

GIRLS TAKEOVER PARLIAMENT

Statement by Minister for Education and Training

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Minister for Education and Training) [2.08 pm]: I rise today to speak about the Girls Takeover Parliament initiative run by Girl Guides Australia. I am sure many members would have noticed plenty of girl guides wandering around this building last week. Girls Takeover Parliament is an innovative program that takes place on 11 October, or International Day of the Girl. It pairs young women and girls with politicians, to guarantee their voices and opinions are heard. It is a program on a mission to show the world the advantages of releasing girls' potential and to inspire more girls to enter politics.

I was paired with Lily Dunstan from Perry Lakes–Tuart Girl Guides. Lily tells me that she has always been very passionate about gender equality, which is one of the reasons she decided to apply for this program. I hope all the female parliamentarians from all sides of politics whom Lily met throughout the day showed her that women have what it takes to enter Parliament and do it successfully. Throughout the day, Lily got to attend a briefing with Minister Simone McGurk on the women's strategy, sit in the advisers' seats to watch private members' business in the Legislative Council, attend question times in both the Legislative Council and Assembly, and film an interview with me on what it is like being a woman in Parliament. She even had the opportunity to take on the role of an adviser and write this statement for me.

Girls Takeover Parliament was not just an amazing learning experience for Lily, but gave politicians like me the chance to see the issues that really matter to teenage girls today. I recommend everyone here take part next year to encourage girls and young women to pursue leadership positions in order to close the dream gap for young Australian girls and women, and encourage greater diversity in Parliament. I thank everyone who hosted a girl guide for the day or helped make this program take place. It was a day that not only was very exciting for Lily, but also gave us an insight into what really matters to young girls and women and what they want from us when it comes to representing them.