that in a minute, Premier—sorry, former Premier, member for Cottesloe.

[Member’s time extended.]

Ms M.M. QUIRK: The recommendation continues —

Such a policy should be consistent with maximising access.

The government response to this report was tabled in April 2014. In response to the first recommendation, although agreeing with its import, the government did not even address conditions beyond the Perth watch house and made no reference to regional lockups. In response to the concerns about access of detainees to legal and family support, the government’s response asserted this was a right of detainees, but how it was to be asserted was subject to diverse conditions and circumstances around the state. The response noted that a comprehensive review of the procedures manual was being undertaken. That was in April 2014.

In August 2014, nine months after the committee’s concerns were made public, Ms Dhu, a 24-year-old, detained for unpaid fines, died of sepsis in the South Hedland lockup. No doubt the observation could be made that hindsight is a wonderful thing, but the circumstances that led to Ms Dhu’s painful death and inhumane treatment were readily foreseeable and the government was warned months earlier. The former Minister for Police may well accuse me of hypocrisy—I note the member for Cottesloe has done likewise—for raising this issue given my responsibility as Minister for Corrective Services at the time of the tragic death of Ngaanyatjarra elder Mr Ward. However, since that occurred I have vowed I would do my utmost to ensure that those in the state’s care and their families do not suffer in the same way again. The failure to seriously heed the warning informed by someone such as me, who has had that experience, is something the previous government should acknowledge.

This leads to me to make special mention of the passing of Marc Newhouse in February of this year. Marc died peacefully at his home at the age of 58. He was a well-known and respected activist who played a leading role in the First Nations Deaths in Custody Watch Committee for more than 15 years. Marc was chair of West Australians for Racial Equality for many years and worked at the Equal Opportunity Commission, where he fought discrimination in all its forms. He was an active Community and Public Sector Union – Civil Service Association member and, at times, held the union delegate position in his workplace and served on the union’s state council. The Aboriginal Legal Service of Western Australia described Marc as —

A tireless campaigner for the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Marc was greatly respected by so many for his dedication and commitment to striving for justice for our people.

I send my condolences, as I am sure my colleagues do, to his family and friends.

I go back to the issue of accountability. I believe that in the interest of better administrative decision-making by not only the executive but also bureaucrats there is merit in amending the State Administrative Tribunal Act to enable the provision of a formal statement of reasons for a decision. This may streamline cases before the State Administrative Tribunal and in some cases obviate the need for an appeal proceeding. The provision of reasons is common in other states with similar administrative law regimes, and is also present in the federal administrative review laws. Receipt of reasons for decision is extremely useful in two respects. It improves the quality of decision-making at agency level and makes it less likely that a decision will be based on arbitrary or irrelevant considerations or failure to observe natural justice. Other measures that ensure high levels of accountability also include the Parliamentary Commissioner for Administrative Investigations—the Ombudsman—and the State Coroner. Members who have been in this chamber for some time will know that many

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coronial recommendations are repeated in inquest after inquest. It is difficult to ascertain what happens to the implementation of a recommendation after an inquest, and is it not easy to search findings to discover when an issue is consistently arising or where common themes are emerging. A running list of coronial recommendations and their status needs to be tabled each year in Parliament.

Also, the Public Sector Commissioner from time to time commissions so-called independent reviews and inquiries. In the context of the latter, it became a routine practice in the Barnett government to receive drafts of a report of an independent reviewer, and to make material changes to the contents. Similarly, it was common to release reports many weeks or months after their receipt, providing the opportunity to dilute or delete findings regarded as politically embarrassing. This practice undermined the integrity of such reports. Moreover, where an inquiry is called, it is, by definition, a matter of high public interest. Making the public wait for months on end for the final tabling of a revised report is treating stakeholders and the community with the utmost contempt.

In a parlous budgetary situation in which resources for frontline service delivery personnel are scarce, superficially it may seem attractive to cut back on accountability resources. But if the last eight and half years have taught us anything, it is that we cannot afford anything less than a truly accountable and open government.

The last words go to United States jurist Louis Brandeis, who famously said, “Sunlight is said to be the best of disinfectants.” So it is in this new government. We need to open the doors and windows so that, in this new era, no one can hide in dark recesses or corridors. Western Australians deserve no less.

MR D.A. TEMPLEMAN (Mandurah — Minister for Local Government) [12.58 pm]: I will make a very brief contribution to the Address-in-Reply debate that will take us to lunchtime. I want to highlight to the house very quickly a very important online survey that was released by the *Mandurah Mail* this week about the naming of the replacement traffic bridge in Mandurah. This very important bridge is currently under construction and will be concluded soon. I think this shows the great humour of my constituents and those of the member for Dawesville.

I report to the house that, in the survey, the name New Old Bridge got 6.78 per cent of the vote; Foreshore Bridge got 7.07 per cent of the vote; Ridgy-didge Bridge got 3.6 per cent of the vote; Bunnings Snag Gateway Bridge got 5.38 per cent of the votes; and Manjar Bridge, which is a good one because it is an Indigenous name, got 3.65 per cent of the votes.

Mr I.C. Blayney: What about David Templeman Bridge?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: David Templeman Bridge did not get any votes, which I was outraged by! However, I report to the house that Bridgy McBridgefance was overwhelmingly supported, with 38.56 per cent of the votes. This is an outstanding result for Bridgy McBridgefance, but in light of the seriousness and the longevity of the bridge name, I understand that the City of Mandurah has determined that Bridgy McBridgefance will not be the name of the new bridge in Mandurah. It could have created an iconic tourism attraction in its own right by its name, but Bridgy McBridgefance has been unsuccessful. However, the City of Mandurah has determined that the new bridge in Mandurah—a very important traffic bridge—will be called Mandurah Bridge. I am happy to report to the house that very important decision, but I lament somewhat the dismal failure of Bridgy McBridgefance.

Debate interrupted, pursuant to standing orders.

Sitting suspended from 1.00 to 2.00 pm