

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 12 September 2017]

p3773a-3819a

Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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**APPROPRIATION (RECURRENT 2017–18) BILL 2017**  
**APPROPRIATION (CAPITAL 2017–18) BILL 2017**

*Declaration as Urgent*

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

That in accordance with standing order 168(2), the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 be considered urgent bills.

*Cognate Debate*

Leave granted for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 to be considered cognately, and for the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 to be the principal bill.

*Second Reading — Cognate Debate*

Resumed from 14 September.

**MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Leader of the National Party)** [4.10 pm]: I rise to contribute to the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. What an absolute con job we have heard in this house this afternoon about the budget that the Labor Party has brought down. They have all drunk the Kool-Aid. They have read the talking points that have been circulated to all and sundry and they actually believe them. They believe that this is a good budget.

Several members interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** They do; they are convinced; they are very earnest and urgent. There was a question about whether the National Party is responsible for the situation with this budget. I can tell members that the Nationals have always taken their role seriously in this Parliament. I can tell members also that in regional Western Australia the delivery of this first budget by the McGowan Labor government was accompanied with a sense of inevitability and deep gloom. Although members opposite constantly crow that they have the most regional members, I can tell them that when we go to their electorates, we find that they are on the nose. They have drunk the Kool-Aid because nobody in regional Western Australia—indeed, I think it stretches further than that—believes that this is a good budget. The Nationals and our constituents braced ourselves prior to budget day. We knew it would be bad and that Labor did not like royalties for regions. From election day to budget day, many signs were coming from the government that royalties for regions was on the chopping block. We were very clear with the electorate beforehand that that would happen: a Labor government would raid royalties for regions to meet their own election commitments. We understood very clearly that the incoming government's intent was to demonise and demolish royalties for regions, and that is exactly what they have done. Over the last six months we have seen cuts to programs and information being dribbled out to community groups, shires and all sorts of other organisations to which commitments by the previous government had been given. They were ready to go. This morning I heard one very distressed member of the public call in to radio about an aged-care project, trying to understand why their aged-care project had been cut off the list, yet there was some discussion around a \$7 million swimming pool for a community that did not want it. That was in a seat that the Labor Party has held for the last five years, so the government should not cry that it did not know and that it had only a short time to come up with the budget. The Labor Party should have known very well that that community did not want that project.

We knew that royalties for regions would be cut, because how could the government let it survive as a constant reminder that regional Western Australia has been put on the back burner for the next four years? The government could not have royalties for regions in any meaningful way in its budget as a constant, daily reminder that the Liberal–National government put regional Western Australians first. It has demolished, demonised, substituted and shunted things that were never designed to be paid for by royalties for regions to wash out the value that has been delivered to this state by that program. That is what this budget means to regional Western Australia. The regional members of Parliament who stood and applauded when this budget was handed down last week should hang their heads in shame. I would be really interested to see how their constituents are responding.

**Mr K.J.J. Michel** interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** They should hang their heads in shame because there is nothing in this budget, member for Pilbara —

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

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**Mr K.J.J. Michel** interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** He did not stand up when he had a chance to talk about state agreements. He made no contribution in this house about what is happening in his electorate. He should hang his head in shame.

**Mr K.J.J. Michel** interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** Does he not understand that this government's focus is on Perth? There are more Labor Party members from the metropolitan area than there are regional members. That is just the way it goes. That is why we see the Minister for Transport stand up every five minutes and talk about Metronet. That is why the regions will get a few lollies along the way but they will not see what happened under the Liberal–National government during the last eight years. They will not see those transformational projects. It does not matter how good they reckon they are, they will not win them because it is about the numbers and they do not have enough. But they could at least stand up and have a go because regional members of the Labor Party were all elected on a promise to keep royalties for regions—every single one of them promised their constituents. I do not think any one of them is prepared to stand up and concede that they came to the role under a false pretence. That is what their electorates believe; that is what they are telling us. Unless they are living under a rock, every country Labor MP will get the same feedback as we get as we travel around the state. If people voted for Labor, they would feel betrayed, deceived and cheated.

I want to talk about the fact that every budget comes down to a choice and that is what we are debating today. This budget indicates very clearly that the Labor Party and the McGowan Labor government have articulated their priorities. We had to wait almost six months but the Labor government priorities are abundantly clear. We will mark down the 2017–18 state budget as a point in time when the Premier and Treasurer made choices. They made a choice to abandon regional Western Australia by raiding royalties for regions and they made a choice to break their own election commitments and promises on no new taxes by increasing payroll tax, the most insidious of taxes—a tax on jobs. They made a choice to break their word to the gold sector—this from a government that has fallen over itself since coming to government to be shoulder to shoulder with the iron ore sector and the two big miners. It turns out that when the government met with the mining sector, it wanted to be friends only with the guys with the deep pockets. It made a choice to break its word to the gold sector. It made a choice to break its word to the police, the men and women who put their lives on the line for us. It made a choice to sack 3 000 public sector servants. They are the choices that the Labor Party has made—the Treasurer, the Premier and his cabinet. I think they are the wrong choices. The National Party believes they are the wrong choices, and I tell members what: the community absolutely thinks they are the wrong choices. They will not drive jobs, growth or prosperity. That is what they were elected on a promise of, but they have broken all their promises. Those choices spell misery and pain for everyone in this state who can least afford it.

The Nationals want to know why the Labor Party, the Premier and the Treasurer are happy to break those promises to the gold sector, the public service, WA Police and the business community—not just the two big miners, but 1 300 businesses, which are significant employers in this state—with a tax that is a tax on jobs. It is insidious. Every government and every opposition has argued that there should be a decrease in payroll tax. Every industry group has also argued that. This government came to power on the back of “we will not increase taxes”—broken promises. Why has Labor made these choices when there are clear alternatives?

The Treasurer has handed down a budget that we think, if he had been sitting on this side of the chamber, he would have taken great joy in absolutely ripping apart. It is the kind of budget he railed against while he was sitting on this side of the house. It is a budget that not only breaks promises, but also fails to deliver any substantial change to the bottom line. We will have a bigger deficit next year, a bigger one the year after, and a bigger one the year after that. Debt is still heading past \$43 billion—all this pain and no gain. We still do not have the full picture because, as the government's own former Treasurer Eric Ripper was quoted as saying last week on page 4 of *The West Australian* —

Funds for some big health and Metronet projects are not there and therefore ultimate State debt may have been underestimated.

This is from one of its own, yet the government made \$5 billion worth of election commitments. We are told, and we can ascertain from some of the reporting, that that \$5 billion has already blown out to \$6 billion. The Nationals and I can accept and understand the argument that we all need to tighten our belts. Everyone in Western Australia understands the perversity of the GST and how it works and the headwinds that that has caused and the financial difficulties that governments of both persuasions have faced. We all understand the fluctuating nature of the iron ore price and the sector and the way that it essentially writes down enormous amounts of revenue for the state. But

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in this context, when that is all that the Labor Party spoke about for the last eight years, it comes to government with \$5 billion worth of election commitments. I do not think we do that, unless we are the Labor Party. It promised the world and then it pleaded for forgiveness and apologised when it broke those promises not less than six months later. It has broken the promises relating only to revenue and then only to some sections of the community and the business sector. There is no restraint from Labor when it rolls out its election commitments. No, it will keep on delivering those \$5 billion worth of election promises. It could not possibly break those promises.

I draw the house's attention to the fact that the Treasurer, who has just so smoothly explained why we should all be coming together to help solve this problem, had a favourite saying when he occupied a seat on this side of the house. Some members opposite may not have heard it, but we certainly did on many occasions. I am going to paraphrase because it was in various formats, but he said that governments should always deal with the fiscal realities in front of them, yet when the Treasurer finally got his chance to hold the purse strings, he has pleaded ignorance and then asked for forgiveness. Neither he nor the government, he says, can be blamed and we are sorry. They cannot be blamed and they are sorry. When someone makes an apology, they are then supposed to make amends. But none of that is coming—just the pain and the misery. The Treasurer is very smooth. He is as smooth as a gravy sandwich, as my lovely father would say. He is very deft at making it seem like what he is saying is the only way to address some of the challenges that the state is facing and that there is no alternative and he has been forced to introduce these measures. We know that is not true.

He could have said that Labor came to government without a financial plan. That is true. He could have apologised for that. It made \$5 billion worth of election commitments it could not pay for. That is true. It won by promising not to sell assets or increase taxation or tread on the toes of the iron ore sector. That is also true. He could have said that now is the time to have some tough conversations with the iron ore sector. Instead, Labor penned some talking points for its backbenchers and asked them to emphasise that it really is asking the iron ore sector to pay its fair share. It is kind of okay—not really. The government increased a job-destroying tax that impacts on not only BHP and Rio Tinto, but also 1 300 other businesses that employ hundreds if not thousands of people in this state. Labor has identified again and again, every turn it makes, that it would rather choose to go somewhere else than have that tough conversation with BHP and Rio Tinto.

Last week we could not even get the government to agree to an inquiry through a government-controlled committee. What is it about having the discussion about some of these legacy state agreements and a sit-down with the two big mining companies to talk about how they can contribute to some of the fiscal realities this state is facing?

**Mr D.T. Redman:** Apparently it sends a bad signal.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is a bad signal, but not for the gold sector or anyone else. I want to talk about broken promises and do a compare and contrast. Some members will remember that from English lit or their university days. I would like to read a quote from the Premier when he was Leader of the Opposition and made a pitch to be the Premier —

My vision for Western Australia is of a successful state, brimming with opportunities for all our citizens—a fair state where regardless of income, religion, background or location, people can be whatever they want to be, based upon their ability, work and need; a state that plans for the long term with decent planning, housing, transport, health and education systems; a state with a diversified economy that rides out the ups and downs of the mining and resources sectors; a state with a diverse array of robust industries, which is why I launched our plan for jobs and our Metronet plan; and a state with a reasonable, competent, stable and honest state government.

That was his reply to the 2016 budget. A leading businessman reflected on the state budget that the Premier and the Treasurer have just brought down. Mr Beament, a goldminer from Northern Star, was quoted in *The West Australian* on 11 September —

Mr Beament, who turned Northern Star from a penny dreadful into an ASX-200 powerhouse, said the Labor Government's willingness to break a promise should be "a huge worry to all West Australians".

"This isn't just about the gold industry or the resources sector," Mr Beament said. "This matters for all West Australians because we now all know that the Premier's promises aren't worth the paper they are written on. He will just break his promise and say 'oh well, I'm sorry about that'.

"He openly acknowledged that an increase in the gold royalty was pointless and destructive. He sought to get maximum political mileage out of the promise. "Once he extracted people's votes, he dumped the commitment.

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“It is now virtually impossible to believe anything he says.”

I have pages and pages of promises and commitments that Labor made about the mining tax, the payroll tax and the gold royalty; they are from not only Premier McGowan, but also Hon Stephen Dawson, the Minister for Environment, the member for Collie–Preston and the Treasurer. There is a raft of them. Again and again, they committed not to increase the gold royalty and then got into government and said, “Whoops, sorry about that. We made a mistake.” It is now virtually impossible to believe anything that he says. It will be incredibly embarrassing for the regional MPs when they try to explain to their communities why the government is using royalties for regions to make up the difference. How can we possibly explain the rationale for using royalties for regions to pay teacher education assistants? How can we explain shifting the entire patient assisted travel scheme into royalties for regions? How do we explain a multistorey car park at the train station in Mandurah so that people can travel to Perth? That is not regional development. The problem is that this government has no commitment to regional development. How do we explain —

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Do you know who uses the Mandurah line? People from Pinjarra, Waroona and —

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** It is to go to Perth.

Several members interjected.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** The opposition is a bit sensitive about it, is it not? The Labor Party made \$5 billion of shiny election commitments and is committed to those, but it will break promises left, right and centre to those who create jobs and do the hard yards in this community. There was no mention of a 50 per cent hike in gold royalties during the campaign or scrapping the royalty-free threshold for gold producers. There was no announcement of a tax on jobs.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** “Jobs not taxes” was the slogan of choice and Labor joined in, sat beside and watched as the Chamber of Minerals and Energy splurged \$4.3 million on slandering the Nationals when we dared to question whether the state’s two most profitable mining companies were paying enough for our finite resources. The Labor Party won the seat of Pilbara off the back of that campaign. Let us not pretend that it was anything else. I am sure that the member for Pilbara is a very nice man.

**Dr A.D. Buti:** You want the Treasurer to break that.

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** I am paying him a compliment. Let us not pretend it was anything else; he is here because the chamber and BHP and Rio Tinto paid \$4.3 million. In contrast, we travelled the state and told people what we were going to do and that we did not believe the heavy lifting should be left to the mums and dads and those who cannot afford it. We were heavily criticised for a policy that would have generated \$7.2 billion. This is the rub. All this pain and misery generates \$3.5 billion through an attack on a job-creating industry by increasing a tax that no-one likes. Both sides of the house for many, many years have criticised payroll tax. Labor’s revenue measures are targeting all the wrong sectors and are generating \$3.5 billion. Conveniently, the argument that any revenue gets distributed away to other states is pushed aside when we start talking about the gold royalty. It just does not apply. I have heard almost the exact argument that we put to the community about the special lease rental or the discussion around increased charges for the two big mining companies coming straight back at us, despite the fact that they railed against it. I cannot figure that out.

We spoke about the fact that the Premier has done a number of backflips. In May 2017, the Premier told a Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia business function that its members might still get the special lease rental of \$7 billion up-front but it will be redistributed to the other states after three to four years. WA will then endure the inevitable downturn in employment that the tax imposes. We have not heard one explanation of why that is any different for the gold sector. It is not. We heard today from the Under Treasurer that 60 per cent of it gets distributed; yet this sector cannot afford it. BHP made \$5.9 billion last financial year. WA accounted for 40 per cent of that revenue. Rio Tinto made \$US3.9 billion in the first six months to 30 June, \$US3.2 billion of which came from the Pilbara; yet this government has let those companies off the hook. Instead, it has targeted the likes of Northern Star Resources and other goldmining companies. Labor has proven with this election that election promises mean nothing unless they are made to BHP and Rio Tinto.

The Nationals will not vote against the appropriation bills. We are not wreckers, as the opposite side has said. When the regulations or the acts that need to be amended come to this Parliament, the Nationals will use the tools that it has at its disposal to oppose those measures. We have had a longstanding position on the gold royalty tax, and we will not support it. We do not agree that the gold royalty tax should be increased. We certainly do not agree

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to an increase in payroll tax. We understand the pressure that the gold sector is under and the pressures that come to bear in those thin margins and on the ability to invest in exploration to continue to grow that sector. We will stand shoulder to shoulder with that sector, unlike Labor, which dumped it like a hot potato as soon as it got to government. It was very convenient. We will not support a tax on jobs. We will help the government fulfil its election commitment to create more jobs by opposing a tax on jobs. That is the position of the Nationals. The Labor Party has a choice to make. As I started to say at the beginning of this contribution, we think it has made the wrong choices. The other choice it could make is to cut back on some of those election commitments. It has shown that it is prepared to break its election commitments. It could cut back on Metronet but it will not do that because the Minister for Transport quite likes standing in front of shiny new stations and getting the shovel out and sticking it in. I think that she is trying to outdo the member in the other place who built the Mandurah–Perth railway line. There is a little bit of competition to see who can outdo the other. That will come at the cost of thousands of jobs and royalties for regions, and businesses being asked to pay more for these vanity projects.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Ms M.J. DAVIES:** There is no restraint from Labor on spending on these projects. It has choices to make. It cannot come to this place and say that we must tighten our belts and that it is going to break all its promises to the organisations that helped to get it here—the mums and dads who voted for them on the promise that they would be looked after. The moment the Labor Party got to government, it said, “We can’t afford that. But we are not going to break our promises on our election commitments because we need to make sure that Metro-debt is delivered.” That is what that is. The Labor Party has raided royalties for regions and it has increased payroll tax. It has hit the gold sector. For some reason, it is unwilling to walk anywhere near the offices of BHP and Rio Tinto. There is a revenue stream of \$7 billion right there waiting to be negotiated but apparently neither the Treasurer nor the Premier are willing to go down that path. We say that they are making the wrong choices. They are choices that will cost jobs and cause pain for households and businesses and will not change a thing when it comes to reducing debt. Their priorities are wrong. The Labor Party came to government without a financial plan.

I want to talk about the fact that there are some seriously wrong priorities in the budget. We talk about these big levers that the government has to pull on. As the member for Central Wheatbelt, I have had some discussions in my electorate. It goes further than my electorate. One of the things that has been cut from royalties for regions is a fund that supported a multitude of small childcare centres right throughout the electorate. The way the funding model is set up from Canberra never worked for our small community centres in regional Western Australia. We simply do not have the numbers. Centres such as Mukinbudin, Trayning and Katanning will never get to critical mass numbers to make that commercial model work. They are run by volunteer mums who want to be able to participate in the workforce and contribute to their communities. It is very hard to make these centres work. We had a funding stream to support them to make sure that they were sustainable and to allow them to innovate. We were working on a project that would put them on a pathway to sustainability, particularly in the wheatbelt, and that has gone. There is no commitment to the mums and dads in regional Western Australia. That has all disappeared. That is very disappointing because I have seen mums and dads and carers crying over the pressures they feel in trying to keep these services open for their communities.

I heard Lee Steele on radio this morning, calling in from Pingelly. The community resource centres have had all their worst fears confirmed. Apparently, a review within the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development is underway but, again, it is a little like the inquiry into regional airfares—apparently the decision has already been made. It gives a backbencher something to do in the interim period. They all know that there will be no funding; there will be cuts. Those community resource centres will disappear unless this government has a change of heart and decides to cut some of its priority projects, like the \$7 million pool that no-one wants or the Bunbury entry statement. Even in the context of the Minister for Regional Development’s comments around petunias, how do we make that decision in the current context when the government is arguing that everyone has to tighten their belts? It beggars belief.

The other major concern in the wheatbelt and great southern is the real cuts to projects for aged care. We are talking about independent living units—\$43 million worth of investment to create housing to allow us to assist in attracting and retaining those people who have made an amazing contribution to building our communities. At a time when the aged require additional care and they need to downsize or stay in their community, they are unable to at the moment because there is no appropriate housing or health facilities. These independent living projects, aged care projects and hostel projects were designed to ensure that we could look after those who have contributed so much. It is also about creating jobs. One of the planks of the Wheatbelt Development Commission’s blueprint was the growth of the aged care sector in terms of jobs and employment for the wheatbelt, but that has all gone. It

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has been pulled out. We had \$43 million. Now they are scrabbling over \$20 million. We cannot make that work. Those projects were already committed to but we are getting a multistorey car park in Mandurah, so it is okay.

We are so incredibly disappointed that, despite all the rhetoric about agriculture, this state government and the Minister for Agriculture and Food did not make one statement about agriculture. Amongst the plethora of media statements that have been pumped out since last Thursday when the budget was brought down—50 or more—not one was about agriculture. There was nothing—nada. Clearly, when the government does not have anything good to say, it does not say it. That is what everyone in the agriculture sector has figured out. That is very disappointing. All we have out of this budget is broken promises and more debt. The Labor Party has some choices to make. We certainly will not be assisting its gold royalty or payroll tax increases. We think they are the wrong choices. The government can make some decisions about spending on Metronet and restoring some of the faith with the regional Western Australian communities who are feeling the brunt of the decision to raid royalties for regions. Shame on all those members from regional Western Australia who stood up and applauded. They have nothing to be proud of in this budget. Their electorates will judge them accordingly.

**MS J.J. SHAW (Swan Hills)** [4.39 pm]: I rise to speak in support of the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. I offer my congratulations to the Treasurer for delivering an absolutely first-class budget.

When I first stood in this place I spoke about three things that I consider to be very important. The first was the importance of strengthening our communities. I also recognised the need to increase the capacity and legitimacy of the ensuring state. Finally, I spoke about the need for industry, community and government to work together to address the challenges we face and to deliver jobs for the future. Those are the three overarching themes of my inaugural speech and all three have been delivered in this budget. This budget is based on four core objectives: strong communities, safer communities and support for families; future jobs and skills, the intent to grow and diversify the economy, create jobs and support skills development; producing better places, a quality environment with liveable and affordable communities; and sustainable finances, responsible financial management and better service delivery. I believe this budget has delivered each and every one of those objectives into my own electorate in Swan Hills and across the state more broadly.

In terms of what the budget has delivered on strong communities, safer communities and support for families in Swan Hills, the initial commitment we delivered was the 24/7 Ellenbrook Police Station, which commenced operations on 24 July. The station was part of a \$6.76 million program to increase staff and upgrade buildings across a range of facilities across the state and to extend not only the opening hours for Ellenbrook Police Station, but also a number of other police stations across the state. The budget also contains the provision of funds for suicide prevention, which is such a significant issue in Swan Hills. It is the leading cause of death for young people aged 15 to 44 years. Suicide prevention community coordinators will be placed in every region in Western Australia, so this program does not just benefit Swan Hills, but I am particularly proud to say that in Swan Hills we secured funding for the delivery of the Young Mens Project into Ellenbrook. Indeed, on Sunday, I was with the Ellenbrook Youth Service to see that project delivered into the community.

In schools, \$465 million will be invested statewide in school infrastructure. I was particularly pleased to see that \$1.75 million will be delivered to Arbor Grove Primary School for a child and parent centre. This will be the first child and parent centre to be delivered into the entire North East Metropolitan Region, and it is long overdue. The budget also incorporates \$12 million for the science in schools policy, which was announced at Gidgegannup Primary School. I was with the Premier at Gidgegannup Primary School during the election to announce the project. Gidgie primary is a great little school. Across the state 200 schools will be eligible to apply for funding under that program and for an additional \$25 000 for equipment to go into those new science classrooms. I am particularly pleased to announce that in Swan Hills we have contributed \$20 000 under the local projects, local jobs program to each and every P&C in my electorate that applied for funding. That will give schools shade sails, playground equipment, electronic signs and nature playgrounds. It is really great to be able to recognise and support the fantastic work being done by the P&C organisations in Swan Hills.

A lot of families are doing it very tough in my community. In fact, Aveley has one of the highest rates of mortgage default in the state. I know that a lot of families in Ellenbrook have been exposed to the fly in, fly out turndown. A lot of people are encountering increasing unemployment, so I was very pleased to see that the budget also contains an additional \$26.3 million to expand the hardship utility grant scheme and the provision of \$5.6 million for financial counselling services for vulnerable families and individuals. This funding will benefit not only people in Swan Hills, but, again, people across Western Australia.

On strong communities, safer communities and support for families we will also deliver local projects, local jobs funding for broader community groups. We will give the Ellenbrook Men's Shed funding to expand that facility,

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which will create a really good place in Ellenbrook for men to come together. We will provide funding to complete the Chidlow and District RSL Memorial. It is a beautiful facility in a part of the world that is very dear to my heart.

We will also fund the upgrading of the Chidlow community hall. My dad built the Chidlow Family Playgroup building 20 years ago, and it is in dire need of an upgrade. It was my absolute pleasure to go to the Chidlow playgroup and have a chat to the people to see what work needs to be done, and then deliver them the funding that they need. Hopefully, my dad is looking down from somewhere on the Chidlow playgroup and is very pleased to see that we are fixing up the work that he began all those years ago.

The second objective underpinning this budget is future jobs and skills to grow and diversify the economy, create jobs and support skills development. Again, some pretty significant commitments have been made to the people of Swan Hills. We have announced a \$425 million destination, marketing and event tourism package. In fact, that was announced in Chidlow at Lake Leschenaultia. I was at the launch with the member for Darling Range—or the candidate for Darling Range as he was in those days—and the Premier. We spent the afternoon at one of the jewels in the crown of the Perth hills, in Chidlow, to announce that destination, marketing and event tourism package. I hope that the package will deliver vibrancy, jobs and growth into the hills. In this budget we also announced \$600 000 of funding to consider the social and economic priorities for the Swan Valley in a Swan Valley development package that will hopefully promote that region's significance as a centre for culture and viticultural tourism. Across the board within the budget there is increased investment into TAFEs. A freeze on TAFE fees will make them more accessible for people. There is a raft of job-creating opportunities associated with state building projects.

The third priority or underpinning philosophical position outlined in the budget is better places, a quality environment with liveable and affordable communities. Again, a raft of commitments were made that are very relevant to Swan Hills. I am not so much a great sporting person, but we are a great sporting electorate. I was very pleased to deliver \$100 000 for the upgrade of the Elsie Austin Oval skate park, which is where the Mount Helena footy team does its training. The skate park is a great place for local kids to run off some steam. The mums usually sit and have maybe a cider or two and the boys are out on the footy field and the kids can knock themselves out on the rejuvenated Elsie Austin Oval skate park. We have also announced upgrades to the State Equestrian Centre in Brigadoon. I have a long affiliation with the equestrian community, as does my family. I am very pleased that we will deliver for my local community the upgrades required at the State Equestrian Centre.

We will give the Gidgegannup Recreation Club \$73 000 for lighting, office and gym equipment. We will give the Eastern Hills Guide and Scout Group \$6 000 for canoes. Finally—this is a really important commitment—we will give the Chidlow Football Club oval \$160 000. I just want to acknowledge that the boys won the Hills Football Association grand final on Sunday. I was thrilled to be there. That team has a very special place in my heart and I say, “Go Cougars. Bring it up the hills!”

This budget priority includes funding for Swan and Canning Rivers community river care fund to the tune of \$300 000 per annum to protect and enhance the ecological and community benefits of the Swan Canning Riverpark. The Swan River runs right through my electorate; it is a core part of what makes it such a beautiful place to live. I was at Noble Falls on Father's Day and the place was absolutely jam-packed despite it being a freezing cold day, reflecting what a popular part of the world it is. The river feeds in through the Wooroloo Brook to the Swan Valley. It is important that we look after the Swan catchment. Of course, Bells Rapids, which runs through Brigadoon, is also located in the electorate. It is an absolutely gorgeous place. I am very proud that we will deliver money to protect the Swan River.

Fire significantly impacts people in Swan Hills. We will deliver \$5.5 million for prescribed burning to reduce bushfire risk ensuring that lands under the state government's care are managed to protect communities, visitors and built and natural assets. This is really important. I was actually twice evacuated during the Parkerville bushfires; firstly, from my own house, where I packed my fur babies into my car and went to my mum's, and when the wind changed direction we were then evacuated from Chidlow. Every summer, if we look up into the hills and see a plume of smoke rising, the first thought that enters our minds is: Is it near someone I love? Is it near my house? Effectively addressing bushfire management risk is so important to people in Swan Hills. I acknowledge that this will significantly allay a lot of people's concerns about fire management in the hills. Locally, I was particularly proud to obtain funding of \$10 000 for the equipment needed by each local bush fire brigade in my electorate. Probably nobody is better positioned to understand the needs of the teams on the ground than the teams themselves. I have really enjoyed the collaborative nature in which the Swan Hills volunteer bush fire brigade associations have worked with me. They are fantastic guys, and I am very proud to support them.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 12 September 2017]

p3773a-3819a

Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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I note that the budget includes funding for ongoing work on the drafting of the emergency services bill. I look forward to clarification of how agency and stakeholder responsibilities for the prevention, mitigation and response to emergencies will be implemented.

A number of commitments were made on transport in Swan Hills. Firstly, under our local projects, local jobs commitment, we have allowed \$138 500 for bus shelters across Swan Hills. We have also introduced the east–west bus link, which finally connects Ellenbrook, Joondalup and Midland. That is part of an \$8.3 million spend over four years for additional Transperth services. Great Eastern Highway will also be upgraded around Bilgoman Road. There is a \$70 million commitment to upgrade Reid Highway from Altone Road to West Swan Road and to put in a dual carriageway. That will considerably alleviate commute times for people in Ellenbrook. NorthLink WA will also incorporate a \$1.1 billion spend on the Swan Valley bypass and the Tonkin Highway grade separations. That will deliver jobs and growth into Bullsbrook. On Toodyay Road, we will see upgrades to Roland Road east to Toodyay. This is one of the top 10 most dangerous stretches of road in the country. I traverse it every day, and the Stoneville Road–Reen Road and O'Brien Road–Roland Road intersections are absolute deathtraps. We will also look to upgrade Lord Street. The Reid Highway duplication project has been assigned \$49 million, which includes earthworks for Metronet and works at the Ellenbrook train station site. Despite comments made, we have actually started work on that project. I was particularly pleased to see \$22.1 million of planning funding set aside for the Morley–Ellenbrook line, which will allow the completion of a detailed business case for the whole Morley–Ellenbrook project. We are trying to maximise the value of this significant project point. It will unlock the north-east corridor and it —

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** This is a Parliament. Some members are seeking some clarification as to points being made, but the member seems to be reading so fast now that she is not even paying attention to the chamber —

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr T.J. Healy):** Members!

**Ms A. Sanderson:** You're pathetic!

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Thank you. I will call you to order, member for Joondalup. It is not a point of order, but the member with the call can take interjections if she seeks to. There is a convention not to read from notes. Is the member speaking from notes?

**Ms J.J. Shaw:** I am referring to my notes as I speak.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** You are referring to notes; I do apologise. Thank you.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** The Morley–Ellenbrook line will unlock the north-east corridor. It is very important that it is planned well. This may be an alien concept to those opposite, but in my past life I had quite a significant degree of familiarity with PMBOK—the “Project Management Body of Knowledge”—and quite a significant degree of exposure to project management methodology. I learnt from a few of the Jedi masters of project management methodology. Broadly, there are five stages to projects—initiate, plan, execute, control and close. We initiated the Morley–Ellenbrook project in the election. We are now planning that project. Part of the process is to plan, and the work must be done. I appreciate that project management methodology may be an alien concept to some opposite, but they should see whether they can keep up, nonetheless. We are in the planning stage of this strategically significant project. Once a business case has been developed and the detailed costings have been done, they will be submitted and the project will be executed. We will deliver that project. We will control the costs, timing and delivery of key milestones under that project—that seems to be somewhat of a shortcoming around the project methodology adopted by those opposite—and then we will close that project because we are focused on delivering.

Contained within the budget are a few other exciting things that are not necessarily directly relevant to the electorate of Swan Hills, but I think they are noteworthy nonetheless. I really look forward to seeing the Public Utilities Office's intention to roll out reforms to the institutional arrangements and governance structures in the wholesale electricity market. I think that is long overdue and very exciting. I note that Synergy has \$23.3 million for capability and system enhancement works that will support the development of new products and services. Again, that is a really exciting innovation. Most importantly, if we look at what Western Power is doing, it has recognised that its customers' needs are changing, the industry is changing and the market dynamics are on the

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move. It is moving away from a centralised energy industry model towards a far more decentralised model with new providers, new services and new products coming in. This will transform network planning. We will need tailored energy solutions. I am very excited to see that Western Power has incorporated financing in its budget to allow it to look at distributed energy, micro-grids, battery trials, and electric vehicles. This will produce new forms of value in the network. It will be facilitated by the Public Utilities Office's reform agenda. It creates new jobs and new economic opportunities, and it can only be facilitated by our ongoing ownership of those assets. It was a bloody good policy that we took to the election to not sell Western Power.

Several members interjected.

**Ms J.J. SHAW:** The final objective outlined in the state budget is to raise sustainable finances and undertake responsible financial management. A comprehensive budget repair strategy has been introduced, including expenditure reprioritisation. But I will hark back to my maiden speech, when I stated —

Corporations should take risks and be legitimately rewarded for it, but they also have a duty to support their community. They should contribute a fair share of taxation, pay royalties for the sale of the Western Australian people's natural resources

I also stated that government and industry —

... exist and depend on one another in a symbiotic relationship sharing both rights and responsibilities.

I also stated —

... concepts such as mutual support, shared objectives and collective responsibility are highly relevant to the functioning of the state and the market, and that the only way we will be able to achieve anything for Western Australia is through the joint efforts of government and industry.

Now is the time for us to do that and to put our collective shoulders to the wheel. The public sector will contribute 50 per cent of the heavy lifting to get our budget back on track and government trading enterprises will contribute 13.5 per cent. Back in June, households were asked to contribute nine per cent. I think it is more than reasonable and legitimate that we ask the resources and corporate sector to contribute. I do not think that is unreasonable. We all have to contribute. In these challenging circumstances it has never been more important for us to do so. The budget strengthens my community. It charts a solid course for economic recovery, but it requires joint effort, including from those who created the problem. I recommend the budget to the house.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** I would just like to make one clarification. Earlier, I called to order the member for Joondalup; I did in fact mean the member for Morley.

**MR W.R. MARMION (Nedlands)** [4.59 pm]: I am not the lead speaker for the opposition. I begin by thanking the Under Treasurer, Michael Barnes, and his staff for their presentation to members of Parliament at lunchtime. As the member for Nedlands, I was not surprised when I went through the budget looking for some areas where my electorate might have got some funding and I could not find anything. My electorate will be very disappointed.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Check out the ministers who live within the golden triangle.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** They have disappeared. They used to be there, but they have gone to their electorate—Swanbourne.

**Mr T.J. Healy:** I've got it here, member for Nedlands—at Kitchener Park in Subiaco, a new inner-city college, and Shenton College as well. You've got some great things going on.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Excellent. That is good.

One of the things that my electorate would have looked forward to in the budget is underground power. A lot of work has been done on underground power.

Several members interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Madam Acting Speaker, we did not interject when members opposite were talking.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms S.E. Winton):** Thank you, members. I will start calling. Let us hear from the member for Nedlands.

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

Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Armadale, I call you to order.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** It is very unlikely that the Labor Party will fund any underground power in my electorate, particularly as it will not sell Western Power. I am not looking forward to that. The Barnett government did a lot of work on Sunset Hospital. It sat stagnant for decades, but under the Barnett government it became a presentable and terrific place to visit. It needs to be utilised as a community centre, and the Labor government needs to support it like the Liberal government did.

The other thing that people in my electorate look forward to is changes to Stirling Highway, which is a very dangerous road. It is dual carriageway and very hard for people to cross, particularly with the amount of traffic. We are looking forward to the Minister for Transport in this term of government looking at Stirling Highway for places to put pedestrian underpasses because it is a very dangerous road. That is something I look forward to seeing the Minister for Transport progress in the next four years.

I want to make a few comments on the budget as the shadow Minister for Health; Mental Health. The interesting thing about the health budget is that it does not have much in it; it is what I would call a very spartan budget. A lot of spending has been slashed. Page 113 of budget paper No 3, *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, shows the major spending changes since the *2016–17 Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*. The highlight is non-hospital service expenditure. The spending change for the 2017–18 budget is a reduction of \$91 million. The reduction in 2018–19 is \$334.8 million and in the 2019–20 financial year it is \$304.6 million. In the out year of 2020–21, the reduction is \$246.4 million. That is nearly \$1 billion of reductions in non-hospital service expenditure over the forward estimates. I am going to get lots of letters, particularly from the non-hospital sector and not-for-profits that support the health industry. That massive reduction will cut their services. I will have lots of concerned areas, as will members opposite. Service providers across every electorate will ring up members and send letters wanting to meet to find out how they can re-establish some of the funds that will disappear.

**Mr D.T. Punch** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I am sure that in the estimates committee hearings we will be able to ask what reductions will happen in Bunbury.

I will go through some of Labor's election commitments, which, fortunately, are spelled out nicely in the budget. It is a well-presented document in terms of how few election commitments there are. During the election campaign, Labor promised \$16.1 million for a specialised drug treatment centre in the south west. There is nothing for that in the budget. It promised \$16.1 million for a specialised drug treatment centre in the Kimberley, but there is nothing in the budget. Correction: there is \$0.2 million for planning the one in the Kimberley. Well done to the Kimberley! The member for Kimberley has done very well. Labor promised \$2.2 million for a Collie Hospital rebuild—nothing. It committed \$3 million for an MRI scanner in Kalgoorlie, which was raised in question time, I think, last week. The commitment in the budget is nothing. It committed \$0.432 million to Wanneroo recovery college —

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** What about Midland train station—\$28 million?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I am the shadow Minister for Health; Mental Health. I am specifically talking about health election commitments, member.

The Wanneroo recovery college was promised \$0.432 million. The budget has nothing. An Aboriginal medihotel was promised \$0.52 million. The budget has nothing. Fiona Stanley Hospital was promised an extra \$24.7 million. The budget has nothing. Royal Perth Hospital was promised \$40.4 million. The budget has nothing. A press release was put out in recent weeks about Joondalup Hospital. How much is in the budget forward estimates? Nothing. Members opposite promised \$21.2 million for Osborne Park Hospital. The budget has nothing. The member for Bunbury will be very interested in this one. Bunbury Hospital was promised an upgrade to 200 beds at a cost of \$10.8 million. The budget has nothing. Geraldton Hospital was promised \$16.3 million. The budget has nothing. The member for Collie–Preston is not here. I understand that Collie is doing well with expenditure in lots of other portfolios, but Collie Hospital was promised \$12.2 million and there is nothing in the budget.

I do not want to be totally negative. I support some things. I am very pleased that there will be a step up, step down mental health facility in Kalgoorlie. The member for Kalgoorlie will be very pleased with that. I am sure that the member for Bunbury, the member for Pilbara and the member for Mandurah will be very pleased that step up, step down mental health facilities will go into Bunbury and Karratha, and a \$5 million youth medical health service hub has been announced for Peel. Two capital areas are very disappointing. One is medihotels, which was a strongly promulgated promise by the Labor Party in the election. I will quote from the Labor platform, which states —

Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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If regional patients are transferred to a medihotel for their last two days of their hospital stay:

- **54 tertiary beds would be freed up every day in 2017–18.**

I could not find any funds in 2017–18 to provide those beds. It also states —

- **5,262 more patients could be treated in our hospitals each year.**

I am assuming that the cuts to non-hospital service expenditure may have been transferred to “Hospital Services—Revise Activity and Cost Settings”. Maybe that money includes some extra services that the medihotels might free up.

The final item I want to talk about in the health budget is urgent-care clinics, which sound very good. It was another strong Labor election commitment to free up emergency departments. People are to be triaged out of emergency departments into urgent-care clinics, which are to be set up, possibly in medical centres, saving the government lots of money because people who do not seriously need emergency care can go into urgent-care clinics. An amount of \$2 million has been allocated for this big-ticket item—urgent-care clinics. I understand that is for planning and consultation. This is going outside my shadow portfolio responsibilities, but that can be compared with what the government is spending in the education portfolio, which you know a lot about, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms S.E. Winton). The Labor government has managed to find \$31.7 million over four years to support selected level 3 teachers to mentor and share knowledge with less experienced teachers. That is commendable. However, when the government can find only \$2 million for urgent-care clinics, I must question its priorities.

Before I close on the book work, very conveniently, at pages 130 and 131 of budget paper No 2, the Treasurer and Under Treasurer set out the asset investment program for WA Health. That is a fairly useful piece of information. The estimated total cost of the asset investment program is \$6.3 billion. That includes works in progress, completed works and new works. Some of those projects were put in place by the previous government and are yet to be completed. The 2017–18 budget estimate for that program is \$653 million. The sad thing is that when we look at the forward estimates for capital expenditure—in the context of \$6.3 billion for existing projects—we see that in 2018–19, there is an allocation of \$341 million; in 2019–20, there is a massive \$72 million; and in 2020–21, it increases by \$9 million to \$81.374 million.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** They might be able to build one of those rail stations by then, I think!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** They might be able to build maybe one and a half rail stations out of that. They will not be able to build any railcars for that amount of money. It will cost more to set up the infrastructure to build the railcars.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I move now to Perth Children’s Hospital. Conveniently, because we basically have two children’s hospitals running at the same time —

**Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I will get on to that in a minute. An amount of \$18.3 million of recurrent expenditure has been allocated for cost overruns at Perth Children’s Hospital. I asked the Under Treasurer at lunchtime about whether this amount of \$18.3 million is dependent on when the hospital will open, and he said this figure is based on the hospital opening on 1 January 2018. Therefore, if the opening time goes past that date, more money will need to be allocated to that hospital. There will unquestionably be a dispute about the delivery of the hospital by the contractor, John Holland, particularly about variation orders and the lead contamination in the water. I cannot see in the budget papers—perhaps the Treasurer could point it out to me—any provision for a contingent liability on this \$1 billion project. I assume the Treasurer and the Minister for Health believe that 100 per cent of the liability for the lead contamination will fall on the contractor.

**Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski:** You were the minister for it!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** Actually, I was not the Minister for Health at the time. In fact, on 16 May 2017, I asked the Treasurer question on notice 39. It was a simple question —

In regard to the Building Commissioner’s report on the new Children’s Hospital that highlighted two possible sources of lead contamination in the water supply:

- (a) will the fire hydrants be tested for lead content;
- (b) what testing has been done ...

Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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The Treasurer could not help himself, just as government members now cannot help themselves. The Treasurer gave this preamble to my very simple question —

I thank the member for his sudden concern about the lead problem at the Perth Children's Hospital. It must be said this concern didn't seem apparent when the hospital was first delayed from its original opening date in 2015, nor when the former Premier guaranteed an opening in 2016. As a former engineer and Member of the Cabinet of the previous Government it would appear the Member was silent ...

It goes on and on. I was not the Minister for Health at the time.

**Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski:** You were in cabinet!

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** In 2015, water had not been connected to the hospital. How could we inquire about lead in the water at the hospital when water had not been put on at the hospital? It is just ridiculous.

**Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I cannot hear what the member is saying, and I am not interested, member.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Kingsley, I would like to hear from the member for Nedlands.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I want to build a chronology about the lead contamination in the water. The member for Kingsley might want to pay attention to what I say. The Building Commissioner put out a report this year about the lead contamination. I have to say, hand on heart, that it was news to me. I had no idea there was a dead leg. I cannot believe that people think that the only person who did not know that there was a dead leg was the then Treasurer. I did not know. I was in cabinet! I should know everything that is happening in Western Australia! I should have known that a piece of pipe was buried under the ground in my electorate, because I was a member of cabinet. But, guess what? I did not know until the Building Commissioner released his report earlier this year. It was a surprise to me and every member on this side of Parliament that nine metres from the inlet to Perth Children's Hospital was a dead leg—a 54-metre long, 300-millimetre diameter water pipe that had been there for 50 years. I will show members a picture of the pipe. It shows that the pipe was full of gunk. I am surprised that when this was discovered, a briefing note was not put to the minister, the Treasurer and cabinet. However, I can tell members that there was no such note. The first I knew about it was when the Building Commissioner put out his report.

I want to give members some interesting figures about the water testing in that dead leg. The water testing showed that the lead content was 0.282 milligrams per litre. The Australian Standards design guideline is 0.01 milligrams per litre. That is 28 times the Australian design guideline. The other point I want to make is that the iron content was 530 times the recommended Standards Australia's design level for iron in a pipe. In his report, the Western Australian Building Commissioner—I will not quote him exactly—made the point that when the water was going into the new Perth Children's Hospital in January 2016—that date is important; think about that—pressure in the pipeline dropped and, as his report states, it had a propensity to suck sludge or other contaminants in the ring main and the dead leg, which is only nine metres away in a direct line of the flow of the ring main. The Building Commissioner's report did not categorically say where the lead in the contaminants came from but he mentioned four possibilities, including leaching of lead-brass fittings, but did not rule out—in fact, made the point—that it was highly likely that some of the gunk that included lead and certainly a lot of iron, as well as lots of other metals, could have been and probably was sucked into the pipes in the new Perth Children's Hospital. That was in January 2016. Amazingly, someone thought, "Oh, there is a dead leg." I do not know where that thought came from; I am guessing it came from the medical board at Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre. It was suggested that from a precautionary point of view, the dead leg should be cut off.

**Ms M.M. Quirk:** Amputate it.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** That is right; amputate it. It was not amputated; it was sealed in case someone wanted to use it. A lot of flushing out would be needed if someone wanted to use it. That was done in September 2016—many, many months ago. The water was going into the pipes in the Perth Children's Hospital, which is not operational—the water was sitting there. Think about that because it will be important when I get to another point shortly. The water feeds in during January. It is highly likely it sucked a whole lot of lead, a massive amount of iron and lots of other contaminants. Where will that end up? When it is flushed into the large diameter inlet pipes of the children's hospital, eventually when the taps are opened, all that gunk will flow into the smaller, half-inch brass fittings with the 90-degree bends. That is where it will end up. That is my hypothesis and what I think is reasonable to suggest. If the gunk sits in brass fittings for a long time, it is very likely oxidation will occur and electrolysis will establish in the water. If a high content of iron is in the water, let alone the sampled lead, the iron

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 12 September 2017]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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in the water creates more electrolysis in the leaching of possible lead and zinc out of the water because of the ionisation in the water, which is called electrolysis.

That sets the scene. What happens? Once the dead leg has been cut off, a lot of testing and flushing is done. Eventually, a very good report was prepared by the Chief Health Officer. It is pretty scientific—there was some criticism of some of the testing procedure—and the test areas were all randomly sampled. The Chief Health Officer gets a very big tick for deciding to put a bit of science around the water testing in the hospital. I can tell members that prior to the Chief Health Officer's more scientific approach, if all the samples were collected and all the lead was added, divided by the volume of water, we would find that, on average, the lead in all the water samples would be compliant with the Standards Australia guidelines. Prior to the Chief Health Officer's scientific review, information was provided to me by a retired water engineer with some 50 years' experience. He added all the samples and came up with the suggestion that the testing regime was incorrect; the guidelines refer to the average of samples not just specific samples, and it is important to understand that technically.

I refer now to the Chief Health Officer's review. The Chief Health Officer randomly designated locations around the hospital, but he did not work out how to randomly take the sample when the water was tested. That is a criticism.

**Mrs J.M.C. Stojkovski:** Will you take an interjection?

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** I do not have time; I have four minutes. I will talk to the member afterwards. I have lots more to do. In this report, a table on page 40 sets out all the samples in a histogram, for those people who know histograms. The Chief Medical Officer said that when he gets 95 percentile of all test samples, he ticked off on the water.

**Mr M. Hughes** interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** There is someone who understands science. This is a histogram—the “iron person” in the room can understand it.

Several members interjected.

**Mr W.R. MARMION:** The average lead content in all those samples conforms. It is 0.008 milligrams per litre. The result is in here from a different sampling technique. One could suggest that this histogram is based on the worst possible case of a highly skewed sampling technique.

I have a report provided to me by a retired engineer of some 40 years' experience, with 30 years in the United States commissioning buildings, which I will not have time to read. He says that since January 2017, all the water in the Perth Children's Hospital has been compliant based on the Standards Australia guidelines and based on average measurements. We cannot claim that cherry-picked samples do not comply with a specific guideline. The guideline is based on the average water consumption over a day. If that sort of technique is used, random samples must be taken. One cannot say, “I will run the tap for X seconds and leave it for X minutes and take a sample and flow it at 0.7 of a second rather than seven metres a second, which is the normal way. The sampling technique could be criticised in a number of ways.

I do not want to rely on just this retired water engineer's report which, by the way the Water Corporation, the Department of Health and the Department of Water have had for three months. That engineer has had positive feedback from people down the ladder but not up the ladder. When I studied for my Master of Business Administration, a very good statistical professor, Dr Jim Everett, critiqued both the civil engineer's report and the Chief Health Officer's report and basically said there was nothing wrong with the Chief Health Officer's report but he said, and I quote —

This conclusion depends on the very stringent assumption that patient consumption is equivalent to drinking four 250 cups of water daily from the same tap, each cup drawn immediately after the tap had been standing unused for 30 minutes.

He has not criticised the Chief Health Officer, but he has suggested that a very stringent sampling technique was used for the review. The report done by someone with six degrees, including from Cambridge University and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, states that the water in the Perth Children's Hospital is okay and we can open the hospital.

**MR D.T. REDMAN (Warren-Blackwood)** [5.30 pm]: I will comment from the perspective of regional Western Australia on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 and this disastrous budget. I want to make some global comments on the aggregates, but also some more direct comments on regional Western Australia where National Party members reside and represent. It was no surprise to see the budget aggregates on page 9 of the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook* and the state of the net operating balance in the out years. It does not return to surplus until the fourth year of the forward estimates. We

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also see what is happening with net debt given the position of investment in capital items that the current government has brought to book.

The Labor Party has exactly the same issue that we had. I find it interesting that in opposition it commented on our aggregates as they came out, particularly the last three or four—I am talking about the midyear review at the end of last year, the 2016–17 budget and even the previous budget and midyear review—and now it has the same issue that we had. Every time we would go back and look at the aggregates, there was a shift in the parameters around iron ore prices and exchange rates and all those things that affect our budget. There were also changes in the business levels of consumption and investment that flowed through to consumer confidence and, therefore, all those transactional taxes that government picks up. I remember vividly that probably the last three or four times we went back and looked at that, the dial had moved. Suddenly, we had lost in the revenue cycle of budget half a billion dollars or, in some cases, almost a billion in the forward estimates. That made it very difficult. The opposition said that we should have known and been able to predict it.

Labor went to the election with what we had at the end of last year—the midyear review and the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*—and it did not predict or see the \$5 billion loss over the forward estimates. I guess we did not either because we did not have the information at hand. But if we were to use the same argument that it used against us, we would be saying it should have known that. The government knew the budget numbers from the end of last year and, in my view, it has overcommitted going into the budget even if it did not lose that revenue of \$5 billion in the forward estimates. That highlights what was part of a number of the speeches on this side when we came into this new term and talked about the fundamental structural issue or challenge in the budget in Western Australia—that is, our volatile sources of revenue and the impact of that on the GST revenue that flows through to us. Therein lies the issue. Unless that fundamentally changes, it is very challenging to run a budget. The Labor Party needs to accept criticism from us that it knew this, because it ran the same sort of argument against us. I have some sympathy for the environment in which the government finds itself. Every time we go back and look at the numbers, we see that some of the revenue has been washed out over the forward estimates and that makes it very difficult.

It was highlighted to me today that we took to the election the notion of looking at another source of revenue. The criticism was, “Well, what’s the point because whatever we raise out of the iron ore miners, in time 90 per cent is washed away to the federal government in the GST calculations?” In the environment now, particularly before the next federal election, we could secure some sort of quarantining of any new revenue source in Western Australia from the federal government. We would not affect any of the GST fundamentals, but we could find some sort of agreement with the federal government to quarantine a new revenue source to try to support the Western Australian budget. The federal government seems to be trying to find ways of doing it without it affecting them electorally on the east coast. The government might consider that on the back of its gold royalty. In that case, some 60 per cent gets washed out over time. It is a new revenue stream to the state and, although I do not agree with that as a source, the government may seek some sort of outcome to quarantine that new revenue.

I asked question on notice 1667 when I was trying to find the numbers around the \$238 million, which is what the government will raise over the forward estimates from power and water price increases. I wanted to know what the increase in the special lease rental charge would have to be to raise \$238 million. In other words, by how much would we need to raise the 25c a tonne charge, which we talked about in the lead-up to the election, to raise \$238 million? I asked the government to give me two figures. I asked it to give me a figure that excluded the GST wash-out over time and a figure that included the GST wash-out. If we did not include the GST in the calculation, we would need to increase the charge to 40 cents a tonne. If we increased the charge from 25c to 40 cents a tonne, without the long-term impact of GST, we would raise \$238 million. If we could achieve that in Western Australia over the forward estimates, we would not have to put up power and water bills. This is the clincher and this is why we have a structural challenge. If we include GST in the calculation, over the forward estimates we would have to increase the special lease rental charge to \$4.33 a tonne. The special lease rental charge would have to increase from 25c a tonne to \$4.33 to collect a net of \$238 million across the forward estimates. That shows the challenges that we face with the structural issues with the GST carve-up in Western Australia. The system is flawed. Unless we get some sort of redress on that, every time we look at these budgets, it will be extremely challenging.

During the debate on the matter of public interest, I commented that I viewed the Labor Party’s position in this budget as a breach of trust. The Leader of the National Party quite rightly pointed out that it is about choices. A number of options could be chosen to take different paths. We on this side of the house will prosecute those choices as we see fit. Increasing power and water prices was not in the budget because they had already been put in place. That was a breach of trust with the electorate because on the back of the “Do not sell Western Power” campaign, there was a fear campaign that if we did, power prices would go up. It was a hot issue for people living

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in Western Australia. What happens at the first turn? Power prices went up by 11 per cent and water prices went up by six per cent. I will come back to water prices in a moment because there is a bit of gouging going on there.

We do not agree with the gold tax. We took a position to the election that we did not support that, so it makes sense that we maintain that position. The government has some alternative options, not the least of which is to look at some of the commitments that it made in the election that it might want to break. Instead of breaking the election commitment on the gold tax, why not break an election commitment and take a bit of railway line from that Metronet plan? The government could easily make that decision.

I was interested to find out that the payroll tax will raise about \$435 million over the forward estimates period, which is about \$135 million to \$155 million a year. I was interested in how much that payroll tax will impact upon the big miners, BHP and Rio Tinto. If we talk about the corporate entities sharing the load of the fiscal challenge in Western Australia, we ask: what is the contribution from BHP and Rio Tinto as a result of the change in the payroll tax arrangements? I am told that they will contribute to about a fifth of the \$130 million or \$150 million a year. That is about \$30 million a year. As far as I can ascertain, BHP and Rio Tinto will contribute an extra \$30 million a year through the new payroll tax arrangements. That is a rounding error for BHP and Rio Tinto. To prosecute an argument that the big corporates in the state are sharing the load, which is the fundamental platform that the Labor Party is bringing to this budget, is wrong when we apply it to those big miners. That is why we do not believe that it is appropriate to prosecute this “sharing the load” argument if what they are paying finishes up being a rounding error.

I follow on from the remarks of the Leader of the National Party in and around choices. I was quite proud of the Liberal–National government’s eight and a half years in government. We supported a position that fundamentally put a significant resource back into regional Western Australia. It was a decentralised focus on trying to build and grow the regions. Other states have many big internal centres with between 200 000 and 300 000 people. The next biggest centre outside Mandurah—I struggle to accept the arguments of the Minister for Local Government—is Bunbury with 60 000 people. We go from two million people in metropolitan Perth down to about 60 000 beyond where the railway line finishes. That is not right in the long term. We have to start having a very proactive policy because it will not happen unless we drive it. We need proactive policies that support the growth and development of regional Western Australia. It is a big generator of wealth for our state. We need a decentralised focus that achieves that. Royalties for regions was targeted to do that. The Labor Party committed to it going into the election. I thought it would be great if it was going to adhere to this position in principle. We have in place a policy position—it is legislated—and each commission has some blueprints that are now embedded in the state planning policies to work out where we invest to make the next opportunities arise. The Liberal–National government set up the framework for that to occur and put that in place. Now we are seeing this program being absolutely gutted. I asked the Treasurer about it today and I talked a bit about it in today’s matter of public interest debate. Although the immediate signals in the budget reflect a 20 per cent cut in royalties for regions by substituting a number of measures, in time that will turn into a cut of over 40 per cent in the royalties for regions program—freed up for the consolidated account to build the metropolitan railway line in Perth.

I will go through those four items because they make up the lion’s share of that \$861 million. The first one is the regional water subsidy. That subsidy is in place to allow for regional Western Australians—consumers—to have a uniform pricing tariff with metropolitan Perth. If we did not do that, we would have to pay what it costs to supply that water. I will give the example of my home town. It costs about \$4 a kilolitre to deliver water to a user in Denmark. In Perth, it is about 60c or something like that. To have a uniform pricing tariff of \$1.38 or whatever it is these days, we have this subsidy paid. To me, that is a fundamental subsidy in and around equity for those who live in the part of the state where we cannot deliver something in a cost efficient way that we would like to deliver.

The patient assisted travel scheme is a basic health responsibility to access services in the best hospitals we have in Western Australia for those who can ill-afford them. Again, we supported the proposal to increase that subsidy. Some royalties for regions money was allocated to that scheme. It needed to pick up another \$35 million a year to support what in our view is a basic right for those who live in regional Western Australia, in some isolated areas, to be able to afford to access the health services they need.

The TAFE subsidy costs some \$44 million a year and supports regional students to attend TAFE to build up, train and support their skills to engage in the workforce.

The fourth item related to remote communities. The Minister for Housing made a couple of comments about this, saying that the federal government pulled it away. I do not agree with his commentary on it but he is absolutely right in saying that the federal government left us stranded. We did not have too many choices about this. Of course, royalties for regions is picking up the essential services. If I was to pick one that I could support, that is

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probably one that I could support. I cannot support the others because they are basic fundamental equity issues for people in Western Australia around access to essential services such as water, health and training. It has been rolled into the budget. That will not stop in budgets to come. We are effectively looking at taking out 40 per cent of a program that was designed to grow and develop regional Western Australia. I had some comments to make about remote communities towards the end that I will probably pick up now. It is pleasing to see funds in the budget, and I believe that the Minister for Housing is leading on that now. Although it has been playing musical chairs for a while, the Minister for Housing has taken the lead on that remote community work. From what I have seen in the budget, the special fund that was put aside is being used to support upgrades in those communities. It was used to support housing and the Kimberley schools project. I am pleased about that because I believe what we put in place and started has to span governments. The minister will have my full support, including public commentary, as long as we hold the integrity of that program. What I have seen so far suggests that that is happening, including feedback I have had from outside this place.

I will be interested in whether some of those housing investments have mutual obligations attached to them. The transitional housing program is a very good example of that. Rather than build social housing, we should build houses that are occupied by at least one person who has a job and kids attending school. That has to be the obligation part of the deal to get it in place. There are very good examples in the East Kimberley, Halls Creek and now Derby and Broome. As long as those obligations are part of the mix and we get kids going to school, we will have some fundamental issues to deal with over time. I complement the government on the remote community work. It is keeping the programs in place. Hopefully, we will see that preserved and hopefully shift the dial. We would all like to see that.

I am a little concerned about roads. The Liberal–National government funded roads through royalties for regions but it funded roads that would never get up against the normal approach that Main Roads and others take to prioritise road investments. One of those was the perimeter road in Margaret River, which will cost \$60 million. If we went to Main Roads and asked what it would do with \$60 million—in fact, the member for Bunbury would know this—it would not build that road. Is it a good investment for one of our communities that is iconic from a tourism perspective? That is there. The other one is the line route. The good member for Moore supports line routes, which is for traffic east–west up to the north of Perth. That was supported by royalties for regions. Indeed, there is some money in this budget. Again, that is supported. For commodity routes to support those local governments that do not have the resource base to support road improvement, we had \$48 million. That is down to \$10 million. Again, that is an appropriate investment for royalties for regions. It is disappointing that funding for the Wiluna–Meekatharra road is being reviewed. The funding that was set aside would have bitumenised or sealed the last piece of road to connect Kalgoorlie, working its way north to the Pilbara. If that road was sealed, it would have closed the last link —

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** What is the length?

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** I cannot remember the length of it. It would have cost \$60 million. Local governments were going to do it themselves. From a jobs and local engagement perspective, that is fantastic. Its costings were significantly less than that of Main Roads for the same job. We worked through processes to ensure that the outcome would be robust. We have not seen that here and I think that is a damn shame. It is an appropriate investment from an economic development perspective because the traffic that increasingly goes from Kalgoorlie up to the Pilbara region would have been supported with a little bit of bitumenising. RforR funding would have been absolutely appropriate. I am a little concerned about where the road budget is going but the new government will have its priorities.

I talked about the Water Corporation earlier in the MPI. The Minister for Water used to run pretty hard on us about what he described as the Water Corp being a cash cow. The net accrual to government is on page 296 of the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*. For those new members, the net accrual to government nets out the dividends, the tax equivalents and the local government rate equivalents against operating subsidies that the Water Corp gets, and basically the government finishes up with \$443 million in its pocket in 2017–18. If that is not a cash cow, I will go “Hee.” It is significantly higher than the \$200-odd million that we had when we were in government as a net accrual to government. On top of that, we have the electricity corporations. Net accrual to government across those corporations is \$256 million. Nearly three-quarters of a billion dollars coming from the Water Corporation and the electricity corporation is net accrual to government. It finishes up in governments’ pockets partly thanks to mums and dads who have an increased tariff in both counts. I find that amazing.

What is more, we are seeing bullying tactics from the Minister for Regional Development now—bullying local governments that have had funds approved by the previous government. We might not agree with them.

**Extract from Hansard**

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[Member's time extended.]

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** Those funds are put into a Western Australian Treasury Corporation account to be acquitted. There is a signed financial assistance agreement and the minister is out there bullying those local governments and other proponents outside the local government space to give some back.

**Mr R.S. Love:** All approved by cabinet.

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** They have been approved by cabinet.

**Mr T.J. Healy:** Business case?

**Mr D.T. REDMAN:** Absolutely; every one of them had a business case, and every one of them went through cabinet the second time it was looked at. It was the most scrutinised piece of government. It went through and was approved, and the state government signed a financial assistance agreement with these proponents, and whether it was a local government, a local community group, a university, or whatever it might have been in the regions, that money went into a Treasury Corporation account. As far as these accounts are concerned, it is acquitted, so we do not often see them in these numbers. It goes into a Treasury Corporation account to be acquitted, and the minister is going and bullying them into giving some back. I got that firsthand. I am not going to say who it is, but it is firsthand, and I find that deplorable. If we are talking about breaking contracts, these are the smallest people on the block—poking a big finger at these little groups out in the regions and demanding they give some money back, despite there being a contract in place. That is the feedback we are getting out there. I am extremely disappointed with that.

The Leader of the National Party made some really good points about the nature of the campaign that the Labor Party ran in the election. It said it would do a better job spending the money from royalties for regions. It would put the money where it was going to count, and where it would make a difference. I responded to the media yesterday when I got a call about Laverton Hospital. There was a commitment through the WA Country Health Service of \$19 million to upgrade that hospital, and it has been pulled. The local nurses and practitioners working in that hospital said that it was fundamentally ill-equipped to deliver the standards of medical care that we expect these days. That grant has been pulled. What do we get for \$19 million? We get a multistorey car park in Mandurah. That might be good for the member for Mandurah, but Laverton Hospital, which was described by the people who work there as ill-equipped to meet the medical needs of the community, loses an upgrade of its facility. If that is doing a job better, then someone is on the wrong planet.

Although there will be an upgrade of the Collie swimming pool, not that long ago the previous Minister for Sport and Recreation was down there launching the investment that the previous government had made in the pool. It has had an upgrade, but it is now getting a bit more. It must be getting something over the top, and a couple of electrodes to heat it up a bit. We do not know what is going on, but it has just had an upgrade, and had money injected into it. Of course, it is back on the agenda for some reason. There is another pool on the agenda that the local community did not want. This notion of the government doing a better job with this program seems to have been blown out of the water after a very cursory glance at this budget. It is very complicated to work through in two or three days, but a cursory glance picks up this stuff. The government has a lot of work to do to build up credibility in its approach to regional investments that a cursory glance at this budget reveals it is coming up significantly short on.

There are about 122 community resource centres around the state, providing a shopfront for government services where they are not otherwise provided. They offer a range of services that have been moulded over time from what they used to offer as telecentres. They deliver training services, in some cases tendering for training work that government agencies and others have been instructed to deliver. In some cases, they deliver federal government services. In my electorate, at Walpole, a Bendigo Bank branch operates out of the community resource centre. The town did not have a bank, but now it has one because of the community resource centre. Funding for the centres is going from \$13 million a year down to \$8 million, which is something like a 40 per cent cut. They will have to find that money by cutting their services. For me, they are a fundamental service in very isolated parts of the state—the member for Kimberley would know about this because she has community resource centres in her electorate—delivering services where the services are not there, and now the government is going to cut that and use the money to build car parks and swimming pools that people do not want.

The boarding away from home allowance is being reviewed. To be able to access education in a bigger centre—not necessarily Perth, but it might be one of the regional hostels—we are not seeing anything in this budget to suggest that there will be boarding away from home allowance assistance, which royalties for regions was able to support. It will be an interesting question in the estimates committees. Regional childcare centres are another area. Members know as well as I do the rigour that these organisations need to put through their facilities to get the tick

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off to have children in those facilities. Supporting capital injections to meet those standards in order to get signed off, to have the volunteer base to support them, are now being cut. I do not think the minister could answer a question the other day when it was put to her. Something is happening with the Country Age Pension Fuel Card, but we do not quite know what. The budget allocation has gone down a bit and flatlined. One of two things has happened. Either the consumer price index increase has been taken away, or the eligibility criteria have been changed. Maybe part pensioners do not now get it. I do not know what the decision is, but some sort of decision has happened, because the budget numbers reflect those changes. We shall wait and see.

In my electorate, there is the Denmark recycling project. Members will be familiar with Wilson Inlet, right next to the Denmark community. The Water Corporation has a wastewater treatment plant in the town. That water is treated through the normal processes and then is pumped out into the inlet. It took a long time, but the former Minister for Water, sitting next to me, and I worked it through the Water Corporation. A \$15 million royalties for regions investment was proposed to put that water onto the golf course to irrigate it in summer. The amount of water used there, and the amount of water going into the facility with the summer populations of tourists, matches nicely. There is also water for the agricultural college for irrigation projects and tree lots. The project would have ended the practice of treated wastewater going into a closed system—Wilson Inlet. Hon Dr Sally Talbot, who was the shadow Minister for Environment, lives in Denmark. I do not know what her position will be on this. Can anyone imagine what would happen if the Water Corporation in Perth decided, for financial reasons, to pump all its treated wastewater into the Swan River? How would that look? Can anyone imagine what the outcry would be if the treated wastewater in Perth was pumped into the Swan River? The little community of Denmark, for the first time, got a chance to have that taken away. It has never seen so many petitions presented to council than were presented on that one issue. It is the single biggest issue in Denmark, which is a very environmentally focused community, in terms of the number of petitions presented to council, and that \$15 million is gone. People will now continue to see, 400 metres from the Denmark Rivermouth Caravan Park, the Water Corporation pumping treated wastewater into the estuary. Right next to where the sailing club wants to build its new facility, so that children and others can sail in the estuary, there is a point source of treated wastewater going into Wilson Inlet. I cannot believe it. If the government is talking about doing it better, and changing its priorities, just imagine what would have happened if treated wastewater was pumped into the Swan River.

Greens Pool, an iconic part of the Denmark community, in William Bay National Park, had upgrades to support access. In summer, cars go right out of the driveway towards the highway, and kids have to walk a kilometre or two to get down to Greens Pool for a swim. Some of the other areas are not bituminised. This was an upgrade for the car park, toilet facilities, sealing some of the roads to the other areas to take a little bit of the pressure off Greens Pool, and disabled access. There is a lady in Denmark who has multiple sclerosis, and she tries to get some therapy out of swimming. She had been helping what was the Department of Parks and Wildlife to organise what should be put in place to help her get down to Greens Pool, and we put that link together. She now has nothing to look forward to, because that money has gone. It was all secured, and it has gone.

The Leader of the National Party has talked about aged-care independent living units.

In summary, we have some serious concerns about where the regions sit in the scope of this budget. We recognise that there are budgetary challenges. We do not believe that the government has made the right choices as far as the revenue sources are concerned. That will play out in Parliament. There are significant issues about the priority of regional Western Australia. People not in Albany, Bunbury and Collie in the south west are missing out.

*Sitting suspended from 6.00 to 7.00 pm*

**MR M. HUGHES (Kalamunda)** [7.00 pm]: I, too, rise to make a contribution to the debate on the budget bills—the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. At the outset I wish to commend the Treasurer, Premier and ministers for their hard work in delivering what I see, and what I believe my community sees, is a fair and responsible budget to the people of Western Australia. The opposition seems to have given up the ghost, apart from the member for Nedlands. I thank him for his earlier comments about my capacity as a student of science, although I think they were misplaced. The delivery of this budget was in the face of the gigantic financial mess created by the previous government, which I am afraid the member for Nedlands was a part of, under the leadership of Hon Colin Barnett, the member for Cottesloe, and the now Leader of the Opposition, Hon Mike Nahan. The McGowan government is demonstrably getting on with the job of getting Western Australia's finances back on track and without recourse to the short-sighted tactic of selling Western Power. The people of the electorate of Kalamunda—I am speaking to the single member of the opposition currently in the chamber—passed judgement on the financial mismanagement of the previous government and found it wanting. So what did the last government do? It threw prudent fiscal management to the wind in its cavalier she'll-be-right, everything-is-hunky-dory approach to state finances. No amount of bluff and bluster

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during the course of this debate on the budget from the opposition benches will in fact absolve them of their culpability. The state of the finances that we inherited is something this state has never seen before.

What benefit has my electorate received from this budget? In broad terms, it has received the comfort of knowing that there is a set of competent and responsible hands governing this state at long last. It is what the people wanted and called for at the March election, and it is what the people have got. Our first budget has struck the right balance to restore responsible financial management to the state and to help drive economic growth to create new jobs for Western Australians. It is not just my view but also a view shared by the Property Council of Australia. The council stated on 7 September —

The McGowan State government has delivered a fair budget for tough times.

“The decision not to increase key WA property taxes in the 2017/18 budget is welcome and it recognises that the property sector has carried its fair share of the burden in earlier budgets. Property Council WA Executive Director ... said.

“Not increasing key property taxes like land tax and stamp duty will give added confidence to the recovery in WA’s property market.

“The focus on METRONET —

Despite the Leader of the National Party seeing this as something of a vanity project —

and infrastructure in the WA Budget is welcome news for the property and construction industry.

This budget delivers on our election commitments and begins implementing our plans for jobs and the Metronet project.

I think we should return to some basic facts and figures. The rest of the issue, really, in terms of what has been presented to the chamber this afternoon, is a difference in views on our priorities in government. What the National Party sees as priorities are not what the Labor government sees as priorities. It has to be asked why that change in priorities was necessary. As we know, the state has lost \$5.3 billion in revenue since the state election. That comprises \$1.7 billion less in GST grants and \$1.67 billion less in royalty revenue. Despite this outcome the budget has been set on a sustainable path, with a return to surplus forecast in 2020–21, which will lead to a net reduction in debt over time. That is what we are aiming for and that is what this budget intends to deliver. As we have heard, the budget repair measures have been fairly distributed across the Western Australian community, including both the public sector and the corporate sector. These measures will deliver a total public sector net debt improvement of \$3.5 billion across five years from 2020–21. The only way to reduce debt over time is to carefully bring the budget back to surplus and to stay there, and that is the aim of this government. As we have heard, the forecast is that by 2020–21 the general government sector will return to an operating surplus of \$1.3 billion. We shall all be happy about that. All sections of the community share the burden to help pay for the Liberals’ and Nationals’ out-of-control spending and the consequence of them effectively running two sets of finances over the period they were in government—one for the Liberals and one for the Nationals—with the disastrous consequences that have been referred to by our Treasurer. The government’s reasonable and fair measures to repair the budget have been taken in such a way as to ensure that any impact on struggling families and small to medium businesses has been kept to an absolute minimum. It is worth reminding ourselves that without these budget repair measures, net debt would have risen to more than \$47.2 billion.

The people of the electorate of Kalamunda understand that there is no quick solution to the gross debt problem; only responsible financial management over time is the answer. They understand that the government was determined to deliver its pre-election commitments and has been prudent in achieving that outcome. The reprioritisation of expenditure—this was the argument we had across the chamber this afternoon—has meant that 84 per cent of the \$3.7 billion cost of WA Labor’s election commitments, or \$3.1 billion, will be funded within the existing budgets.

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr M. HUGHES:** One of the key pre-election commitments was to the local projects, local jobs program. I am very pleased that the state budget includes an allocation of \$39 million for the local projects, local jobs program, which will go towards more than 750 projects in both the metropolitan area and regional Western Australia. I am particularly pleased that my electorate has received a total of \$911 000 in grants towards 25 projects in the 2017–18 financial year. They include \$160 000 towards projects in Darlington, \$40 000 towards projects in Glen Forrest, \$10 000 towards projects in Parkerville, \$10 000 towards projects in Stoneville and \$250 000 towards projects in Mundaring, making a total of \$475 000. The groups that will benefit include Darlington Sports

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and Recreation Association, Treetops Montessori School, Mundaring, Parkerville, Stoneville, Darlington and Glen Forrest Volunteer Bush Fire Brigades, Helena College, the Mundaring Scout Group, Mundaring Tennis Club and the Rotary Club of Mundaring. There will be upgrades to the Noble Estate and Parkerville Oval playground equipment, and resurfacing of the BMX dirt jumps in Darlington. In addition, there will be \$316 000 towards projects in Kalamunda, \$90 000 towards projects in Lesmurdie and \$30 000 towards projects in Walliston, making a total of \$436 000. The groups that will benefit include Kalamunda Community Learning Centre, Kalamunda Men's Shed, Kalamunda Cricket Club, Kalamunda Volunteer Bush Fire Brigade, Kalamunda Volunteer Fire and Rescue Service, Kalamunda Senior High School and Special Education Centre, Walliston Primary School, Hills BMX Club, Lesmurdie Tennis Club and Lesmurdie–Mazenod Cricket Club. A whole range of community groups, local schools and bush fire brigades will benefit from that program.

The local projects, local jobs program is about supporting local grassroots initiatives that can make a big difference to local communities across the state. I believe a small amount of government funding—the government shares that view—will go a long way and well beyond the immediate support provided to community groups in the electorate of Kalamunda. The local projects, local jobs initiative will allow numerous organisations to continue their important work in their communities. I urge the government to consider ways of continuing this program well into the future.

As part of the pre-election commitment to my electorate, the City of Kalamunda was promised a \$3 million allocation towards the Community Hubs project. Many different projects or commitments are being worked on across government, and general planning and scoping of additional projects is taking place, in conjunction with a range of entities and local groups, including the City of Kalamunda. We have to remember that we are in government for a period of time, and we should not expect everything to be included in the current year's budget. The City of Kalamunda has determined that the location of the community hub will be on the site of the existing building in Jorgensen Park, Kalamunda. Kalamunda Community Learning, which is the principal user of the facilities, along with other community groups, will take advantage of that much-needed project.

I have said that the construction of Metronet is a key element of the government's drive to develop an integrated transport network that will benefit the metropolitan area as a whole, including my electorate of Kalamunda. The allocation of \$1.3 billion for Metronet stage 1 projects, including the Thornlie–Cockburn link, the Yanchep rail extension and the acquisition of an additional 102 railcars will begin this process. Across the state the government has committed to a range of road projects that will reduce congestion, amongst them the allocation of \$86 million to a new traffic interchange at Roe Highway and Kalamunda Road. I recognise that that project, although it falls in the seat of my colleague the member for Forrestfield, will have a direct benefit for people in Kalamunda. It is welcome news for my constituents faced with delays. It is also welcome news because I think the statistics show that for the five-year period to 31 December 2016 there were 201 crashes at that intersection—175 of them rear-end collisions—and at least 31 casualties. Not only will that type of project improve congestion across the metropolitan area—because it is replicated elsewhere—but also it will be useful in reducing the incidence of traffic accidents. It is welcome news to my constituents.

I am pleased that stage 1 of the Kalamunda Hospital infrastructure upgrade, costing \$1.765 million, will be completed in the 2017–18 budget year, and that a further \$7.56 million has been earmarked in the 2020–21 forward estimates for its redevelopment. This is good news for the people of my electorate and the wider community, especially because of the excellent palliative care provision at the hospital.

I am also aware that students and schools in my electorate—along with the broader emphasis the government has placed upon restoring cuts to state schools—will benefit. I read with interest that Darling Range Sports College will receive a significant amount of funding capital works; something in the order of \$10 million, I believe. That is of great interest to my electorate because many of my students are selected for that special sports program. My electorate will definitely benefit from that provision.

During the election campaign I placed the increased provision of high-needs aged care as my number one priority. I am pleased that the Minister for Planning has taken action to approve the scheme amendment to permit the Gavour Road aged-care development in the City of Kalamunda. The government has, as part of the 2017–18 budget, announced that it will make aged care more available by fast-tracking the establishment of additional aged-care facilities to free up public hospital beds and improve the quality of life for the elderly. This includes identifying land that may be suitable for aged-care facilities. Removing planning and local government impediments to facilitate the construction of aged-care facilities is part of the pledge, and I was pleased to note that in division 8 of the budget WA Health has earmarked Osborne Park Hospital and a site in Kalamunda as being considered for possible aged-care facilities. That was an election commitment. I am also pleased to advise the

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house that an interdepartmental coordinating group comprising staff from the Departments of Health, Planning, aged and seniors and Local Government is in the process of being established to assist with fast-tracking the establishment of aged-care facilities. I am determined to be a strong advocate for the realisation of the government's pre-election commitment to fast-track the establishment of additional aged-care facilities for the people of Kalamunda. The achievement of this goal is a key performance indicator for me that I have set as the local member. I now wish to see that achieved in the first term of the Mark McGowan Labor government.

In closing, I raise a concern about the conditions of buildings at a number of schools in my electorate. I am well aware of the constraints placed upon this government and the pre-election commitments and priorities it brought to the people. I am, however, particularly of the view that the majority of the buildings at Lesmurdie Primary School, excluding those provided by the Building the Education Revolution funding, are well beyond their use-by date and need replacing. There has been only the patch and repair of the buildings.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr M. HUGHES:** To continue to patch and repair the buildings is, in the view of the school council—I share that view—simply throwing good money after bad. This is a longstanding issue for this community. The community does not expect this government to overturn its existing priorities, but we need to help that community and it should be the long-term intention of this government to do something about those facilities. Equally, Kalamunda Senior High School is managing with, at my count, 17 demountable or transportable classrooms. From the position of a former principal, I understand that although they provide teaching spaces, they fall well short of what we should expect to be provided in all our schools. I would benchmark that provision against the schools being built in developing suburbs—schools built for this century rather than for the last century. Kalamunda Senior High School provides an excellent comprehensive education and has a specialist performing arts program, but it is constrained by a lack of specialist learning areas for its programs. Equally, the co-located education support centre struggles because less than adequate teacher preparation areas are available. The need to deal adequately with ageing school infrastructure and to remodel existing schools to adequately reflect current pastoral care and curriculum expectations placed on schools is an abiding issue, one that will be faced by successive governments and one that needs the collaboration of both sides of the house over the long term to achieve a better set of outcomes.

Lest I finish my speech in what might be regarded as a criticism of government, it is not; it is simply this: governments have to make choices in relation to priorities. I also believe that governments are required to keep faith with their pre-election commitments. The McGowan government, in the face of the unexpected extent of the problems left behind by the previous government, has done a sterling job to keep faith with its central commitments to in fact build a better future for the people of Western Australia, and I commend the budget to the house.

**MS L. METTAM (Vasse)** [7.21 pm]: I would also like to make some comments in the second reading debate of the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. When preparing for this speech I looked at *Hansard* from last year and at the comments made by the now Minister for Tourism; Small Business. He stated —

The blame is with not only the member for Cottesloe, but also all the participants in the government. They are just as responsible for enabling it to occur; —

He is referring to the debt —

they were enablers. Barnett was addicted to debt and they were the enablers.

It appears that the minister is now also an enabler, with the debt over this term of government predicted to increase, as projected, by 32 per cent to \$43.6 billion. This is a budget of betrayal and broken promises. Before the election the Premier promised not to increase taxes, yet in this budget payroll tax will increase by up to six or 6.5 per cent and the gold royalty rate by up to 3.75 per cent from 2.5 per cent. Although that might be only a 0.5 per cent or one per cent increase, the total payroll tax liability of affected companies will increase by between five and 13 per cent.

We also heard the Premier say before the election that he would also pay down debt slowly like a mortgage, but we are seeing something quite different, with debt expected to increase by about 33 per cent over this term of government to \$43.6 billion. Although a surplus is predicted in 2021, that is only an assumption. We can only assume that that will be deliverable given the Treasurer himself saying recently at a Committee for Economic Development of Australia breakfast that that might not be the case.

I would like to start with some more specific comments about the lack of funding for the south west region.

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**Mr M.P. Murray:** Where have you been for the last eight years?

**Ms L. METTAM:** I will come to that, but the member for Collie–Preston's electorate has done quite well actually, with upgrades to the Coalfields Highway of \$50 million, upgrades to the Collie Hospital of \$7 million; and Collie SuperTowns, \$12 million. I was absolutely appalled and shocked that there is no reference to the south west region on the state budget website. In every other area there is a budget allocation by region—there is the Gascoyne, goldfields, midwest and Peel—but there is no reference to the south west as a region, only the towns where there are Labor members: Collie, Bunbury and Albany. In fact, the south west region as a whole has been completely overlooked in almost every portfolio. As I have pointed out to the member for Collie–Preston —

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Good members do that.

**Ms L. METTAM:** The member is also a minister.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Just because you're asleep at the wheel.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I would say not because this government went to the election committing to all of Western Australia. If the minister sees his achievements and the achievements of his government as pork-barrelling his own electorate, he is —

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I will continue. The McGowan government's commitment —

**Mr M.P. Murray** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Because the member is a waste of time.

*Point of Order*

**Mr S.K. L'ESTRANGE:** The member is trying to make her contribution to the budget second reading debate. I ask that maybe you, Mr Acting Speaker, offer some protection if the member requires it.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price):** Minister, can we hear the member deliver her speech.

*Debate Resumed*

**Ms L. METTAM:** The McGowan's government's commitment to road safety in this budget is also of concern not only because of the omission of any commitment to progress one of the RAC's most dangerous unfunded roads, being the dualling of the Bussell Highway between Capel and Busselton, but also through the outstanding need to commit to a future for the RAC rescue helicopter. I was very disappointed to see that the dualling of the Bussell Highway project did not receive any commitment in this budget.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I have a serious interjection. Isn't there \$30 million in the budget for the highway?

**Ms L. METTAM:** No. For the dualling of the carriageway, there is not.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** It's in there.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I have not seen the specific commitment.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** You haven't done your homework.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I have done my homework.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Well, there's \$30 million in there.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Is that for the dualling of the carriageway?

**Mr M.P. Murray:** No, for the highway.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Well, it is not there. When was that announced?

**Mr M.P. Murray:** It is in the budget.

**Ms L. METTAM:** I think I will keep going.

Very specifically, the dualling of Bussell Highway is not mentioned or appropriated for in this budget, and I would welcome any announcement for that given the advocacy I have done. We have asked questions about the representations that the member for Collie–Preston has made, and it is absent.

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On the issue of safety, we have also seen the removal of funds that were dedicated to shark hazard mitigation, an imminent threat. On the ground we will see a reduction of \$250 000 a year, which will see the effective cancellation of shark hazard mitigation as well.

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** Is this the little bit of misinformation you have been spreading around the south west?

**Ms L. METTAM:** Just refer to the budget papers.

**Mr W.R. Marmion** interjected.

**Ms L. METTAM:** In water as well.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, can we hear the member for Vasse's contribution to the debate in a bit of silence, please, so we can all hear what she is saying.

**Ms L. METTAM:** In relation to bushfire mitigation —

**Mr D.J. Kelly:** Just do not mislead the house, that's all.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Minister!

**Ms L. METTAM:** You can talk!

In relation to bushfire risk mitigation, I am pleased that there is funding for at least another 12 months for this important program. However, that will only deliver funding for planning and further funding is required after the first 12 months for actual fire mitigation. It is very important that that funding be delivered for the City of Busselton, which is a high fire risk area.

It was pleasing to hear recently that the funding for expansion of the Busselton–Margaret River Airport has been retained. The McGowan government's value optimisation review has not been successful in ripping out any funds from that project, even though that project is about four months behind schedule. It has also challenged the city's ability to finalise route negotiations for the beginning of September 2019, given the significant delay. Obviously, the ability to fly from the east coast into the south west region would be a major tourism game changer for the region. I am aware that the member for Bunbury was quite heavily involved in the business case for this project, but it is important that it is backed up and supported in the future to see that commitment of airlines and to see their aeroplanes full of passengers. That will require heavy and significant investment in destination marketing and events.

That brings me to the portfolio of tourism. I welcome the funding of \$425 million, which is a clear commitment made to the tourism industry. There will be an addition of \$87 million over four years for events and destination marketing. This is a significant investment in tourism; however, it is vital that we see those funds spent effectively. In recent times we have seen the removal of the former CEO, Gwyn Dolphin, from Tourism WA, which has raised concerns, as well as departmental restructuring and the mega-departments. The concern about the mega-departments is what will happen to the commission, and there is great concern about the politicisation of events and destination marketing under this government's watch. The new minister effectively has junior status, because he shares ministerial oversight of the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation with the Premier, Minister MacTiernan and Minister Kelly. Effectively, we have seen the diminution of the role of tourism through the submerging of the tourism organisation within the mega-department. It has raised significant concern within the industry. As I stated before, going forward there will be an impact on events and funding from having Tourism WA within the department. Given what we have seen for the south west region so far, there is very good reason to be concerned.

A regional events program has been committed to in this budget. An amount of \$20 million has been committed to, which is good to see, but given the exclusion of the south west from the budget, I am concerned about where those funds will flow. The announcements made have been for the Swan Valley, Ferguson Valley and Wellington Forest areas. The City of Busselton is the events capital of the south west region, and the exclusion of Vasse and the Margaret River region is of significant concern.

**Mr M.P. Murray:** Do you want all the money?

**Ms L. METTAM:** No, I want to see funds flow to support investment in infrastructure that has happened. There are outstanding concerns about the future of the Margaret River Gourmet Escape, which, according to many in the industry, will not continue after this year. I remain concerned about this event, given the impact it has in putting Western Australia and the Margaret River region on the map globally, with a reach of 50 million people. We have seen 80 000 visitors to the region since the event started in 2013.

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I turn to international education. Fees for international students have been increased. This adds to concerns in the sector already following changes to the regional sponsored migration policy, as well as the state schools list. There is concern amongst not only the university sector, but also the hospitality sector, about what these changes mean and the ability to attract skilled staff to deliver the service expected by visiting tourists from competing overseas countries and states.

I turn to the Australian Tourism Exchange. The previous budget provided one-off funding of \$3 million to hold the ATE event in Perth in 2019. I note that the Minister for Tourism made some comments in the house about this several weeks ago, but there does not appear to be a line item in the budget or any funding committed to this event. I encourage the government to support it in the future given it will provide WA with a lot of exposure amongst important tourism buyers who then take the tourism experience back home to sell Western Australia as a product, which is incredibly important.

There is the issue of visitor centres. The regional centre sustainability grant program is going ahead this year, but it is the final round. This is a very important program as well. It has been very well supported in visitor centres across regional WA. These centres are often run and supported by local volunteers who have good knowledge on the ground to give to people who pop in for some advice on where to go and the best way to enjoy Western Australia. This program has been really successful in the past. The local tourism centres in the south had funding for digital touch screens and dollar-for-dollar funding for signage. That enabled these visitor centres to promote their wares, which is all about promoting these regions as well. It is good to see that funding for the next 12 months, but it would be great to see it continue in the future.

Caravanning and camping is similar in that respect, with the winding up of the spend there. It has been very successful. Thirty parks have completed a program that is all about the sector becoming more connected and being able to best promote itself going forward. Caravanning and camping is a vital part of the tourism space and is worth about \$1 billion to the tourism sector. The funding will be wrapped up this financial year, but I encourage it to be supported further. The Aboriginal tourism development program has not been extended past 2018–19. WA has done some great work in this space. I know Robert Taylor, the CEO of WAITOC, and his board have done good work in inspiring tourism operators to develop authentic tourism experiences. We know from feedback that 78 per cent of visitors from overseas want a tourism experience.

I welcome funding in the budget for the Abrolhos Islands; I understand it is \$10 million. I encourage some of those funds to go to the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. Work needs to be done on a plan that was being delivered under the former Liberal-led government, which was about working together with the tourism sector and stakeholders in the fishing industry to transform the Abrolhos Islands to reach their true potential as the jewel in the crown.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms L. METTAM:** I would like to touch on small business as well. So far, there has been the introduction of an increase in payroll tax and the gold royalty. A foreign investment tax of four per cent will be charged for residential property purchases. There has been a steep increase in household fees and charges, with electricity bills to go up by \$169 a year and vehicle registrations by 5.5 per cent, and caps on the Seniors Card rebate. All these changes and policy initiatives delivered by the McGowan government will have not only a direct impact on small business in Western Australia, but also an indirect impact because they will affect the discretionary spend of individuals and households. That will be exacerbated by the cuts to the real wages of frontline public servants, and the loss of 3 000 jobs in the public sector. As a shadow minister representing small business, I am greatly concerned about the impact on retailers and small business operators. Those people are already being challenged in the current market by the hike in electricity charges. They are significantly concerned about what this will mean to their budget bottom line.

There is also concern at the local level about the loss of regional investment funding. In this budget, not only has \$1.5 billion of government costs been shifted, but \$647 million of Labor election promises, and \$860 million for regional programs, will now be funded through the royalties for regions fund. That includes a long list of road projects. The member for Collie–Preston has said that the dualling of the carriageway between Busselton and Capel —

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I said the highway, not the dual carriageway. You did not listen, again! You did not listen to what I said.

**Ms L. METTAM:** So the dualling of Bussell Highway is on the list?

**Mr M.P. Murray:** I said there is \$30 million for that highway.

**Ms L. METTAM:** Semantics.

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**Mr M.P. Murray:** No; it is true.

**Ms L. METTAM:** The royalties for regions fund will also be used for 80 per cent of the water subsidy for regional areas.

There are also serious concerns in the electorate of Vasse and the south west region about the tourism budget. If the tourism budget is politicised in the same way that the Vasse electorate and the south west region have been politicised, we should all be concerned about how this budget will help promote the state into the future.

**MR M.J. FOLKARD (Burns Beach)** [7.42 pm]: I rise to speak on the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. These budget bills show great foresight for the future of this state. These bills will also have a positive impact on my electorate of Burns Beach. During the state election campaign, I spent a great deal of time talking to the people of Burns Beach. I wanted to know what their concerns were and what they believe the government should do to alleviate their concerns. After my election as the member for Burns Beach, I continued these conversations. Unsurprisingly, my constituents told me that they are worried about their future. With the rising unemployment rate, little diversity in industry, and minimal investment in public infrastructure, my electorate is worried about the future. I heard stories from young families who were once living comfortably on the back of the mining construction boom and are now living on a shoestring budget as the work has died off. I heard from a former crane driver, who I have mentioned in this place today, who struggled to find work after years of experience because the jobs were not there. I heard countless stories of economic hardship that would bring tears to members' eyes if I were to relate those stories. Another concern in my electorate was a lack of faith in the former government's ability to address our state's rising unemployment rate. These stories are stuck in my mind.

Today, I have the pleasure of responding to a budget that offers a pathway to address the concerns that have been aired to me. This budget has at its core the concerns of the working people of this state. Without shying away from the mammoth task of budget repair, this budget can be summed up in one word and one word only—jobs. It is no secret that this government inherited the worst financial position in our state since the Great Depression. It is no secret that the former government somehow managed to squander the finances of our state and leave Western Australians without the vital futureproofing infrastructure that it needs. It is also no secret that the former government had no plan to address the rising unemployment rate. During the time of the former government, the unemployment rate rose dramatically. There were 92 000 jobs in this state at one stage. At the conclusion of the former government's term in office, about 5.8 per cent of Western Australians were out of work. I believe that figure was even higher in my electorate. The youth unemployment rate would definitely be higher. I hope that the Langouland inquiry will get to the bottom of the state's financial position so that we do not repeat that process. Fortunately, the people of Burns Beach and, more broadly, the people of this state, could see the truth in this matter. They know that when it comes to listening to the concerns of working people and taking action on job creation, this government and myself as the member for Burns Beach are the people for the task. The community saw our plans for jobs and infrastructure and knew that this represented a better vision for Western Australia.

These budget bills before Parliament are just one part of the government's plan to get our state back on track. They are not all of the plan; they are part of the plan. I welcome the investment of \$1.2 million in my electorate as part of the local projects, local jobs community improvement scheme. Just yesterday, I had the pleasure of announcing \$50 000 towards the construction of an Anzac memorial at Currambine Primary School. That memorial will accompany a tree at the school that was grown from seeds of the original Lone Pine at Gallipoli.

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Magnificent!

**Mr M.J. FOLKARD:** A couple of years ago, I went to Gallipoli for the first time and saw that tree at Lone Pine and the graves around it. As a returned serviceman, that holds a great deal of merit for me, because it helps tell the kids about our past. That is just one of 10 local projects that will see community infrastructure upgraded and jobs created for the people of Burns Beach. If the members present will allow me, I will list some of these projects. There is \$10 000 to Clarkson Youth Centre for a redevelopment to improve that centre. There is \$70 000 for the installation of fitness equipment at Tauranga Park. There is \$11 000 for the redesign of the Thornton Park play space—good money. There is \$80 000 for the construction of the Iluka foreshore lookout platform. Members who have seen the coastline around Burns Beach will know that it is breathtaking. That is a great future project and I look forward to its completion. There is \$50 000 for construction of the Kinross Primary School nature playground. What a great idea that is—to enable the boys to build little cubbyhouses and the girls to build little fairy tunnels et cetera, and get into the playground and away from their computers and iPads. There is \$70 000 towards the purchase of a new school bus for Kinross College. That is money well spent. There is

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\$757 000 to deliver upgrades to HBF Arena. There is also, I must admit, \$400 000 for the local rugby club to build new change rooms. These are all good things. This is real action on jobs and real action on community development.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the positive impact on my electorate of the \$520 million that these bills allocate to the extension of the Joondalup train line to Yanchep, as part of Metronet. It will have a great impact on my electorate. Congestion as a result of patchwork planning has plagued the constituents of Burns Beach. I reflect on the intersection of Marmion Avenue and Hester Avenue, which the RAC says is the fourth most congested intersection in Australia, and the RAC is very credible. I have seen the improvements resulting from the extension of the freeway and I hope that congestion will ease even further with the extension of Metronet. For people to travel from Yanchep or Alkimos to anywhere in the Perth metro area, there is not much choice but to go through Clarkson, Currambine and Kinross. By extending the Joondalup line to Yanchep and constructing stations in Alkimos, Eglinton and Yanchep, the government will offer commuters of the northern suburbs a viable alternative to driving, which means shorter commutes for our community and safer roads. This \$520 million project has an added aim, other than just easing congestion; it is about getting construction workers back on site. It is money that will be put into the pockets of the families of the north. It is money that will flow into the hands of shopkeepers, retail assistants and, more generally, throughout the local economy. It is a good thing.

Metronet is also about ensuring that we put Western Australian manufacturing first, which is why I welcome the proposed \$322 million that has been allocated to the development of our own railcar manufacturing industry. It is not good enough for the government to sit and wait for the private sector to shift its focus and diversify our economy at its own pace and on its own terms. I support these bills because I believe they represent real action on jobs and real action on infrastructure. It does not leave Western Australian families in the lurch as they wait for things to pick up. Could this government hold its head high, knowing that it did not put Western Australians first on its projects? My answer is no. Thankfully, investment into manufacturing capabilities as well as tourism by this government will assist our shift towards more sustainable forms of employment. I go back to the aim of this budget: it is about jobs, jobs, jobs.

If members present recall my inaugural speech, they would remember me stating that when I left school I could not read or write. It is something that has stuck with me and shaped my passion for the provision of quality education. These bills have an allocation of \$19.9 million towards improving and creating new education facilities within my electorate of Burns Beach. I read something the other day: for each dollar we spend on our kids, there is an \$18 return in future investment. This investment of \$19.9 million in my electorate will in time return \$358 million to our economy and, more importantly, to the education of our kids. Is that not a good thing? This amount will also see the construction of a new primary school in Burns Beach, which has been promised for years, but not delivered. It is coming. There is \$2.5 million for upgrades to Kinross College. A new passion of mine is an early childhood education centre at Kinross Primary School so that kids from nought to eight, their mums and their families can have support at the local primary school. There is a further \$200 000 for upgrades to Currambine Primary School—all good things. This means new classrooms and facilities for students to meet the demands of the ever-changing educational environment. It means spaces for STEM-focused learning. “STEM-focused learning”, members ask? It is about computer coding, it is about science, it is about all the things that kids need to have a good education.

It is our duty to ensure that all children, no matter their background, have the opportunity to get the most out of their education. I am thrilled to see that the additional teaching assistants we promised during the election will be delivered to the schools that need it the most, with additional teaching assistants being allocated to Clarkson Primary School. I know the principal up there and he thinks it is a good thing. By providing additional support in the classroom to students experiencing difficulties, we are not only giving those children the best chance of achieving their full potential, but also freeing up time for the teacher to educate the rest of the classroom. That has to be a good thing. That, to me, is what policy is all about.

I would also like to remind members about my personal concerns about our mental health services. In my years as a first responder, I saw the impact post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental illnesses had on not only my friends and colleagues, but also the victims and perpetrators of crime. It is as debilitating as any physical illness, and I do not believe that this government, nor any other, should accept the current standard of mental health services in this state. To accept them would be to be complicit in the havoc they cause. This is why I welcome these bills' allocation of additional funding to mental health services, which will result in an increased number of mental health hospital beds, as well as—this one is key—additional support for young Western Australians dealing with mental health issues, through the addition of 0.1 full-time equivalents per 300 school students to assist with

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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the implementation of evidence-based mental health programs. That is mental health support for our kids. It is overdue, it is needed, and it is being delivered. That has to be a good thing.

For those reasons, I commend this budget, and I thank members.

**MR J.N. CAREY (Perth — Parliamentary Secretary)** [7.56 pm]: It is my pleasure to speak to the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017. When I speak to constituents in the Perth electorate and discuss the budget, I often describe it as though we have had a very big party and now we have been left with a terrible hangover. When we think about it, over the last eight years we have seen the previous government spend like absolute crazy. Now we, the new government, have been left with a terrible hangover, and we need to repair the budget.

That party also included the end of the mining boom and saw a reduction in the state's GST share and an ongoing brawl with the commonwealth government over a fair GST deal. Of course, we are also faced with incredible state debt of more than \$32 billion. That last point is very sobering. When I talk to people in my electorate, the best way to explain it is in terms of total net debt per person, because it really shines a light. It is quite astonishing when we think about the situation that the previous government inherited and what we have now inherited as a new government. When Labor left office in 2008, total public net debt per person was \$1 673. As at 30 June 2017, that figure had grown to a total public sector net debt per person of \$12 592. I think that really shines a light on the significant situation we face, and it also puts to bed the idea and myth that the Liberal–National government was an extraordinary economic manager. A government could not face that with such a debt.

I was interested to listen to Mia Davies, because I see some small difference in that the Liberals acknowledge their responsibilities and contribution to that debt, but when the Nationals speak, there is no sense that they were part of the same government. I am new to this house and I admit that sometimes I am shocked by the tone used by members and the expressions that both sides of the debate call each other. Certainly, in my time as a new member of this Parliament, I have tried to show every member of Parliament due respect outside and inside this place. I was disappointed by Mia Davies' approach to the debate.

*Point of Order*

**Mr R.S. LOVE:** The member is referring to one of the members of the house by their name rather than their position or their seat, and that is disorderly.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** I will happily correct that to the Leader of the National Party.

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Mr S.J. Price):** Thank you.

*Debate Resumed*

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** I was disappointed by the tone and by the personal attacks when she said, “Hang your heads in shame.” Is this the kind of tone that we want for our Parliament? Members of Parliament may disagree on political ideologies and how we approach issues, but I believe that every member of this Parliament comes in with the best intentions to represent their electorates and advocate.

The Leader of the National Party said also that Metronet was a vanity project. I do not think that one of the basic investments that we can make—that is, public transport infrastructure, particularly public transport to the outer suburbs—is at all a vanity project. We know that there have been repeated warnings by advocacy groups and research about the critical need for investment in public transport. I refer to ongoing research by the RAC about the future cost of congestion to our economy if we do not act. I refer, for example, to the well-known story run by PerthNow and across the media in late November indicating that the cost of congestion would reach \$16 billion a year by 2031. Another research paper predicted that by 2031, seven of the 10 most congested roads in Australia would be in Perth. It appears obvious to me that investment in public transport is not a vanity project. It is not, as the Leader of the National Party suggested, about people standing in front of shiny stations cutting ribbons. It is about creating a metropolitan city that ensures accessibility for everyone who lives in it. It is, at its basics, about providing equity and access, particularly for those people who live in the outer suburbs and cannot afford to live in the inner city or the western suburbs, which are better serviced by public transport. For me, it is a basic question of equity. I am disappointed. It is not a vanity project.

The budget repair response that has been developed is tough, but I genuinely believe it is fair. I will not go over the range of budget repair measures. We have seen that the public sector is taking the brunt of the budget repair measures, but I note that one of the key focuses of this government—I appreciate that in time we will demonstrate whether we have met the record—is to rein in expense growth. In the first full year of the 2017–18 budget, this

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government aims to rein in expense growth at 2.4 per cent, with an expected average expense growth of 1.9 per cent. Again, I compare those figures with those of the previous government, which saw expense growth of 10.9 per cent in its first year.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** I will not be interjected on by the former Premier; thank you.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

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

**Mr J.N. CAREY:** I will continue. As I have said, I believe that the budget repair measures are fair. The burden is on the public sector, the government, households up-front and, of course, the corporate sector, but the majority of budget sector savings are coming from the public sector.

In terms of the key commitments that we are making, I have talked about Metronet and the value of the Metronet investment. However, tourism is one of the other key areas that we have prioritised and that are critical for the future growth of our state. I know that firsthand from my own electorate of Perth, where we have quite a critical situation, despite some significant investment in the city. Office and retail vacancy rates in the city are double the rates we saw during the global financial crisis. We have had some extraordinarily high vacancy rates for hotels. I am proud of the action taken by the Minister for Tourism, who has asked for a re-prioritisation of \$2 million of tourism marketing funds to secure more people flying to Perth. I am proud of the fact that we have made significant new funding commitments to both event tourism and destination marketing, which are about reinvigorating our tourism strategy and drawing more people to Perth. It is great that the tourism industry has embraced these initiatives and is working with the state government to recast our brand and our marketing strategies.

I am very pleased that education has been a key focus of delivery in my electorate. Of course, nowhere is that more apparent than in the debate about a new inner city college. I appreciate that there was significant community debate and I am not embarrassed that the government changed its position. It did not persist; it listened and engaged with the Perth Modern School community. That demonstrated that there was nothing embarrassing about admitting that that policy setting was not right and that, although the need for an inner city college was critical, the way that we were going about it could be refined. I am very pleased that \$68 million has been allocated to building a new state-of-the-art inner city college with access to Subiaco Oval. I was pleased to see in a recent announcement by the Minister for Education and Training that architects have been appointed and that it is all systems go to develop that inner city college. I acknowledge also that the decision to build an inner city high school has been warmly received by the parents and citizens associations in my electorate of Perth.

In the education focus, we have also committed to a double-storey build at Mount Hawthorn Primary School. As we have heard before and as I have mentioned in Parliament, there is huge growth in primary school numbers in the inner city. We are seeing it at Highgate Primary School, but Mount Hawthorn Primary School is growing every year. I am very pleased that the money is locked into this budget and that architects have been appointed. I have met with the architects, as has the school community, and the plans have been finalised.

Other smaller commitments can sometimes appear to be not a lot. I will not go through all my local projects and local job commitments, but one small area that has resonated heavily in my community and electorate, particularly with parents, is pedestrian safety. As members know, I am a strong believer in reducing speeds on local roads. Around the world, London and other great cities have reduced speeds on residential streets to 30 or 40 kilometres. That makes sense because it is about creating liveable streets for residents. It has been proven time and again that reduced road speeds means a reduction in fatalities but ultimately for me it is about liveable communities in which kids can play on verges and not worry about speeding cars going by. As part of that focus on pedestrian safety, I committed to three major new pedestrian greenlight crossings. The first one on Fitzgerald Street is near completion. The other two, which will be built on Charles Street and Vincent Street, are in the budget. Both were lobbied for by local parents and residents who are concerned about children's safety when they access Beatty Park Leisure Centre and Kyilla Primary School. We aim to get those pedestrian crossings built in the next financial year.

The last issue I wish to raise has been given less focus—that is, investment in cycling infrastructure. I appreciate that there is a lot of well-deserved attention on Metronet and the work being done by the Minister for Planning, but cycling infrastructure is critical to make cities accessible to all. We have all seen the extraordinary cities overseas that have totally embraced the cycling culture and, as a result of embracing that cycling culture, have had significant wins in traffic congestion and in creating a more accessible city. I am very proud that over the next four years, a record allocation of \$129 million will be spent on at least 95 kilometres of cycling paths that will better integrate with Metronet and railway stations. There is still one problem and that is in the city centre itself. Recent research shows that fewer people are cycling to the city, partly because they do not feel safe cycling in the city.

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There is not enough protected bike or cycling lanes in the city. If we want people to cycle to work, we must focus on not only pathways in the outer metropolitan areas, but those in the heart of the city for people who want to cycle to their apartment building or place of work. That area needs greater investment.

Those are a few budget highlights and commitments. I am incredibly proud that in the next year our government will deliver on the key issue of education in my electorate.

**MR R.R. WHITBY (Baldivis — Parliamentary Secretary)** [8.13 pm]: I also rise to speak in support of the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. The budget by any fair appraisal is tough and has made some tough decisions. I think it is seen as fair in that it spreads the burden of budget repair across the community and across the public sector, the private sector and households. Just a moment ago, the member for Perth said that most of the burden of budget repair will be borne by the public sector. The majority of the \$3.5 billion worth of measures will be borne by the public sector; a lesser degree will be borne by the private sector and about nine per cent will be borne by Western Australian households. That is a fair mix and a responsible way to spread the burden.

This budget is responsible because it will arrest the trend of many years of an explosion in debt.

**Mr C.J. Barnett:** Your debt just went up \$2 billion this week.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** The budget has its critics; we have heard from them constantly. It has critics on both sides because some say it is too tough while others say it is not tough enough. Indeed, the critics who say it is not tough enough include *The West Australian*. When some critics argue that the budget has not gone far enough and others argue that it has gone too far, that suggests that government got it right and somehow we have landed in the sensible centre for budget repair and a responsible budget.

My interest is in how this budget will impact ordinary Western Australian families and communities, and I will explain how the budget will impact on the ground in Baldivis. It just so happens that I have a copy of a story in today's *Sound Telegraph* with the headline, "Baldivis, Peel big Budget winners", in which a suburb and a region are described as big budget winners. It is a good read that is full of good information. I am very tempted to read the contents of the story into *Hansard*, but if members want to read the report they are more than welcome to receive a copy. The article includes insightful commentary about how the budget is doing good things in the Baldivis and Peel communities. When I was doorknocking before the state election, one recurring and constant theme was the complaint about congestion on Kwinana Freeway. It is a constant issue and those who have travelled northbound in particular on Kwinana Freeway know that it does not matter what day of the week or what hour of the day it is, there are congestion spots just north of Baldivis and they can be frustrating. That issue was constantly raised when I was doorknocking. After the construction work on the southbound lanes of Kwinana Freeway to widen the freeway from two lanes to three, residents suggested that a comparable project was needed on the northbound lanes. That made good sense to me. I called the shadow Minister for Transport at the time and raised this issue with her. I asked her why we could not extend the northbound lanes of Kwinana Freeway from two to three lanes. She said that that was a really good idea and something we needed to do. I asked the shadow transport minister at the time whether I could commit to it, but she cautioned me and said, unfortunately, I could not because she wanted to be absolutely convinced —

[Quorum formed.]

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** I contacted the then shadow Minister for Transport to ask whether it would be possible for us to commit to widening the northbound lanes of Kwinana Freeway. The then shadow Minister for Transport cautioned me and said, "No; we won't do that because I need to be absolutely certain that we can secure the money for this project." She also said that we would not want to make a fully funded, fully costed promise that we might break if we were elected. I was very glad to pick up the budget papers last week and see that \$49 million is allocated in this budget to widen the northbound lanes of Kwinana Freeway between Russell Road and Roe Highway to reduce congestion. The two lanes will be increased to three along that section with \$3 million set aside in the current budget, and the balance of \$46 million for 2018–19. There is further good reading for people who are frustrated with congestion on Kwinana Freeway. Another \$47 million is allocated to the smart freeway project, which will increase the freeway by an extra lane and the addition of ramp signals for improved traffic flow on the section between Roe Highway and the Narrows Bridge. The good news continues. Karnup station is one of the new stations, or station upgrades, on the Mandurah line, for which \$100 million has been allocated. This is an important initiative for the people of Baldivis. It is located just south of the Baldivis electorate, but a new rail station on the Mandurah line will mean that during peak periods on that line, train engineers will be able to put on extra carriages so that the frequency of service can be increased. That is good news for people in Baldivis who catch a train. The local stations that they go to include Warnbro and Rockingham, so having an extra station in

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Karnup will reduce the pressures on those other stations and make rail travel that much more attractive. It is excellent news for people who catch the train. There is also \$535 million for the Thornlie–Cockburn rail line. It will help to create a true network, which is at the core of Metronet. It will open up the eastern suburbs to people who are travelling on the Mandurah rail line. At the moment, as we know, we have a spoke and wheel network in which people have to travel into the CBD and also leave the CBD to travel anywhere—we go in and out of the centre. The inspiration driving Metronet is a true network on which people can travel east–west. This will allow people in Baldvis and all along the Mandurah line to travel to the eastern suburbs. It will mean that people from the southern suburbs who have work commitments in that part of the world will be able to travel on rail more easily. It will open up opportunities for people to use rail who may not use it at the moment. Every person who we can get on a train is one fewer person in a car and that will reduce congestion on Kwinana Freeway and all our roads.

There is also money in this budget for other areas of the Baldvis electorate. Education is one of the local industries in Baldvis that is booming. This budget has \$15 million in the out years for a new primary school in the electorate. It also continues funding for the new Wellard primary school, which will open next year. It allocates \$48 million to Baldvis south high school, which will be the second public high school in Baldvis.

I would also like to speak about a range of local projects, local jobs initiatives. These are smaller in comparison but they are dramatic in their impact on the lives of people in my community. For example, \$750 000 has been allocated for the Peel Riding for the Disabled Association. This is a wonderful community organisation. Riding for the Disabled involves children with disabilities being able to ride horses and the value of that is incredible. I have seen it in action with the Peel Riding for the Disabled group, which is located in an area that is bounded by three seats: Kwinana, Rockingham and Baldvis. On the weekend, I was in Murray–Wellington where the local member attended the Mandurah–Murray Riding for the Disabled venue, which was holding the state games. It was a wonderful day. It brought in people from throughout the state and children were able to ride horses and engage with the community. These children have a range of disabilities and situations—some are in wheelchairs—and they are able to engage with the community by riding horses. It is also incredible to see the development of children who participate in these programs. That \$750 000 will go towards making a new home for the Peel Riding for the Disabled Association. It is homeless at the moment, but it is operating from a property called Mead Farm. Horses cannot be stabled at Mead Farm, so there is a big logistical issue of bringing horses in via floats every time it has a meeting or gets together for the children. This is a big issue for the group. It is very expensive. It needs a permanent home, and we intend to provide that at Mead Farm. Mead Farm is also a very historic property; it dates back to the 1850s. It has immense local and state heritage value and the \$750 000 will also go towards helping to restore this old farming homestead, as well as providing facilities for horses and ablution blocks so that the community can use this facility. The long-term intention is to have a facility that serves a range of purposes. Of course, it will be a new home for the Peel Riding for the Disabled group. It will retain, protect and preserve a valuable heritage property in Western Australia. It will also provide a local tourist attraction. The intention is to have a facility to which local people can go to have Devonshire tea and look at the horses, which will provide some income for the Peel Riding for the Disabled group. This is a very worthy initiative and I am very proud that money has been set aside for it in this budget.

I will also talk about the \$100 000 that has been allocated to the mighty Brumbies at Baldvis Football Club. The Baldvis Brumbies probably deserves this allocation for the fact alone that it helped to introduce Hayden Ballantyne into the football world. It is where he got his start. If that was not enough, it is a fantastic football team. I think it is one of the biggest and most active local teams in the state. Recently, its reserve team made it through to the grand final and its league team is still fighting in the finals. I can also report that the girls' under 18 team won its grand final, and it is back-to-back premierships for the girls' under 18s at the Baldvis Brumbies. The allocation of \$100 000 will be matched dollar for dollar by Rockingham City Council and we are very grateful for that contribution. It is a way for the state government to work together with local governments to bring these benefits to communities. The money will be spent on resurfacing its home ground at Fifty Road and installing a new reticulation system. With so many teams and so many players from AFL Auskick upwards, this ground gets an absolute pounding and some of the sections are reduced to sand, which can be quite dangerous. This initiative will mean a total of \$200 000 invested in the Baldvis Brumbies' home ground. It will be money very well spent.

I can also see in the budget that there is a total of \$150 000 for local schools, including Bertram Primary, Makybe Rise Primary and Tranby College. That money is being allocated for the provision of nature play in those schools. Nature play is an incredibly valuable resource for schools. It is a way for children to be kids, basically, in the middle of the school day. If we tried to get a child to learn by putting them in a classroom all day, it would be a bit like sitting in Parliament and not having a break—they would not get a lot achieved at the end of the day. Having those kids being able to loosen up and to engage in nature—to be kids—is very valuable. The experts tell us that

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it actually increases their academic performance if they are allowed to go out into a natural environment and enjoy the outdoors. I understand that Bertram Primary is going to match its \$50 000 grant with other money that the parents and citizens association is busy raising. Its intention is to have a world-class—almost Australia's number one—nature-play facility built around the natural wetland at the back of the school. It will be very exciting to see how that works out. Makybe Rise Primary was designed for 450 students but is home to about 1 000 students. It is a very big and crowded school and there is pressure on areas for children to play and recreate around. Makybe Rise also used to hold the dubious honour of having the most demountable classrooms—up to 27 last year. The plan is to remove at least one of those demountable classrooms to put in place a nature-play facility. Those are very valuable things for the local community in terms of what is happening in the schools.

There is also an allocation of \$200 000 for the Baldivis Children's Forest, which is very well renowned and well known in the southern suburbs of Perth. Children from Fremantle down to Mandurah attend this facility regularly to learn about nature. The \$200 000 allocation will be used to provide an education centre. This facility is helping to restore a former farmland area to natural Australian bushland. It attracts students from around the world to Western Australia to visit the Baldivis Children's Forest. It is a valuable investment and it is one of many happening in Baldivis. There are many others I could mention, but I think that gives a certain flavour of the impact of the budget in the community of Baldivis.

I would like to close by making a comment, if I can, on what this budget is about. I grew up in a small business family. On this side of the chamber there are many people who have had connections with small businesses or who grew up in small business families. The lesson I learnt from that is to live within your means and manage your finances, and that virtually the last person you pay is yourself. Pay the bills, pay staff and then, if there is money left over after reinvesting in the business, pay yourself. It is a basic philosophy. It is something that I believe in. It is the way I manage my own finances. I think most Western Australians who believe in responsible financial management also believe that it is incumbent on governments, which get the benefit of their taxes, to treat that tax money with respect and to invest it carefully and in ways that will deliver a return. The notion of borrowing money to pay a grocery bill is abhorrent, quite frankly.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** It is a sign that someone has lost control of the finances.

**Mr C.J. Barnett** interjected.

**Mr R.R. WHITBY:** It is a hard truth to bear for some people.

**MR S.J. PRICE (Forrestfield)** [8.34 pm]: I rise to contribute to the debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. I would like to start by saying that yesterday essentially marked six months that the McGowan Labor government has been in place. It is pleasing to see that we have delivered on a significant number of the election promises we made. The budget goes to the fact that we went to the election having listened to what the people in our electorates had to say and having looked at the issues, with a view to providing solutions and alternatives to them. It is interesting to hear some of the comments from the other side of the chamber regarding pork-barrelling and looking after our own seats and stuff like that. My seat was held by the then government at the time; it was not held by the Labor Party, so the commitments we made were in response to what we were told as we campaigned throughout the period leading up to the election. We listened to the residents and the members within the electorate and responded to what they wanted.

I would like to start by referring to some of the comments made by the Treasurer in his speech on budget day. He started off by commenting that this is a budget that —

... addresses the fiscal legacy that we have inherited.

We have heard a lot of debate today about who is responsible for that. At the end of the day we are certainly hearing a more positive tone regarding the budget from the Liberal Party than from the Nationals. I think a few of the media commentators are making the comment that the way the opposition responds to the budget will be quite telling as we go into the future. The Treasurer went on to say —

This Budget strikes the balance of delivering on our election commitments, of creating jobs and getting the State's finances back on track.

...

Tough decisions have been made and not all will be popular.

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We have heard some of the debate over some of the increases in payments that particular aspects of the economy will have to pick up. The Treasurer continued —

But we have worked overtime to ensure that the burden of fiscal repair is shared as fairly as possible across the community.

That is the approach we have taken. He then went on to say —

This Budget lays the foundation for returning our State to a position of strength.

The Treasurer acknowledged that the revenue estimates have been revised down by a massive \$5 billion over the period 2016–17 to 2019–20, and stated —

The Government has worked hard to mitigate these impacts through a \$3.5 billion package of Budget repair measures ...

But this has also allowed us to deliver on our election commitments. The government is limiting the impact on net debt and bringing that to \$603 million over the next four years, which is a great reflection on the work that has been done since we came to government to identify savings that we can make and to get underway in fixing the budget. The Treasurer also said —

... the McGowan Labor Government has been elected to create jobs and diversify our economy. Our plans are vast and bold, with an eye firmly fixed on the future.

To boost local jobs we are spending \$39 million on the Local Projects Local Jobs grants program, which includes \$10 million in regional areas.

We heard some comments today that the regions have missed out in this budget, but that is not an accurate picture of what we are looking at.

I would like to talk about some of the election commitments funded in the budget for my electorate of Forrestfield. I can tell members that the electorate and residents of Forrestfield are very happy about what we have actually achieved in the budget process. One of the first issues we confronted was policing across the Forrestfield electorate. Just to remind members, and also everyone in the Forrestfield electorate, the Forrestfield electorate consists of High Wycombe, Maida Vale, Forrestfield, Wattle Grove, Orange Grove, Kenwick and a bit of Maddington. Every area is very parochial. When I talk to people about being the member for Forrestfield, they say that they do not actually live in Forrestfield but live in Kenwick or High Wycombe. Across the electorate, people had concerns about crime. One of the first commitments we made was to extend the opening hours of Forrestfield Police Station to address people's concerns. On 7 February 2017, I put out a press release that stated that should the Labor Party win government, the hours of Forrestfield Police Station would be extended so that it would be open until 7.00 pm. Upon coming to government, that was one of the first things the Minister for Police implemented and it has been extremely well received by Forrestfield residents.

The local jobs, local projects program committed to by the Labor Party during the campaign was extremely popular. As a result, it provided a lot of funding for different parts of the community. I would like to touch on a few of those because it is extremely important to the recipients of that funding to, once again, have their projects fully funded in the budget. Once again we are delivering on our election commitments. Forrestfield United Soccer Club has received \$200 000 to upgrade lighting at Hartfield Park. Those who know Hartfield Park would know that it received a \$6 million grant at the last election to increase a lot of its playing surfaces and facilities.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** Upgraded by the Liberal Party.

**Mr S.J. PRICE:** That was an election commitment by the Liberal Party at a previous election, which it won.

Hartfield Park is a fabulous facility for the east metropolitan region. This additional commitment from the government will help continue improvements at that facility, which will certainly become one of the best local soccer grounds in the state.

The government has also committed \$60 000 to the Kalamunda United Soccer Club to improve facilities at the Maida Vale Reserve. Those improvements will ensure that there are more opportunities for training and playing at the Maida Vale Reserve. Maida Vale Reserve is an expansive sporting field but it does not have too many facilities. That is certainly something that needs to be looked at in the future.

The High Wycombe Junior Football Club has received \$75 000 to improve lighting at Scott Reserve, which is a ground they also share with the High Wycombe Cricket Club. Something very evident within the electorate is that community and sporting clubs and activities are a significant part of the fabric of the community. All our sporting clubs are being challenged for space and they have to be more creative about how to facilitate the

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additional number of young children who want to get into sport, which is a positive problem to have. Providing additional lighting at those grounds will let those clubs juggle training and playing requirements for different times of the day and different days of the week, which will benefit everyone.

The government has also committed \$75 000 to the Forrestfield “Rhinos” Football Club for the same purpose— lighting upgrades at the John Reid Oval. They, too, are challenged for space by the number of young kids and amateur footballers wanting to play football, so they have to create access to different parts of the reserve to allow people to undertake footy training or to play games at different times and different days of the week.

The Forrestfield Bowling Club will receive \$60 000 to install a synthetic bowling green. That will be a fabulous asset for the club. It will have one synthetic green and one grass green, and save it a significant amount of money associated with maintenance of the greens. More importantly, it will allow them to train and practice on a synthetic green so that when they go to another club for a competition on synthetic turf, they will have been able to practice on a synthetic green prior to that competition.

Some school P&Cs in my electorates also received financial commitments. Edney Primary School has received a commitment of \$50 000 to install air conditioning in its Building the Education Revolution assembly area and to purchase new music equipment for its recently established music program. I am certainly looking forward to the first concert they put on with their new music equipment in that air conditioned BER area, because it certainly gets hot in there during summer.

Wattle Grove Primary School has received some funding to deal with parking issues around the school. It is a fairly new school that has seen exponential growth in the number of students enrolled there. Parking is a problem for that school, as it is a challenge for a lot of schools in a lot of different electorates. How we convince parents that they do not have to drop their kids right off at the door of a school and to not walk in with them is an ongoing issue that this funding will certainly help to deal with.

East Kenwick Primary School has received \$40 000 to resurface its basketball courts. The P&C had been fundraising for quite some time for that project, and hopefully it should not be too long before that basketball court gets a new surface.

The Friends of Brixton Street Wetlands is a volunteer group that spends a lot of time ensuring that the Brixton Street Wetlands are looked after and managed environmentally. That group needed some assistance to put in fencing to keep both humans and animals out of certain areas and also to put an erosion-proofing product on the ground to stop vehicle damage. That group has received \$10 000 to do that. Trevor and Regina Drummond have been absolute champions in fighting for the Brixton Street Wetlands.

The Foothills Information and Referral Service is a local organisation within Forrestfield. I will read a little from what it says on its website so members can appreciate the significance of this small group.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members, could you take your conversations outside, because I am having trouble hearing the member. Thank you.

**Mr S.J. PRICE:** Thank you, Mr Acting Speaker. The website states —

FIRS is a not for profit, community based organisation that is overseen by a volunteer board. FIRS has been providing, accessible, non judgmental, non discriminatory services to families and individuals within the Shire of Kalamunda since 1992. The services that FIRS provide are:

- Emergency Financial Relief
- Education and Training
- Supported Developmental Playgroup —

For minority groups—

- Referral information to other agencies and organisations

FIRS also provided financial counselling. Financial counselling is very important for people struggling to make do in life. It helps them to cope and chart a path forward with a bit of financial stability. Unfortunately, the previous government cut funding to financial counselling services. It re-established some of the funding, but not all of it, so as a result, not all financial counselling services were reinstated. Unfortunately, FIRS was one organisation that missed out on that funding. It is pleasing to see in the budget that the Minister for Community Services has included funding for financial counselling services for the rest of this financial year and will re-establish full funding in the forward estimates. The text that goes with the funding provision on page 237 of budget paper No 2 states —

There is a growing unmet need for financial counselling services for vulnerable families and individuals in the metropolitan area, due to current economic conditions, low wages, growth and other factors.

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Current services are achieving positive outcomes for their clients, and additional funding over the next four years and revised procurement arrangements will enable the services to be expanded.

It is great to see that money there and I commend the Minister for Community Services for that. That service is extremely important to a lot of local organisations providing financial counselling to residents. It is particularly important in my electorate, because FIRS is the only organisation people have access to within the area. When FIRS could no longer provide that financial counselling service, the nearest financial counselling service for people to access was in Gosnells. There is no public transport directly to Gosnells from Forrestfield, and a lot of people do not have cars so they could not get there. If they could, often they were not dealt with because they did not live within the Gosnells catchment area, so there was a bit of a black hole in the system. Reinstating that funding is extremely important and I will certainly be working with FIRS to ensure that it can access that funding in the future.

I am sure members on the other side of the house would be happy to hear that our number one Metronet priority is to complete the Forrestfield Airport Link rail. The current route and design came about as a counterproposal during the 2013 state election campaign. At the time the Labor Party proposed Metronet, there was to be a rail line to Forrestfield via Perth Airport, at a cost of \$731 million, and it was to be completed by mid-2018. We would have been halfway there had we won that election and instigated our Metronet project at that time. Unfortunately, we did not win that election, and the counterproposal is the one that is being constructed at the moment, at a cost of \$1.6 billion. However, in saying that, it is a significant piece of infrastructure for the state, and particularly for the residents of Forrestfield and people who live in that region. It will provide direct access from Forrestfield to the city. However, it should also go the other way. Forrestfield should be not only a point of departure but also a point of destination. The residential and commercial development at the end of the rail line around Forrestfield station needs to be transit-oriented. It needs to provide people with the opportunity to live close to that transport hub. It also needs to provide employment opportunities for the jobs of the future, and opportunities for the development of new industries. The close proximity of Forrestfield to the airport will provide significant advantages for logistics companies in that area.

Another benefit of the Forrestfield Airport Link is that it will increase property prices in the area. In an article in *The Weekend West* of 2–3 September, the Satterley Property Group CEO highlights Forrestfield as one of the top areas in which to invest, thanks to heavy investment in transport infrastructure. Mirvac's general manager of residential development says that the expanding eastern corridors will lead to areas of real growth over the next few years. She goes on to say —

“These areas meet the key criteria that we believe people are looking for, with both existing and planned amenities, transport links into Perth, including the new Metronet, proximity to primary and secondary schools, shops and services,” ....

That project is having a significant impact across my electorate.

[Member's time extended.]

**Mr S.J. PRICE:** I also need to mention the \$10 million for Darling Range Sports College to upgrade the home economics part of the school—what is it called?

**Mr R.S. Love:** Cooking and cleaning!

**Mr S.J. PRICE:** That is it! There are some better words for it—design technology centre, science laboratories and food technology. That will be an extremely important part of that school. It will also provide students with the opportunity to undertake a non-Australian tertiary admission rank certificate, which they currently cannot do at that school. Another commitment in the budget is funding for a \$900 000 upgrade to the intersection of Hale Road and Woolworths Drive, which is a major problem in Forrestfield, and \$86 million for grade separation at the intersection of Kalamunda Road and Roe Highway. As we heard earlier from the member for Kalamunda, that will improve safety at that intersection. In the last five years, there have been some 200 accidents at that intersection, and a few years ago there was the unfortunate death of a young child who was crossing the road at that intersection. It is also a significant point of congestion in that area.

I will close with the three points made by the Treasurer in his budget speech —

In conclusion, Mr Speaker, the 2017–18 Budget:

- focuses on getting Western Australia back on track by boosting local jobs and delivering our election commitments;

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- outlines our Budget repair plan to return the general government sector to surplus within the forward estimates and limit growth in net debt; and
- starts the process of reforming the public sector and the delivery of services to the community.

I commend the bills to the house.

**MS L.L. BAKER (Maylands — Deputy Speaker)** [8.54 pm]: I rise to speak on the second reading debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. I want to talk about what this budget will deliver for the electorate of Maylands. I also want to talk specifically about an issue that the community of Maylands and the community of Western Australia is finding increasingly difficult to deal with; that is, the plight of older women who are vulnerable and facing poverty and homelessness.

After nine years in opposition, members would imagine that it is extremely gratifying to finally be able to deliver some definite goals for our electorates. I will start with the \$50 million upgrade to John Forrest Senior College. I have been on the board of that school for the past five or six years, ever since John Forrest Senior College became an independent public school. The college is well deserving of an upgrade. The kitchen is in the same condition as it was in 1958 when it was first built, and some of the scones that are made in that kitchen are probably from that time as well! Funding has also been provided for a new performing arts centre. We need to spend that money wisely to enable that school to go from strength to strength. A tip of the suburb of Morley is in my electorate. Morley Galleria is part of my electorate, as is John Forrest Senior College. The population of this area is expected to increase by 10 000 people over the next 10 years. The upgrade of John Forrest Senior College will give that school the capacity to take children from those families.

I turn now to some of the transport commitments in the budget. The first is the Caledonian Avenue crossover. The second is the spur line that will take the rail line from Bayswater to Morley and be the start of the Ellenbrook rail line. Money is provided in the budget to undertake planning for those commitments. Caledonian Avenue has been a weeping sore for anyone who has tried to cross from east to west in my electorate. I see that many members agree with that, because they do a similar run. Cars are often stuck at that intersection for a long time. That will be a great improvement for the community.

One of the star deliverables that this government has brought to my electorate is the \$1.5 million contribution to the purchase of the Bayswater wetlands, known as Carter's block. That unequivocally won many friends for me and the Labor Party in the lead-up to the state election. I cannot begin to tell members how welcome that commitment is, after many years of fighting to try to get the Liberal–National government to do anything to protect those wetlands. So that is welcome, welcome support.

The crown jewel in Bayswater is, of course, the \$86.2 million for the Bayswater train station upgrade. I do not expect that to be delivered overnight. The two parts of that redevelopment will need to be planned very carefully, particularly the train station that will be at the end of the tunnel at Bayswater, and then the spur line as it goes across to Morley. I am glad that funding is provided in the budget for the planning of those projects.

Members have already seen some other deliverables and fulfilled promises by the McGowan government. I would like to mention the money that has gone into the family and domestic violence prevention activities around the state and thank the McGowan government very warmly for that needed support. The RSPCA has benefited a little from that because, as many of the people in this house will understand, many women stay in the home to protect its vulnerable members; they choose not to leave. Even when they do leave they will go back, because there have been threats made against family members. Quite often family members include the pets of the family. That support will help foster about 30 animals over the next 12 months. I am really proud of that initiative and looking forward to seeing the outcomes from that.

There is another program that I think is being developed. When it was originally written it was based on the program from the UK called “troubled families.” When the policy was rewritten by me it was called “thriving families”, but for the election commitment it was renamed as “Target 120”. It is a multi-systemic therapeutic model that should deliver amazing outcomes to drive down some of the recidivism rates that we see with the most troubled families in the state. It will be money well spent if we can bring resources together to help those families come out of the problems that they are seeing.

I want to talk specifically about the plight of older single women in Western Australia and Australia in general, and about their risk of homelessness, now more than ever before. We need to start by thinking about the narrative around home ownership, work, money, gender and ageing, to rewrite this story. The old narrative goes that a person works for 40 years in a full-time job and along the way buys a home or maybe a couple of homes. They build their

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savings and superannuation so that when they retire they can literally sail off into the sunset in safety and security. When they get too old for that, they can buy their way into a retirement village with the relevant social and health supports that it would provide. But there is a twenty-first century narrative unfortunately running parallel to this. It is the story that demonises people who are living in poverty, because it must be their own fault that they are poor. It has nothing to do with structural inequality or neoliberal policies, and sees our ageing population as a burden rather than an asset. I think that members will find that government policies and funding decisions around pensions and the like have been built on that dated narrative. But for hundreds and thousands of older single women in this state and across Australia who are on low incomes, this narrative is at best a fairytale and at worst a horror story. As one newspaper states —

...a new homeless epidemic in which women in their 50s and 60s are the victims.

Social workers warn Australia is facing a generational “tsunami” of this older demographic in coming years ... government stats are showing half a million women will fall into housing stress over the next two decades.

Working from a life pathway approach, we can look at the shocks in an individual’s life that might cause them to become homeless or become vulnerable to homelessness. Researcher Maree Paterson has categorised older women’s pathways into homelessness. I will go through a few of the dot points that she has identified, such as divorce or separation, escaping from violence in the home, not being able to find paid work or losing a job, poor or ill health, being evicted from private rentals and increasing rental prices that they just cannot afford. If an older woman leaves a partner, that requires a division of assets that often includes the family home and superannuation. Given that many women work part time, we can see that their capacity for post-divorce wealth accumulation is immediately less than many men. Seventy-five per cent of men will go on in full-time occupations. It is much harder for women. An older single woman is more likely to be living in private rental accommodation and this has its own set of problems. Older women on low incomes often spend more than 30 per cent of their weekly income on paying the rent. That is the definition of housing stress. If 30 per cent or more of a person’s income is going towards a mortgage or rental, then that is housing stress. I have anecdotal evidence from a dear friend of mine. She makes less than \$500 after tax from her part-time weekly income. More than 50 per cent of that goes on renting her rooms. This leaves money for food and transport to work, but nothing for savings, nothing for health benefits and certainly nothing for a holiday, recreation or sport activities, which will impact on her health in the long term. Our current tenancy laws tend to favour the owner of a property and there is little security of tenure for long-term leases in particular. Older women are often afraid to ask for home improvements because they think they might get evicted if they cause a problem. Some private rental stock is not fit for the purpose of an older lifestyle. There may need to be improvements made for physical safety and some landlords may not be willing to do that. In essence, women are afraid they will lose their home, even if it is rented, if they make complaints. There are many cases. I am sure my colleagues would have found cases themselves in which women who have lived in a rental home for decades find themselves evicted when the owner of that property dies or the property is sold for redevelopment. There is no security of tenure for these women.

For many decades, this Western Australian housing narrative splendidly supported the retirement home industry and suggested that people eventually switch their home asset for a life of leisure in a retirement or lifestyle village. Apart from the fact that the option of private or non-government retirement villages is beyond the income capacity of older single women, it does not often meet many women’s requirements regarding ageing and place. Owning their own home is also financially impossible and the current financial offerings from banks and government agencies for co-financing equity schemes are still beyond many women’s means. Private rental is the only option for many single women and that carries with it a minefield of problems. In 2016, the Mercy Foundation report “A Plan for Change: Homes for Older Women” stated —

They also rarely get access to priority social housing as they are homeless as a result of their low incomes, not as a result of having complex needs.

This means that older women are marginalised in the housing market—in the private rental market, in the social and affordable housing markets, and even in the homelessness service sector.

This is not the reward that we would envisage for a life of hard work, both paid and unpaid.

I do not have all the solutions for these issues. I would like to put on record a few ideas. Firstly, coordination is needed across agencies and governments. Federal, state and local agencies need to coordinate better in order to attack this problem with any chance of success. Across-agency solutions are needed that go across housing, homelessness, women and aged care. We must include older single women in that discussion. They will bring initiatives, stimulate ideas and bring policy thoughts and design practice to this debate. True participative

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engagement for older single women is critical. They are assets, not burdens. Older single women need to be involved in any research and policy development that is created to deal with the core issues regarding their risk of homelessness. There is no specific WA research providing the facts and issues around this cohort. At the very least we should be finding some baseline data on how many older single women are using public and social housing, how many are accessing the commonwealth rental assistance scheme and some way of estimating the hidden and at-risk homeless groups. We need to include as diverse a range of women as possible, and to really involve them as active participants in identifying needs and exploring solutions to reimagining homes for the future. Information covers many areas, including rights and benefits, pathways to safe and secure homes, innovative financing options, innovative housing options beyond living in a one-bedroom apartment, and ways for women to connect, organise and work out their own housing solutions. These are all things that are urgently needed.

Social impact investment is a growing option in Australia. A recent example of this form of financing in action involved Social Ventures Australia. SVA manages Health Employees Superannuation Trust Australia's \$30 million impact investment fund and, in 2016, allocated \$6.7 million to a Queensland community housing provider to build homes for low-income earners. There is also a need for governments and banks to more deeply explore and expand co-financing and shared equity options for older single women who may want to buy a home with a group of other women or create a housing cooperative.

Innovative models are the way to go. One apartment for one person is not the only option for homes of the future. Older single women are open to exploring innovative housing options, including co-housing and co-living as well as cooperative and intentional communities. Housing specifically for older women has been developed successfully in Paris and London, and projects are underway in Canada and the USA. These housing developments were created for and by women. The Babayagas' work in Paris took over a decade to create 25 apartments and shared spaces, as well as a community space on the ground floor for an open university, where learning and entrepreneurial activities are run by women and the local community. This five-storey building is in the heart of Paris and is surrounded by shops, cafes and community. The women sourced €4 million from eight different public sources. The Babayagas' model is being developed in other parts of France as well as in Canada. Examples of smaller scale female-led options for homing include three women buying and modifying a home together, as well as a woman who already owns a home advertising for others to build small homes on her land. Given support and information, many older single women at risk of homelessness could work together to create these options. Changing mindsets and laws will be needed if truly innovative, affordable and secure homes are to be created.

Currently, most single women at risk of homelessness live in private rental accommodation. Tenancy laws will need to be changed to give women more security to be able to build a home that is fit for purpose. If this issue is not addressed, hundreds of thousands of older single women across Australia will not only live in poverty but also have a vastly diminished quality of life. We cannot let this group of citizens down any more than we already have. We need to more clearly understand the extent and range of this problem. We must include women themselves to help us understand the scope of the problem. These women are not a burden; they are creative and powerful assets and, given the resources, they will be able to help us reimagine and create new visions for homes.

Before I sit down, I would like to thank my very dear friend Liz Lennon, who did all the research into this subject. She has an amazing research capacity and is very clever at being able to examine all aspects of these kinds of complex and interrelated problems. Thank you, Liz; you are a legend.

**MS J.M. FREEMAN (Mirrabooka)** [9.13 pm]: I also rise to speak on the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017, otherwise known as the budget and the budget reply speech. I note with some confidence and optimism that it is forecast in budget paper No 3 that employment is expected to grow by 1.5 per cent. As members can imagine, this is very welcome news, along with the government's focus on employment generation. It is particularly welcome news for the people of Mirrabooka, the area I represent, which has an unacceptably high unemployment rate of 21 per cent.

When we look at the *Economic and Fiscal Outlook*, we see that employment is expected to be supported by growth across a range of industries, particularly in the services sector. The census for Mirrabooka, Balga, Koondoola, Alexander Heights, Westminster and Dianella shows that the services sector is an important employment sector in these areas, particularly for women. Beyond this, employment growth is forecast to strengthen by 2.25 per cent by 2021. That can only come as very important and good news. I also note that a new industries fund will be established to stimulate the economy and generate new opportunities for jobs and business growth through support for emerging businesses and new, innovative and technological start-ups. I urge the government to ensure that that initiative has a broad scope to include a wide variety of communities—particularly many of the diverse communities that I represent in the Mirrabooka electorate. There are many businesses and new industries that wish

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to flourish and connect us with, in many instances, diaspora from a wide range of countries. That gives us a benefit internationally as well as nationally and in this state.

I have said this before, and I want to keep saying this because it is very important: when I entered Parliament in 2008 the unemployment rate in the Mirrabooka–Balga area was 8.5 per cent. It grew to a peak of 25 per cent in December 2016, so one in four people were unemployed. Thankfully, that has now reduced to 21 per cent. What is really imperative about this story is that it should not be simply dismissed as long-term unemployment for a certain cohort of people, or batted away in an offhand way as something that is not a problem we can look at. We need to understand how unemployment grew so exponentially when the rest of the state did not have that massive increase in unemployment.

I commend the University of Western Australia and the McCusker Centre for Citizenship for their recent research efforts. Postgraduate research students focused on this vexed issue and the reasons for this peak and spike in accelerated unemployment growth. Yesterday I met with some of the students and others to hear about some of the ways in which they were looking at their particular projects. I thought it was really important to point out to them that it is not simply enough to just say, “Well, it’s a high multicultural area.” It certainly is that; more than 50 per cent of the people living in my electorate were born overseas, and around 45 per cent speak a language other than English at home. Yes, that is an issue in the area, but a lot of those people are well and truly long-term citizens of Australia. There are many Vietnamese, Macedonians, Greeks, Somalians, Eritreans and Burmese living in the area. It is not simply a new refugee problem vexing the community in terms of employment. I remind the people in this Parliament that the WA Charter of Multiculturalism was established in 1984, and still stands today, by a champion of multiculturalism in this state, Geoff Gallop. As I understand it, it has never been repealed or replaced, and has been retained by successive governments since then. I want to remind the house of the importance of its principles. One of those principles states —

Multiculturalism as enunciated by this Charter is a public policy which enables all Western Australians, irrespective of their differences on the basis of culture, religion, history, and other variables, to have the opportunity to participate equally in the political, social and economic life of this society.

That means the economic life of employment. When we look at employment and employment growth, we need to particularly look at the impact of employment on the community. Although I said that I did not want to suggest that this was the sole reason for the unemployment rate in the Mirrabooka–Balga area, it is one of the complex factors in the area, and I would like to take a little time in the house tonight to explore that. In doing so, I will place on the record a very concise and good report by the Fairfield Multicultural Interagency and the Refugee Council of Australia that was released in August 2017 called “Not Working: Experiences of Refugees and Migrants with Jobactive”. One of the recommendations is that we should develop a national multicultural strategy and review and improve jobactive services. What I really want to talk about in this place tonight is that, with a government that is focused very much on employment and growing employment, we need to enter the debate about jobactive providers, because my view is that they are not delivering employment services to our community and to taxpayers. We tend to think that this is a federal matter and that we in this place have no control over it and cannot have any influence. Indeed, we need to have influence, because jobactive services have a major impact on the communities that we represent. In saying that, I will give a good example. In a recent edition of *The Saturday Paper* of 12 September 2017, a mother wrote an article about disability employment services and their failure to deliver, to the detriment of her son. In the article she talks about his disability, which is a mental health illness, and his need, desire and commitment to re-enter employment so that we he can re-establish his life. She states —

Tom has applied for so many jobs we’ve lost count. Through the Department of Employment, Tom is registered with Disability Employment Services. His agency is supposed to help him “find work and keep a job” but mostly he just helps himself.

He tells us they get government funding to “provide expert support”. They don’t get funding if he finds a job himself—this is why they discourage him from doing this and why he argues with them regularly.

I have raised this issue in Parliament previously and I have had contact from people about this situation in my electorate office in Mirrabooka. People have told me that their jobactive provider will not facilitate them getting a certain ticket, a certain licence or a certain training accreditation because they found a job themselves, which means that the jobactive provider gets a smaller amount of funding. When jobactive changed in 2014, an outcome-based funding model was applied to providers. We need to be careful with this new terminology used by bureaucrats. We all want to know what outcome-based means and we want to know that funding for providers is not to our detriment, and that is exactly what appears to be happening with jobactive providers. About 70 per cent of their funding used to be for administration and 30 per cent was based on outcomes, but now about 40 per cent

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is for administration and 60 per cent is based on outcomes. That means that a major part of their funding is based on them showing that they found a job for a person. That seems to cause disadvantage to jobseekers. It also means that people are discouraged from actively looking for their own work by their jobactive agency because it is of no benefit to the agency.

I want to talk about how jobactive providers are performing in Western Australia. We have a rating system. The online rating system for jobactive providers illustrates that Western Australian providers are the worst performing in the country. The national average indicates that jobactive agencies failed to find work for some 90 per cent of clients. I do not have the figures with me; I tried to find them tonight but I could not find them in time. However, WA appears to be well below the national average. We know that the Australian government outsourced national employment services to employment services providers in 1998. Members may remember the old Commonwealth Employment Service offices from their adolescence or early adulthood. Since 2015, it has operated as jobactive. Its principles include helping jobseekers find and keep jobs, helping jobseekers move from welfare to work and helping jobseekers meet their mutual objectives, and for jobactive organisations to deliver quality services. Participation in jobactive is compulsory for those jobseekers who receive income support payments. They can seek assistance from a jobactive agency if they do not receive income support, but they get only a limited amount and it is only for up to six months.

I want to talk about the three streams—stream A, stream B and stream C. Jobseekers in stream A, including volunteers, account for 43.8 per cent of the overall caseload and are considered to be the most competitive and ready for work. Jobseekers in stream B account for 38.8 per cent of the caseload and have access barriers that need their employment services provider to play a greater role for them to become job ready. Those people may also have language barriers. The most disadvantaged jobseekers and those with multiple barriers to work, such as drug and alcohol addiction or language barriers or other issues, are assisted through stream C, which accounts for 17.1 per cent of the caseload. An employment incentivisation scheme pays additional money to people in stream C if they have been unemployed for a significant period. The article from *The Saturday Paper* states —

After a couple of years “providing expert support” but no employment opportunities, Tom’s employment agency offered a potential employer financial incentives to employ him.

The employer incentive was up to \$10 000. The article states that when that money ran out, Tom lost his job even though there were no problems with his employment. Jobactive decided to take unfair dismissal action because it thought that the situation was unfair.

[Member’s time extended.]

**Ms J.M. FREEMAN:** Suffice to say, according to this August 2017 article, the case never went anywhere and Tom remains unassisted by his jobactive provider. From the number of people who have come to my office, this is not an uncommon situation.

I want to talk about the adverse impact on refugee and humanitarian entrants. The reason I took members through streams A, B and C is that for the one jobactive provider that has classified its refugee and humanitarian entrants since 2014, of its 800 clients, 38 per cent were classified stream A, 42 per cent were classified stream B and 20 per cent were classified stream C. These stats indicate that almost 40 per cent of refugees are streamed into jobactive stream A and, consequently, receive the lowest level of support but are expected to meet the highest level of mutual obligations. They are treated the same way that most people who are born in Australia are treated and who have had the benefit of the Australian education system. It is one of the key causal factors of the many refugee jobactive job seekers being adversely affected. It has in itself resulted in the “three strikes and you’re out” system of systemic payment suspension. People with English as a second language, in particular refugee and humanitarian entrant clients, are sometimes unaware of their responsibility to report, and the jobactive network does not make its clients aware of that requirement. Refugee clients are not adequately notified of jobactive interviews and appointments. The compliance framework does not take into account low levels of English proficiency. Often during suspension issues clients are completely stressed and unable to meet their commitments, such as rent, and they have to deal with angry landlords and seek assistance from service agencies in Mirrabooka or from my office. The Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre, which is a very valued service in my area, has dealt with more than 100 refugee clients who have had their Centrelink benefits suspended. It believes this is a serious systemic issue that causes considerable stress to clients and is very disproportionate to intervention in terms of what happens in the broader community.

In the interests of time, I will not take members through the other aspects, suffice to say that the situation is dire and it will become even more so because the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre recently lost federal government funding for its humanitarian settlement scheme. It is a well-respected, well-considered agency in our community

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and the loss of federal government funding is a great blow to it. It deals with people who need assistance to negotiate jobactive. As I have shown, jobactive is in no way flexible with people with these sorts of needs.

In conclusion, I absolutely welcome the budget, particularly because of the \$250 000 injection to commence a project with the City of Stirling for a newcomer workforce participation project. This project will focus on skilled migrants and skilled people in the community who need to make links in the network, involve themselves in mentoring and develop the capacity to identify employment. If we are going to address this very complex issue of unemployment in the Mirrabooka and Balga areas, remembering that the charter for multiculturalism refers to economic participation, we must also consider this very vexing issue of humanitarian refugees and other community members who are not highly skilled. To do that, we must look at any opportunities, given our emphasis on job growth, to assist the Metropolitan Migrant Resource Centre to deliver this well-needed, well-respected and vital service to our community. I know that with that commitment, those opportunities will arise. I wanted to put to Parliament tonight that those opportunities must be broad enough to meet the needs of these community members as well as those of the more highly skilled in our community. I thank the house.

**MR S.A. MILLMAN (Mount Lawley)** [9.37 pm]: I also rise to make a contribution to the debate this evening on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. However, before I do that, I encourage members to pause and reflect on the contributions that we have just heard from the members for Mirrabooka and Maylands. I ask members to do that because they were enlightening, heartening and worthwhile. The underlying theme that influences the speeches that were just made by the members for Maylands and Mirrabooka is about empowering people. It is about people participating in our society, community and economy. The member for Maylands passionately spoke about her advocacy on behalf of women who face a housing crisis and women who struggle to face the challenges of the particular demographic circumstances in which they find themselves. The member for Mirrabooka, it is fair to say, is a renowned advocate for jobs and she also speaks on behalf of refugees. I highlight those two speeches because they are reflective of a number of speeches made this evening on this topic. I say that because I will locate my comments in that broader context. This evening I will speak to the house about the way in which the budget fixes the finances of the state in a way that also strengthens the economy. I will address the house on how one goes about making investments that deliver a return to the community, and I will conclude by emphasising the difficult task of ensuring that in engaging in this exercise, we strike the right balance.

I wonder, if I may, Mr Acting Speaker, also pass on my gratitude to and acknowledge the Treasurer. I will start by reflecting on some of the comments he made in his second reading speech. I quote —

Mr Speaker, the path to surplus is not an easy one.

Tough decisions have been made and not all will be popular. But we have worked overtime to ensure that the burden of fiscal repair is shared as fairly as possible across the community.

...

Mr Speaker, the 2007–08 Annual Report on State Finances outlined a general government operating surplus of \$2.6 billion and total public sector net debt of just \$3.6 billion. The net debt to revenue ratio for the total non-financial public sector was 19 percent.

Fast forward nine years and the estimated financial results for 2016–17 show a general government operating deficit of \$3 billion and total public sector net debt standing at \$32.5 billion. The net debt to revenue ratio is now a staggering 83 percent.

Having contextualised the circumstances that we face by alluding to those figures, the Treasurer also acknowledged —

Since Labor was last in office, the Western Australian economy has experienced strong growth, expanding by an average of 4.7 percent per annum or a total of around 45 percent.

At the same time as the economy was growing —

Tight labour and housing market conditions flowed through to strong growth in taxation revenue, in particular payroll tax, while solid growth in commodity prices saw royalty revenues expand.

And—this is for members opposite—the Treasurer said —

I accept that since 2014 the former Government did it tough, and faced changes to the State's revenue that, whilst predictable, the extent and speed were not.

The Treasurer's comments ought to inform the way in which this house embarks upon this process of debate on the passage of this legislation. I say that because we should be driven by sensible, philosophical, economic and

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political imperatives. We need to make sure that when we pass this budget, as this Parliament should, we do not put too much pressure on those nascent green shoots of economic recovery that we are seeing. At the same time, we cannot also slash and burn the public sector in order to drive down expenditure. This budget, and what I am going to say, is all about striking the right balance.

Admittedly, the McGowan Labor government is faced with a challenge because, on one hand, the trade union movement has expressed concerns about 3 000 redundancies in the public sector. Alternatively, Rick Newnham, the new chief economist at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Western Australia, has said that the McGowan government has lost the opportunity to impose more significant cuts to government expenditure, and commentators such as Gary Adshead stated in *The West Australian* yesterday that we should impose a \$2 a tonne levy on our iron ore miners in order to try to remedy the predicament the state finds itself in.

**Ms J.M. Freeman:** You should join the Nationals!

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** Thank you, member for Mirrabooka. It is the proposal that seems to have been advanced by the National Party, albeit at \$5 a tonne. The fact of the matter is that we can see from the constellation of responses that this budget has invoked that plenty of people are saying we probably have it right but that they have a different view. It is striking the balance—that nuanced and sophisticated response—that this budget achieves that sets it apart as a fantastic piece of fiscal responsibility to restore the state's financial position.

I might have mentioned this anecdote to the house previously, so please forgive me if I have. During the course of the campaign slightly more than six months ago, when I was doorknocking, people would ask me what the government was doing about the state of the economy. I would say that the state of the economy was not the member for Cottesloe's fault; he does not control commodity prices or the housing market. However, I said the government could look at the budget. The state government is such a significant player in the overall Western Australian economy. It is one of the largest employers, largest investors and largest spenders, and it is a significant collector of revenue. When it comes to considering the overall Western Australian economy, the government's responsibility needs to be recognised. If the government does not discharge its political and financial responsibility to manage the budget properly, it is going to create danger signs for the economy overall.

That brings me to the only significant point in this speech, which is that a government should be making the right investments in order to drive productivity growth, confidence in the economy, and provide citizens with the skills they need to be active, meaningful and worthwhile participants.

Members may be aware of the well-known Latin maxim, “mens sana in corpore sano”, literally —

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** I thank the member for Girrawheen; a healthy mind in a healthy body. Many members have regaled the house so far about contributions that have been made through the local jobs, local projects election commitments.

**Ms S. Winton** interjected.

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** I could regale the house at length with all the commitments that have been made and delivered in the state seat of Mount Lawley—in my local neighbourhood—but, given the hour, member for Wanneroo, I do not propose to go through them. I would rather focus on one small area because, in Mt Lawley, I am extraordinarily proud of the quality of our educational institutions, be they early childcare centres such as Marjorie Mann Lawley Day Care Centre or Meela Child Care Centre. They are responsible, in those formative early years, for ensuring that our community—parents and children—have access to terrific, high-quality early childhood education. It is a great honour for me to have been able to assist them in that endeavour by making a small contribution to their capital budgets. Or I could spend time regaling the house with the contributions I have made to some of our fantastic public primary schools such as Sutherland Dianella or Coolbinia Primary Schools, both of which will be investing in new covered outdoor learning areas, or West Morley Primary School, which is investing in an outdoor play area, and which the member for Baldyville quite rightly identified is such an important part of a child's education. I could regale the house with the \$20 000 that will be invested in the Mount Lawley Primary School robotics program in order to provide its students with the necessary attributes they will need to find the jobs of the future and therefore become meaningful and worthwhile contributors to our community. Or I could advise the house of the \$350 000 we are spending on the revitalisation of the Yokine Primary School administration block.

But the one contribution to the education sector of which I am proudest is the \$4 million that the McGowan Labor government will invest in Mount Lawley Senior High School. Members must agree that it is one of the premier public high schools in the state. It has graduated some phenomenal graduates including honourable Jaye Radisich,

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a former member of this place, amongst many others. Mount Lawley Senior High School unfortunately finds itself in a position in which, were it not for the committed policy objectives of the McGowan Labor government, it would be overcrowded and the pedagogical outcomes available to its students would deteriorate. The \$67 million that the McGowan Labor government will invest in building an inner-city high school on Kitchener Park will alleviate those enrolment pressures and provide students at Shenton College, Churchlands Senior High School and Mount Lawley Senior High School with access to the high-quality public education that they need to become the most effective, most efficient and most competent members of a twenty-first century society.

**Ms M.M. Quirk** interjected.

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup:** You're in government. You hold the chamber.

**Mr S.A. MILLMAN:** Yes, member for Dawesville, we do. We are going to use that to make sure that with this budget we strike the right balance. We encourage small businesses. We encourage entrepreneurship. We will make sure that our public sector workforce is skilled and equipped. Twenty per cent of the savings from the voluntary redundancy program will be reinvested into these public sector departments so that they can equip, train and skill their new employees with all the attributes they are going to need to improve that service delivery to the Western Australian community. What a noble and laudable objective. We are in government, and we will use the levers of government and the mechanisms at our disposal to make sure that when we deliver a budget to this house and when we negotiate its passage through the Legislative Council, we do so in the interests of the entire community, but in a way that is sensitive, nuanced and which puts Western Australia back on the road to fiscal and financial recovery, so that we can grow that economy and provide the jobs that people are desperately crying out for. I commend this budget; it is fantastic!

**MR C.J. TALLENTIRE (Thornlie — Parliamentary Secretary)** [9.51 pm]: I rise to support the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017 and to say what a welcome change it is after years of pusillanimous budgets from those opposite. I say that because they were budgets that did not tackle the real problems that we faced. They shied away from and failed to rein in out-of-control public spending. Those opposite sought only to give in to those who would perhaps pose them problems in the media or who would have advocated strongly and embarrassed them in some way. They were not prepared to do the job that the McGowan government has done; that is, to put forward a tough budget, but one that at the same time delivers for many Western Australians. This budget delivers for the people in my area and the people who have been crying out for the extension of the train line from Thornlie to Cockburn. In this budget is a sum of \$423 million over the forward estimates to enable the construction of that train line. We are going to have trains running from Thornlie through to Cockburn and then around to Perth. This is going to enable transit across the city in a way that we have not seen before. There will be the eventual creation of a circle line, which is something the city desperately needs. In fact, it could almost be described as a defining moment for the city, when we actually elevate ourselves into a world-class, transit-oriented city that provides not just radial transport but also transport that enables people to get from one part of a peripheral area to another. That is something my constituents have been crying out for and which they welcome.

Of course, this enables us to develop such things as commercial and residential precincts around train stations. This is something I want to work with the transport and planning minister on, to ensure that we do not fall into the trap of having a train station that is something of an island in a sea of bitumen. We need to create train stations that are a hub of activity—places where people can do their shopping on their way home, knowing that shops will be open to perhaps a quite late hour and where there will be activity, so that they feel safe. At some train stations on the transit network, people feel very unsafe as soon as they leave the train station area because it is a sea of darkness and bitumen. People walk back to their car with a sense of fear. After all, there is a lack of profitable use of that space. All of this bitumen is often used for only 12 hours of the day for parking vehicles. That is underused real estate. We cannot allow that in the development of our city into the future.

These things really do fill us with a lot of hope into the future. Of course there are some challenges. I know that some people, such as the McDonald family of Thornlie, are keen to see and learn more about the project, but they also want to know what the implications will be for them. Their home is very close to the train line. They want to know what the vibration and noise issues might be and how those will be mitigated. That is something we have to work on with members of the community, to reassure them that the investment will be there to mitigate those sorts of problems so that they are able to enjoy the quality of living they presently have.

I am pleased to see in the budget something that some members might consider to be fairly minor; that is, an upgrading of the SmartRider system. The SmartRider system does a good job but, as with all technologies, there is scope to improve it and to roll it out further. Perhaps you, Mr Acting Speaker (Mr R.S. Love), have been in

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a situation where you have just made it onto a train and have not had time to swipe your SmartRider before getting on. You would have been looking on the train for an opportunity to swipe your SmartRider but, at the moment, the technology does not allow that. I hope we can see that possibility arise in the future. That will mean that people will have greater flexibility. Just in passing, I wonder why Sky News is broadcast at Perth train station and why it is not the public broadcaster. I am concerned about the quality of some of the commercial broadcasting and do not think it necessarily does a community service. That is perhaps a minor issue.

Another major point for my electorate is that a half-a-million-dollar upgrade is proposed for the huge Yale Road–Nicholson Road–Garden Street roundabout, which, at times, is difficult for vehicles to access from some points. There is the idea of traffic metering. Half a million dollars will be available to the local government, the City of Gosnells, to develop that so that there is a smooth flow of traffic. This will work brilliantly with the new bridge over the rail line that is currently being constructed. When the trains flow through from the extension of the suburban rail network, there will not be any disruption to traffic from boom gates going down. Everything will flow smoothly. Access into the train station area for those doing the kiss-and-ride-type manoeuvre will work smoothly as well. There are some very exciting prospects that really will lead to the development of our area.

I was delighted to host, along with the member for Forrestfield and Hon Matthew Swinbourn, a coming together of public servants, or technocrats—people who have real technical expertise in how a part of Maddington can be redeveloped. We have a problem. We have an area that the City of Gosnells wants to develop but access to it is currently restricted, because the road network does not allow traffic to get in from Albany Highway onto Kelvin Road. It is also necessary to move a major Water Corporation water pipe in order to enable the road surface to be upgraded and improve traffic flow. I am very pleased to say that we have hosted a meeting to look at this issue. We have done what parliamentarians have to do—that is, bring the public servants together to deal with a problem. We have great expertise in our public service. It is our job as parliamentarians to bring together people from the Water Corporation, Main Roads Western Australia, Housing, Planning and LandCorp so that we get a coordinated and harmonious outcome that is for the betterment of all. That is exactly what we have been able to do. That fills me with a lot of optimism for the future of the community of Maddington.

During the state election campaign, people were asking me, “Chris, what would you do about the level of crime in this area?” I can think of a lot of things. We can increase the number of police on the beat and make sure police are out in the community. Probably the best way in which we can lift the quality of the area is by improving housing and community facilities. Rather than treating the symptoms, that is the best way in which we can deal with the underlying causes of some of the problems that we face in the Maddington community. The job of parliamentarians is not only to bring together the public servants, but also to have the vision to guide them on the journey. That is an important role for us to play.

Another amazing redevelopment opportunity is the Gosnells town centre. On 21 September, we will be holding a community meeting at which technocrats and people with information about the necessary upgrades can discuss why we have had to wait eight or nine years for a derelict building to be demolished so that a new building can be created. I am thankful to the Minister for Planning for her work to ensure that we have the potential to issue the owner of the property with a notice of intent to take. I know that some members opposite get very concerned about property rights. However, what else can we do when a person is exercising their property right in a way that degrades the quality of life for everyone else in that community? We have all been blighted by a derelict building that harbors criminal activity and provides for the very worst elements in our society. There is only one option when a private property owner does not have the entrepreneurial flair, enthusiasm and skills to develop a site that is prime real estate, and that is for the state to undertake the development. That opportunity is now before us with the Gosnells town centre. I applaud the Minister for Planning for her enthusiasm, interest and understanding about what is required so that we will see this urgently needed uplifting of the quality of life in the Gosnells town centre.

Comments have been made about some of the great measures the government has taken in this budget. Some of those measures are very challenging, difficult and tough. One of those measures is the change to gold royalties. I think it is fair to say that this has been done in a very sensitive manner. I note that the changes will apply only if the gold price is over \$1 200 an ounce and the gold operation is producing over 2 500 ounces of gold a year. These changes will enable the royalty rate to be increased to 6.5 per cent in some cases. I have had workers in the gold industry contact me and say they applaud these changes. We have an interesting disconnect here. I could not help but notice media reports about how Bill Beaumont, the boss of Northern Star Resources Ltd, has talked about how outrageous these changes are, yet I am getting calls from the workers at Northern Star telling me they applaud these changes. In fact, they summarised it by saying that workers in the industry support increased royalties; it is time the big end of town paid their fair share. They went on to quote *Midnight Oil* and said —

The time has come

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To say fair's fair  
To pay the rent  
To pay our share

It says something when the workers in the industry realise that changes need to be made. They pointed out to me also that Northern Star has had its share of problems. It has not been a bed of roses at Northern Star. There have been cases of staff not receiving pay rises for the last five to six years, reports of bullying on site, a culture of worrying only about the bottom line, and cases of unfair dismissal. I think someone was sacked recently for making some comments on Facebook. There was a manager in place on one site who, as one worker told me, just destroyed the place. There have been some problems there, but this company was given prominence in the media criticising

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**Mr I.C. Blayney:** One person rings you up and makes these accusations and you take them as gospel proof.

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** I have checked them. A number of workers —

**Mr I.C. Blayney** interjected.

**Mr C.J. TALLENTIRE:** I am lucky, member for Geraldton. People who work in the industry are in my electorate. I do not speak only to bosses; I know the workers. For obvious reasons they do not want to be named, and I think that is fair enough; they want to keep their jobs. If people have a different view from that expressed by the boss of a company who is in a privileged position, who gets all the media attention he wants and is able to say what he thinks, then it is fair enough for me to come into this place and express the view put to me by workers on some of those mine sites. The picture is different from the one presented of what a valuable contribution this company makes. I am sure that in many ways it is well run, but I was presented with examples that indicate otherwise.

We can see that the gold royalty is part of the budget repair. When I look at some of the other initiatives we have taken to go about budget repair, again, I commend the Treasurer for his drive and initiative. It is always popular with the general public to talk about how parliamentarians are overpaid. When I look at the actual saving due to the freeze on our humble rates of pay, it is very interesting that it will save only \$16 million. Our not receiving a 1.5 per cent increase will save \$16 million. That freeze applies to us, the judiciary, the special division of the public service and prescribed office holders. That is a relatively small saving in the scheme of this almighty change that will enable us to save \$3.5 billion over the forward estimates. All the various measures such as the service priority review and the surcharge on overseas property buyers have been criticised in the media. Various other measures such as the voluntary targeted separation scheme, household fees and charges, and the removal of non-salaries indexation will help us achieve the budget repair that we so desperately need because—I have not said this until this point—we have been left with this dreadful legacy from the years of the Barnett Liberal–National government. That was a government that did not do the tough job of budgeting. Instead, it gave into those groups it thought it could not escape from. It did not do the hard work of making sure our budget was properly balanced, and that enabled our expenditure to get out of control and put us in this terrible debt and deficit situation. I will conclude my remarks there and, again, commend this budget to the house.

**MS S.E. WINTON (Wanneroo)** [10.09 pm]: I rise at this late hour to make a short but important contribution to the debate on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. I agree with many of the speeches about this budget made today and this evening. I think it is important to highlight again, and I would like it on the *Hansard* report next to my name, that the last Labor government left the best set of books in history.

Several members interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Members! The member for Wanneroo has the floor.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** Thank you, Ms Acting Speaker.

The present Labor government, however, has inherited the worst set of books, despite a period of incredible wealth creation in our state. Those are facts, and although there are many stereotypes that suggest Labor governments build up debt, it is not the reality in this state. This budget will bust a lot of stereotypes. In the next few years, this government will also bust a lot of stereotypes. It will be a government for the times.

A couple of things have happened that I have liked about this government. We are prepared to say sorry when we get things wrong. We are prepared to change our policy direction when we do not quite get it right, and that is an important thing to do in government. The member for Perth mentioned a pointed statistic earlier about where we have come from since 2008 when the Liberal Party came into government and where we are now. I will repeat the statistic that the member for Perth used. The net debt per person in 2008 was \$1 673 per person. On 30 June 2017, the net debt per person was \$12 592. This budget seeks to address that problem that we have inherited. It is a fair

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budget and everyone has to share the burden. It is reasonable and I think that we have got the mix right. It is quite incredible that in all the debate so far the opposition has not attacked us for making savings of \$1.7 billion in the public sector. Fancy that—a Labor government achieving such cuts! The corporate sector is being asked for \$922 million and everyday Western Australians for \$303 million. We think that is a fair and reasonable mix. I congratulate the Treasurer for his work delivering this budget and I acknowledge the ministers who have worked really hard to find savings and for being disciplined in their portfolios.

I will take a few moments to go through some of the local projects, local jobs programs that I am particularly proud of being delivered in the electorate of Wanneroo. I do not want to talk about them in any particular order but they emphasise, I suppose, a range of community and sporting groups in my electorate with diverse aspirations that provide services and support in a range of areas. I have Knit and Natter in my electorate. I am delighted to say that it will receive \$3 000 to continue its important work. It is important not only for the clothing and blankets it produces, but also for the important social opportunities it provides for women to socialise and get together. Likewise, the Wanneroo and northern suburbs men's sheds do a similar job—not with wool and knitting, but with wood and tools—providing key services and wonderful camaraderie for senior men in my electorate. They will receive \$12 500 each to help them further their wonderful work.

The Carramar and Tapping Residents Association will also benefit from an allocation of \$2 000, which will help it to upgrade its administrative systems capacity. The City of Wanneroo will receive \$10 000 to upgrade some exercise equipment at Houghton Park, as well as \$30 000 to provide shade sails at Salitage Park, Pearsall.

I have long been a netball coach and an age manager at surf clubs. Knowing and being involved in local clubs, I appreciate the difficulties local groups have with funding and the amount of time, effort and energy that takes up for volunteers, so I am delighted to support such groups, particularly Hocking Netball Club and the Woola Woola Koolankas Netball Club, with \$5 000 allocations to assist them with purchasing uniforms and equipment.

The Wanneroo Touch Rugby Association will also receive \$11 000 for uniforms and equipment, as will the Wanneroo amateur football and cricket clubs, which will each receive \$6 000 to allow them to install energy-efficient lighting at their clubhouses.

The Wanneroo Amateur Boxing Club is a club that has been operating out of Rotary Park Wanneroo for more than 40 years. It does really important work with vulnerable youth in my electorate and it is wonderful that through an initiative of this McGowan government, it will receive \$10 000 to upgrade its equipment as well as \$70 000 for a minibus to allow it to transport its members around the various venues that they need to travel to.

I want to turn now from boxers to actors. I cannot see the Leader of the House in the chamber right now, but he would be delighted to know that Limelight Theatre will also benefit from this budget. I am looking forward to him coming to Wanneroo and perhaps even treading the boards at Limelight Theatre, which will receive \$93 000 for upgrades to its facilities.

History and heritage are very strong themes throughout Wanneroo, being one of the oldest districts in Western Australia. One of the iconic places in Wanneroo is, of course, the Wanneroo Showgrounds. It has been the home of the Wanneroo Show for more than 100 years. The first show was opened by John Forrest back in 1909. This is the epicentre of Wanneroo for many major events that are held throughout the district and the northern suburbs. In fact, the Wanneroo Show is the biggest regional show in Western Australia after the Royal Show.

Wanneroo is also very much a multicultural community. More than 40 per cent of our residents come from other countries, so each year on Australia Day the Wanneroo Showgrounds hosts the biggest citizenship ceremony in Australia. Last Australia Day, more than 800 residents from 49 countries took the oath. I am delighted that we have been able to commit \$220 000 to upgrade that very, very important, iconic venue in Wanneroo.

I want to talk for a moment about education, and why would I not, having been a teacher for 27 years? I have been delighted to make such strong connections with all the schools in my electorate during the six months I have been the member for Wanneroo. Tapping Primary School will benefit from this budget; it will receive \$400 000 to upgrade its undercover area to allow it to hold assemblies and performances for the entire school community.

My old stomping ground, the former Wanneroo Senior High School, or Wanneroo Secondary College as it is now known, will receive \$5 million in funding through this budget, of which there is \$4 million for a brand-new, standalone gymnasium. This school celebrates its 40-year anniversary this year and, as members can imagine, it is tired and has been neglected, so I am delighted that this budget is providing investment in that school to make sure it continues to be the secondary school of choice for families in my electorate. In addition, it will also receive \$70 000 to purchase a minibus to assist it in taking small groups to school events.

**Extract from Hansard**

[ASSEMBLY — Tuesday, 12 September 2017]

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Mr Ben Wyatt; Ms Mia Davies; Ms Jessica Shaw; Mr Sean L'Estrange; Mr Bill Marmion; Mr Terry Redman; Mr Matthew Hughes; Ms Libby Mettam; Mr Mark Folkard; Mr John Carey; Mr Reece Whitby; Mr Stephen Price; Ms Lisa Baker; Ms Janine Freeman; Mr Simon Millman; Mr Chris Tallentire; Ms Sabine Winton; Ms Margaret Quirk

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I want to chat quickly about one aspect in the budget that members may not have realised has changed, and that relates to some of the funding initiatives that we are putting in place. Returning 300 education assistants to classrooms is fantastic, but I want to briefly mention the level 3 classroom teachers. I am a level 3 classroom teacher, which is one of the most robust and time-consuming processes that any teacher can ever undertake. The teachers who achieve level 3 classroom teacher status are the best of the best and provide fantastic support and mentoring to other teachers. For those who do not know, as well as being well-paid, the level 3 classroom teacher process enables teachers to be released from their classrooms for half a day a week—that is 0.1 of their full-time equivalent position—while another teacher takes their class. They are relieved to provide leadership within their schools. The Barnett government did away with that. Not much noise was made at first, because no-one thought through what that meant. But at the time it occurred, there were about 1 500 level 3 classroom teachers in the system and each of those teachers lost 0.1 FTE, which, effectively, meant that 150 teachers lost their jobs; 150 full-time teaching positions were lost.

Several members interjected.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** Ms Acting Speaker —

**The ACTING SPEAKER (Ms J.M. Freeman):** Just talk to me.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** Thank you. I am very conscious that it is late and I would like to get through my speech. Level 3 classroom teachers are a very important part of the system and I am delighted that the 0.1 FTE attached to level 3 classroom teachers will be reinstated by the Mark McGowan government. We recognise that we want to retain the best teachers in our system and have them working and supporting and mentoring the graduate teachers so that we do not have as many graduate teachers leaving the system because they feel undervalued and under-supported. I am absolutely delighted that that measure is in this budget.

I want to finish by quickly talking about the Mark McGowan government's transport commitments. As a member who represents the northern suburbs—I am sure that we will hear other members of northern suburbs electorates also talk—I am delighted about the massive amount of investment going towards rail and roads in the northern suburbs. An amount of \$780 million is invested in congestion-busting road and rail measures. We are going to build new traffic interchanges worth \$110 million on Wanneroo Road to deal with the congestion at two key intersections, which are in the top 10 congested roads in Western Australia. We have also already commenced work on a \$31 million project that will see us finally completing the dualling of Wanneroo Road from Joondalup Drive to Flynn Drive, which should have been done years ago. We cannot be shy in acknowledging that the Mark McGowan government will be delivering on its commitment to bring rail to Yanchep, and that is truly transformational.

I want to take a moment to mention a member of the federal government. In the last few weeks, the member for Pearce, Christian Porter, has made some comments on his Facebook page and mentioned my name. He suggested that if the Mark McGowan government does not commit to bring the freeway to Romeo Road, somehow we have failed. I would like to say to Christian Porter and the federal Liberal government, "Show us the money from the GST and I am very sure that we could convince the transport minister to reconsider taking the freeway further." It is quite interesting that he wanted to challenge me in that regard. Members might have noticed that he has been driving around in a rather large bus lately.

Several members interjected.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** He has been driving around in a bus, which probably costs more to fill than a pensioner receives in their pension each week. That is how out of touch Mr Porter is. I thought I would take a little time to look at his commitments to his electorate. I want to read from what he said in 2012 when he made the decision to leave this chamber and represent us in Canberra. The article states —

Mr Porter this morning said he had grappled with the decision to switch to federal politics for months but believed he could make a better contribution in Canberra.

That was in 2012, so he has had five years now.

[Member's time extended.]

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** He went on to say —

"Some people ultimately will understand why I've made this decision, other people will find it a difficult decision to understand ...

**Extract from Hansard**

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It continues —

“I’ve come to a view that I cannot shake now that I can make a contribution to the advancement of a number of very important issues, issues that I’ve come to feel incredibly strongly about and issues which I think are absolutely critical to the state of WA and to the entire country ...

We are still waiting. I did a little more research to see what else he has done since then. I note that on 19 February 2017, he made a contribution to the Liberal Party conference—members will know the one when they all danced to *One More Time*.

Several members interjected.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** He enjoyed denigrating our Premier, Mark McGowan, at the time and suggesting that Mark McGowan was not able to represent this state or get any benefit from the federal government. Do members remember that? I would like to recognise in this place the wonderful work of our Premier and our Minister for Transport in getting the \$1.7 billion from Roe 8, a lot of which is coming to the northern suburbs, thank you very much. I am quite happy with the way the Premier is representing us in Canberra at the moment. This little mob of stars in this photo, who have so much sway in the federal cabinet, cannot seem to achieve anything much for us.

A member interjected.

**The ACTING SPEAKER:** Member for Churchlands, you are not in your seat.

**Ms S.E. WINTON:** The dream team has not really been able to produce anything, whereas our Premier and our transport minister have gone to Canberra and have been able to get money for much-needed rail and road infrastructure in the northern suburbs. I look forward to seeing what Christian Porter will produce for us, given that he is in the cabinet. Opposition members and members of the government all recognise that we have a black hole. We have a huge financial problem in this state and it is about time people like Christian Porter stopped having a crack at backbenchers, or anyone else, and took some responsibility for what he can do to deliver much-needed money back to this state.

**MS M.M. QUIRK (Girrawheen)** [10.29 pm]: I am inspired by the generosity of the member for Mount Lawley when speaking about his colleagues to say how much I enjoyed your speech, Madam Acting Speaker (Ms J.M. Freeman), on the Appropriation (Recurrent 2017–18) Bill 2017 and the Appropriation (Capital 2017–18) Bill 2017. I will enjoy continuing to work with you to ensure that the very vibrant and important multicultural communities in our electorates—as well as the electorates of the member for Thornlie; the Minister for Citizenship and Multicultural Affairs, Hon Paul Papalia; and of course the Premier himself, the Minister for State Development, Jobs and Trade—have full participation in the workforce. I know that they will make a valuable contribution.

I am also pleased to have the last word this evening. I do not often get the last word, so that is really terrific! For the record, I need to apologise to the fashionistas in the Parliament for wearing the same jacket that Pauline Hanson wore in interviews about her burqa ban. I assure the house that when I purchased it, I had no idea that Pauline Hanson also had the jacket. I want to make it clear that I am not slavishly copying her.

**Mrs M.H. Roberts:** If you wear a burqa next, we know you are.

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** That will not happen.

I compliment the Treasurer on his first budget. It pulled no punches and it shows that the state of the budget and the state of state debt is a major cause for concern and of course should make us all pause for very sober reflection. It also demonstrates that we no longer have the luxury of eight years of spin. The chickens really have come home to roost. However, how is it that those on the other side of the chamber are still in denial? How is it that the opposition is in some kind of parallel universe where avatars made all the rash and profligate decisions on the budget, leading to what was inevitable? It is not as though there was some unpredictable global event that caused a collapse in the economy and in our revenue. It is not as though something was unpredictable.

I refer to the prescience of a former colleague of mine, the former Leader of the Opposition, Eric Ripper, and his valedictory speech in this house during a loan bill, which extended more money to the Barnett government to do the proverbial with. This speech was recalled in an article by Gareth Parker in February last year. It stated —

Eric Ripper was right. In his farewell speech to Parliament, which ironically came during debate on a loan bill, the former treasurer predicted WA’s fiscal trajectory.

That was November 2012.

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“I am dismayed at the state of State finances, ... “Every last cent of financial capacity for this term and, indeed, for the next term has been chewed up by this Government.

“The official figures are bad enough but the Budget is full of every accounting trick and savings device one could conceive of. In my view, the post-2017 Government will still be repairing finances as a result of this period.”

Ripper acknowledged a problem with the GST and said both sides of politics should continue to campaign for reform, but “whingeing to appeal to the WA electorate” would not cut the mustard.

“I do not see a repeat of stamp duty boom of my time or the royalties boom of this Government,” Ripper said. “I see health and police spending growing much faster than revenue, so the State will be driven back to our own tax base, the three ugly sisters of payroll tax, land tax and stamp duty.” The Government, Ripper predicted, would face “intense financial pressures towards the end of the next parliamentary term”.

How prescient is that? It is something that the opposition claims was unpredictable and was not caused by unwise decisions and ignoring the counsel of the many advisers who knew better. I now go back even further, to August 2013, mindful that this is a year after Hon Eric Ripper made those comments, and an article in *The West Australian* on 10 August, headlined, “Buswell puts no limit on state debt”. It states —

Treasurer Troy Buswell refuses to put a figure on an acceptable maximum for State debt but admits the Barnett Government’s infrastructure binge is unsustainable over the medium to longer term.

Mr Buswell sold his second State Budget at a business breakfast yesterday before defending its debt-fuelled centrepiece—spending on “transformational” transport projects.

Madam Acting Speaker, you will particularly like this bit —

He said the Government decided to invest \$4.7 billion on the “intergenerational” airport rail link —

Wait for it —

MAX light rail ...

“We have an obligation to deal with congestion and the issues associated with the impact of a growing population on transport,” Mr Buswell said.

...

Debt has become politically sensitive for the Government but it is also a credibility test of Mr Buswell’s financial management, with international credit ratings agencies watching the State’s books closely.

In 2010, then-treasurer Colin Barnett said debt would not exceed \$20 billion and during the election leaders’ debate, the Premier said debt would “level off” in his second term.

...

Although defending the borrowing, Mr Buswell said the State would soon reach its financial limit to invest in infrastructure.

Quoted in the same article, the also prescient then Leader of the Opposition, Mark McGowan, said —

... the Budget was “a disaster” for the future.

“I don’t know how Mr Barnett can ignore the fact that in the election campaign he said he was going to keep debt under control ... when he’s done exactly the opposite,”

I move on to 2015, and Liam Bartlett. I am being very even-handed with all the media outlets. Liam Bartlett’s article is entitled “How Colin Barnett is plunging WA into \$36 billion debt”. It reads —

IT’S often said that to appreciate the future it’s crucial we understand the past and in politics that seems especially so, as history often has a way of repeating itself.

...

It’s got nothing to do with the price of iron ore but rather the importance of economic management.

The article then cites the infamous briefing note written by Treasury head of the time, John Langoulant, to Premier Richard Court, which stated —

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“Individual Ministers proposing, and cabinet endorsing, expenditure proposals with no regard to the state of the overall budget and with no examination or consideration of existing budgetary capacity within a portfolio”.

...

Mr. Langoulant then used examples, such as: “The Education Minister’s announcements on matters such as reduced class sizes which are not funded.”

He goes on to talk about a lack of discipline shown by ministers and singled out individual ministers who committed to spend the money before it had even been passed in the parliamentary budget process.

Mr Bartlett’s article continues —

Now, it doesn’t take Dan Brown to figure out the historical link is Colin Barnett.

The current Premier was then Minister for Education and Minister for Energy and if he was writing cheques that Treasury was finding hard to cash in 1998, it would explain a lot about why we now face a debt mountain that is beginning to bite.

The article continues —

Mr. Barnett was sworn in, in September 2008 so he was bound by Labor’s budget but it was his government that was responsible for three-quarters of that financial year and significantly, he substantially adjusted the budget at the midyear review in December 2008.

By June 30, 2009 the net debt had already grown to \$6.7 billion and today —

That is, when this article was written —

... it’s blown out to \$25.4 billion, on its way to that Everest-like figure of \$36.3b.

So much for the Liberal Party mantra of responsible management compared to its opposition. It’s also salient to point out the Carpenter government had paid for the rail line to Mandurah and fully funded the Fiona Stanley hospital construction.

Any big ticket infrastructure liabilities the taxpayer is now shackled with, are not hand-me-downs but come straight from Colin’s desk.

Again, there has been a pattern of conduct over many years. That pattern of conduct was preventable and totally predictable. As we saw over that period, legislation was introduced into this Parliament and we found at the committee stage that it had not been budgeted for or funded, and there had been no rigorous process within cabinet for the cost of legislative reform. Unlike under the previous government, that stuff would quite often go to cabinet and it had not even been subject to Treasury analysis or even approval—such as occurred under the Gallop and Carpenter governments.

At the risk of descending into farce at this late stage of the evening, this denial of responsibility —

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** Why not?

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** I wish I could use the Leader of the House to assist me in this process but I am afraid I will have to use my less than stellar skills to make this analogy. The denial of responsibility by the opposition is nothing short of Pythonesque. Every time I use the words “dead parrot” I invite members to think of the words “record state debt.” We have a situation where, I quote —

Mr. Praline: ... I wish to complain about this parrot what I purchased not half an hour ago from this very boutique.

Owner: Oh yes, the, uh, the Norwegian Blue...What’s, uh...What’s wrong with it?

Mr. Praline: I’ll tell you what’s wrong with it, my lad. ‘E’s dead, that’s what’s wrong with it!

Owner: No, no, ‘e’s uh,...he’s resting.

Mr. Praline: Look, matey, I know a dead parrot when I see one, and I’m looking at one right now.

Owner: No, no he’s not dead, he’s, he’s restin’! Remarkable bird, the Norwegian Blue, idn’t it, ay? Beautiful plumage!

Mr. Praline: The plumage don’t enter into it. It’s stone dead.

Owner: Nononono, no, no! ‘E’s resting!

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Mr. Praline: All right then, if he's restin', I'll wake him up! (shouting at the cage) 'Ello, Mister Polly Parrot! I've got a lovely fresh cuttle fish for you if you show...

...

Owner: There, he moved!

Mr. Praline: No, he didn't, that was you hitting the cage!

Owner: I never!!

Mr. Praline: Yes, you did!

Owner: I never, never did anything...

Mr. Praline: (yelling and hitting the cage repeatedly) 'ELLO POLLY!!!! Testing! Testing! Testing! Testing! This is your nine o'clock alarm call!

(Takes parrot out of the cage and thumps its head on the counter. Throws it up in the air and watches it plummet to the floor.)

Mr. Praline: Now that's what I call a dead parrot.

Owner: No, no.....No, 'e's stunned!

Mr. Praline: STUNNED?!?

Owner: Yeah! You stunned him, just as he was wakin' up! Norwegian Blues stun easily, major.

I am getting to the end, members will be pleased to know. It continues —

Mr. Praline: Um...now look...now look, mate, I've definitely 'ad enough of this. That parrot is definitely deceased, and when I purchased it not 'alf an hour ago, you assured me that its total lack of movement was due to it bein' tired and shagged out following a prolonged squawk.

Owner: Well, he's...he's, ah...probably pining for the fjords.

That is my favourite line. It continues —

Mr. Praline: PININ' for the FJORDS?!?!?!? What kind of talk is that?, look, why did he fall flat on his back the moment I got 'im home?

Owner: The Norwegian Blue prefers keepin' on it's back! Remarkable bird, id'nit, squire? Lovely plumage!

Mr. Praline: Look, I took the liberty of examining that parrot when I got it home, and I discovered the only reason that it had been sitting on its perch in the first place was that it had been NAILED there.

(pause)

Owner: Well, o'course it was nailed there! If I hadn't nailed that bird down, it would have nuzzled up to those bars, bent 'em apart with its beak, and VOOM! Feeweewee!

Mr. Praline: "VOOM"?!? Mate, this bird wouldn't "voom" if you put four million volts through it! 'E's bleedin' demised!

Owner: No no! 'E's pining!

Mr. Praline: 'E's not pinin'! 'E's passed on! This parrot is no more!

Anyway, at the risk of killing the Monty Python sketch, I make the point, members, at this late hour that those sorts of implausible denials are what we are hearing from the other side of the chamber. I have said that the exercise of replacing the words "record state debt" with "dead parrot" works extremely well.

[Applause.]

**Mr D.A. Templeman:** I was a little premature then.

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** I am sorry. I know the Leader of the House needs his beauty sleep, but on a more serious note I want to mention one issue in my electorate.

Several members interjected.

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** Yes.

Several members interjected.

**Extract from *Hansard***

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**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** Yes; that is right. It is the Black Knight over there who is looking remarkably like he has had an amputation. He has just walked out the door.

Having looked at past performance, in the remaining three minutes—maybe a little more if I could have an extension—I will focus on the future.

Several members interjected.

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** On the northern boundary of my electorate is Gngangara Road. Members on the eastern part of Gngangara Road know that the state of that road has been a running sore. The eastern portion of that road, near the electorates of the members for Swan Hills and West Swan, has been improved. But, unfortunately, the western end of Gngangara Road, which is in my electorate and borders the suburbs of Madeley and Darch, has not been improved. Ideally it should align with Whitfords Avenue. Major blockages occur along that part of Gngangara Road, with multiple high-speed truck movements. It has been a problem for some years. I grieved to the then minister in March last year, and if members look at *Hansard*, they will see that he pretty well did not even respond to my grievance on that issue. At the eleventh hour, when the member for Wanneroo knew that things were pretty grim—I think in late September—the then government promised a \$2 million roundabout on Wanneroo Road. That has not come to pass because that announcement was premature. There had been negotiations with the City of Wanneroo, which I have to say are never easy, and there is still some discussion, on which I have briefed the Minister for Transport, as to whether one section of the road should be transferred from a local road to a state road. It is that section about which the City of Wanneroo says it does not have any money to spend and it is still working out the final plans. So it has not worked out the budget and it has not nailed down its plans and what it wants to do there, yet it is blaming Main Roads Western Australia for failing to progress the plans. I also note that there are developer contributions of over \$60 million for the eastern part of that section of the road that needs some improvement and to meet up with the realignment with Whitfords Avenue. This is relevant —

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

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** Yes.

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

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** Yes.

On the eastern part of the section of the road that I am talking about there are a lot of businesses in that industrial area and many thousands of vehicle movements a day. A conservative estimate is that should the road be improved, those businesses will have the capacity to expand, with the potential of hundreds of jobs. We all know that local jobs are important because they limit people having to move out of suburbs and allow people to work close to home with all the attendant benefits of being close to family and not being involved in a lengthy commute, as many of my constituents are. Most importantly, I think, those who live in the bordering suburbs will be able to get out onto Gngangara Road unimpeded, instead of having the long waits along with the road safety issues created by speeding trucks and vehicles. I will take pity on my colleagues and —

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis:** What solution do you propose for that? Do you support the roundabout?

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** I propose that the City of Wanneroo and Main Roads sit down, work out responsibility, finalise their plans and get on with it, instead of passing the buck to one another.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis:** Will the government fund it?

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** The government cannot commit to this until such time that the City of Wanneroo and Main Roads conclude on what the ideal plan is. There was originally a suggestion of a flyover and it is now a roundabout but, as I said, part of the reason that there is no reference to it in this budget is that there was no agreement between the City of Wanneroo and Main Roads about the final plan. The roundabout, for example, will require a lot less land acquisition, which of course minimises the cost, but because those plans are not finalised, we do not know what the final cost is. I apologise to my constituents that we were not able to resolve the issue sooner. To say that we should have matched the funding promised, as I said, at the eleventh-hour panic by Paul Miles is only part of the story, because at that stage the plans had not been settled by either Wanneroo or Main Roads, responsibility for sections of the road was not clear and an intention of the City of Wanneroo to transfer some of the responsibility for the road to Main Roads had not yet been finalised.

**Mr P.A. Katsambanis:** Have they finalised it now?

**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** No, as far as I am concerned, member.

Several members interjected.

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**Ms M.M. QUIRK:** I have somewhere here the Black Knight speech, and if the member for Hillarys does not desist, I will have great pleasure in reading it as well—“‘Tis but a scratch”! On that note, I thank members for their forbearance and I will sit down.

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