

EDUCATION FACILITIES — FUNDING

Motion

HON DONNA FARAGHER (East Metropolitan) [10.57 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house —

- (1) recognises the McGowan government's failure to respond to the continued strong community opposition to its harsh funding cuts impacting education services in regional and metropolitan Western Australia; and
- (2) calls on the government to listen to students, parents and the wider Western Australian community and immediately reverse its unfair decision to close Moora Residential College and the remaining cuts impacting schools and community-based organisations.

Earlier today I presented more petitions calling on the Legislative Council to oppose the remaining education cuts impacting Moora Residential College, Landsdale Farm School, Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, camp schools, community kindergartens and so on. I want to acknowledge Jo Matthewson who I believe is in the gallery today. I can hear her daughter up there, so I know she is here! This latest batch of petitions adds to the petitions in similar terms that I presented in this house before the winter break, which contained over 2 460 signatures. These petitions build on many others tabled in this house since we returned to Parliament in March of this year that have been signed by more than 19 000 Western Australians—such is the depth of unhappiness with this government. This motion is therefore moved for two reasons. Firstly, it recognises each and every one of those Western Australians who have been unfairly impacted by this government's harsh education cuts. Secondly, it recognises each and every one of those Western Australians who have taken the time to sign these petitions that contain 19 000 signatures, and who have written countless letters to the editor, sent emails and letters, made phone calls to members' offices, organised rallies and attended meetings, all with the very simple request to the Minister for Education and Training and this government: reverse the cuts.

Every one of these members of the community knows that this government has made a mistake. Every party represented in this house, with the exception of the Labor Party, knows that this government has made a mistake. Why will the government not budge? The minister will tell us—I can read the script—that these cuts occurred because of us. She will tell us that she did not want to make these decisions. Yes, I bet she did not want to make these decisions, because no minister ever does. The simple fact is that this minister and her government, not us, are entirely responsible for these decisions. They are theirs and theirs alone. It is a matter of priorities. When this government has now blown its budget on its electioneering Local Projects, Local Jobs slush fund, now totalling some \$39 million, we know that this government has its priorities wrong. Thankfully, in January, the minister reversed some of the cuts. Who could possibly think that axing Schools of the Air was a bright idea? But in making one good decision after a very bad one in December, in one fell swoop the minister created a two-tiered system. On the one hand were the schools and community organisations that were worthy of being saved. On the other hand were the schools and the community organisations that were not lucky enough to be saved from the chopping block. We put it to the minister that they should have all been saved.

The Moora community—we have representatives from Moora in the gallery today—are still waiting for Minister Ellery and the Premier to visit their town to explain why Moora Residential College must close. Western Australians right across this state have repeatedly demanded that this decision be reversed. As I have said before, these calls have been strong and they have been unanimous. Whether they have been in metropolitan Perth or regional WA, these calls have been unrelenting. The Country Women's Association of Western Australia even rallied on the steps of Parliament House for the first time in its 94-year history. I do not think that the Save Moora College group has slept a wink since December, yet the McGowan government continues to ignore these requests. The government simply will not listen. Why?

Moora Residential College is special. It is special for these students and their families. It is their home away from home. Not once have I met or heard from any former student or family who has said that the college should close—not one. I am told, and I have seen it, that it is because it is a close-knit and supportive environment. It is because of the one-on-one relationships that are developed between students, their peers and the residential staff; that is why these kids want to be there. They are not just a number; they might fall through the cracks in a larger facility. It is why over successive years Moora Residential College has been rated highest in parent surveys in terms of satisfaction. The goalposts and the reasons for the college's closure continue to change. In the minister's first press statement of 13 December, she said —

... in the case of Moora, the completion of a new school nearby is likely to be the preferred option for local families.

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

Really? That one went down like a lead balloon. Then it was that it was a potential fire risk. That was fixed too. Then it was cost. I will agree with the minister on one point. I agree that the college needs some work. I think everyone understands that. We agree with that.

Hon Jim Chown: So do most schools.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: Exactly right, Hon Jim Chown. But does the college require the full \$8.7 million right here right now? No, and the community is not asking for it. All it wants is to keep the college open. How much does it cost the taxpayer to keep the college open? We add on some of the repair costs—we are now hearing different figures. Last week we heard \$2.5 million, albeit some of that has already been addressed. The actual cost to keep the doors open—that is, the deficit funding—is on average around \$330 000. In answer to one of the questions that I asked in this place, we found out from the minister that the expected savings over three years is less than \$1 million. But for that so-called saving, all we get is a lot of hurt and anger. The Premier has said that we are talking about only 30 students. To him, Moora Residential College is just like all the other budget cuts. According to him, they “are nice to have, but not necessary to have”. That is his quote, not mine. I have to tell members, and we all know this, the students of Moora Residential College matter. Their parents matter. Mothers such as Debbie Richards, who is up in the gallery today, and others whom I have met matter. The Moora community matters. The students at the Central Midlands Senior High School matter.

In coming to that, when that college closes, we will immediately see a 20 per cent or thereabouts reduction in student population at that school. The response from the government is that that is okay and it will keep its senior high school status. That is all well and good, but we also know what the inevitable outcome will be. With smaller student numbers, funding will decrease, meaning staff will decrease, meaning options for students will further decrease. It means that it will be a senior high school in name only. If members do not want to believe me, this is what the department had to say in a briefing note dated 28 September —

Central Midlands Senior High School has an enrolment of 188 students, with 25 students in Year 11 and 23 students in Year 12. This includes the students from the residential college. With low numbers of Years 11 and 12 students, the school is challenged to provide comprehensive senior secondary programs with access to pathways leading to tertiary education, further training and employment.

It continues —

Moora Residential College has projected 32 placements for 2018. The loss of Years 7 to 12 students from the residential college could see the enrolments in the secondary school fall below 150 students making it even more challenging for the school to offer a comprehensive secondary curriculum.

It also says —

Secondary schools with small enrolments are unable to generate the required level of funding to provide sufficient breadth and depth of curriculum that meet the requirements of the Western Australian Certificate of Education ... for Years 11 and 12 students.

That is what the department said. That is the reality for this school should this college close.

I want to recognise members of the Save Moora College group. Some are in the gallery today and have travelled from Moora to be here. I recognise Tracey Errington, the president of the Central Midlands Senior High School P&C, and the shire president, Ken Seymour, who has also made the journey today. I recognise every member of the Moora community for their unwavering commitment to these students, their families and this college. I recognise every Western Australian, whether they live in regional WA or metropolitan Perth, who is right there beside the Moora community. These Western Australians do not want to fight the government. They have better things to do with their time. They have lives to live. They really do not need this. If only the minister would listen to their calls, all the hurt and anger would go away.

Sadly, though, it is not only Moora Residential College. I refer to Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre. Members have heard me talk about this issue quite a bit. Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre has supported thousands and thousands of students and teachers for more than 30 years through hands-on environmental education programs. For a saving of \$413 000 over three years, or to put it in context \$137 000 a year, this centre will probably close when its funding dries up. That is the reality. The minister says that there are alternatives for students to engage in environmental science programs through agencies like Perth Zoo, Kings Park and DPaW, or whatever it is called now. Yes, I do not disagree that they provide important programs—I was the Minister for Environment for a time; I was responsible for them—but they do not replicate what is on offer at the centre. The WA Gould League has been part of the Western Australian community for nearly 80 years. It has always had outstanding teachers, including legends like Harry Butler. It delivers specialist subjects that require educators with specialised skills to teach them. It also has the advantage of having scientists, businesspeople, environmental consultants and specialist teachers on its volunteer management committee, which helps underpin the award-winning programs that this centre

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

is known for. Let us be clear: the government said it would help find alternative support for the WA Gould League. It has not been forthcoming.

Hon Sue Ellery: Oh, yes it has.

Hon DONNA FARAGHER: I will get to that. I am quite sure that the minister will say, “We’ve put to them Conservation Volunteers Australia.” That is a valued organisation; I take nothing away from that. But I understand that it is able to offer only in-kind support, not funding for staff. Inasmuch as that is very much appreciated, what the centre desperately needs is some funding for the staff. Then there are the camp schools and Landsdale Farm School. This is what the retired principal of Landsdale Farm School, Ted Kelley, had to say in a letter dated 12 June —

According to the Education Minister, apparently Landsdale Farm School does not engage in **education as its core business!**

How can Sue Ellery make such an important decision like ceasing the funding to Landsdale Farm School without even visiting to check on the accuracy of the information provided. It’s her decision, her shoulders that this decision rests on so surely she would ensure that the facts and reasoning behind it are accurate.

If the Minister had bothered to see for herself instead of relying on her advisors, she would have seen Education support students working on their Certificate of Horticulture by weeding, planting and generally tending to their school vegetable plots. She would have seen both Ed support and mainstream students working in the resource centre full of farm related educational activities and information. She would have seen Ed support and mainstream students working on their Certificate of Animal Care through interacting with the farm animals and the farm staff, involving themselves in routine farm jobs, being part of an animal talk or reading information from animal signage in the area. She would have seen 36 enthusiastic teachers involved in their Professional Learning day, preparing activities linked to the Australian Curriculum, and a working schedule for their upcoming excursion to the farm complete with the relevant student outcomes.

In fact, according to the 2017 Annual Report on their website, the Minister would have noted that **3,420 Ed Support students and 2,220 mainstream students visited Landsdale Farm School supported by 3,322 teachers, support staff and Education assistants along with 2,137 visitors from disabled groups.**

We also know that community kindergartens are being unfairly impacted. They are being targeted through an unnecessary change to the enrolment threshold to gain access for funding and support through the Department of Education. The minister said in the estimates hearings on 21 June, “I am not anticipating closing any.” That is rubbish! If she is not anticipating closing any community kindergartens, why is it an identified savings measure? Why is it that the government is banking on \$1.1 million? The only way to create a savings measure is by cutting something or, in the case of community kindergartens, closing them. Like Moora Residential College, these community kindies do matter. There might be only 17 left, but each and every one of them is important. Each and every one of them is valued. The minister said recently in response to her reversal on a previous decision to reject Bunbury Baptist College’s advanced determination application that parents should be able to choose where they send their children to school. I agree. So why pull the rug out from under the feet of parents who choose to send their kids to a community kindy? Why should Mount Helena Community Kindergarten or Glen Forrest Community Kindergarten—who I might say are also represented in the gallery by Cristy and Richelle—be facing closure simply because they are in areas in which there is lower population growth than perhaps some other kindies? Why does the minister refuse to confirm that kindies will be able to open if they get late enrolments to meet the new threshold before the end of the school year? I am not talking about term 3, as the minister tried to answer in a question yesterday; I am talking about the end of term 4. If the kindies get 16 enrolments, will they be able to open? The minister will not answer that. Maybe she will today. Why is the minister comparing apples with oranges when looking at their funding structure?

A couple of weeks ago the Minister for Regional Development reversed the government’s decision to cut funding to community resource centres. Her press statement said —

After reviewing the Community Resource Centre program and listening to regional communities’ concerns about the future of CRCs, it is clear CRC funding should continue.

The Liberal Party welcomes this decision, but it believes the reversal should not stop there. The minister needs to take, heaven forbid, a leaf out of Minister MacTiernan’s book. She has done the right thing, and the Minister for Education and Training, too, must immediately reverse the decisions that are so unfairly impacting on our state’s education system. In each and every case that funding was cut, there was no consultation undertaken; there was just a letter sent from the department on 13 December to those affected. The McGowan government has, however,

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

shown an ability to reverse decisions when it has got it manifestly wrong. We have seen the minister, thankfully, reverse the decision to move Perth Modern School to a high-rise building in the middle of Northbridge. We have seen that the government can reverse its decision on Schools of the Air and gifted and talented programs. We have seen that it can reverse decisions on community resource centres. If the government can do those things, it can and obviously has the ability to reverse the other remaining education cuts that are continuing to cause immense hurt and frustration. There is no excuse for the government to not act immediately. I put it to members that the students living at Moora Residential College should be able to stay where they are and be able to complete their education at Central Midlands Senior High School; community kindies should not be forced to close; the trust fund supporting ag colleges should not be raided; and Landsdale Farm School, the camp schools and Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre should not be closed.

HON SUE ELLERY (South Metropolitan — Minister for Education and Training) [11.18 am]: I am pleased to be able to respond to the motion moved by Hon Donna Faragher today. Hon Donna Faragher and, indeed, others on the other side might think that predicting my response about budget repair is somehow diminishing the argument and they might not like it. I get that they do not like being reminded about the financial mess that they left the state in, but that is a fact. It is a fact that they left the state's finances in an appalling situation and the incoming government has had to introduce all sorts of measures to address that. It has had to make tough decisions. One of those, for example, was about the residential colleges available in the wheatbelt, where there are a number of them. There are four and when Moora Residential College closes, there will be three. Hon Donna Faragher makes the point that Moora Residential College is special, that I need to recognise the unwavering commitment of the community to Moora Residential College and that students matter. She has adopted the campaign slogan of the Nationals WA—these students matter. Can I just make this point?

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Members, we are listening to the Minister for Education and Training.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I just make this point: Moora Residential College was so special to the previous government, its commitment was so unwavering and those students mattered so much that it refurbished other residential colleges, in some cases twice, before, in the dying days of its government, it announced that it would tackle the issues there. Those issues have been described by Hon Martin Aldridge in this place and by the local member, Shane Love, who said during a grievance in the other place —

The kitchens, bathrooms and dormitories are very tired, there is severe cracking in a lot of the walls —

Hon Martin Aldridge interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Mr Deputy President?

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Minister for Education and Training, I am listening.

Hon SUE ELLERY: He said —

... there is severe cracking in a lot of the walls and some real structural deficiencies.

The member for Moore went on to say that Moora Residential College is not fit for purpose and that upgrade works are needed to address structural, safety, health, electrical and fire risk concerns. Other comments have been made as well.

Let us not forget the hypocrisy writ large. This residential college was so special and so important to the former government and its commitment was so unwavering that it did nothing when it was in government to address the issues there. Worse than that, it let the enrolment population of that high school get below 200 students. Members opposite are quite right when they talk about the impact that a low number of students in a secondary school has on the capacity of that school to offer the full range of courses and say that that diminishes the choices available to that school. They let that happen on their watch. I am at the end of the process and am being expected to clean up their mess, when they let that school diminish. Yet they then ask me, "What is your commitment to building that school up and making sure that it is in fact able to offer the full range of courses that secondary schools should be able to offer?" Hypocrisy writ large!

Several members interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: I also make this point: I have met personally with the P&C president, the shire president, the Country Women's Association and the chamber of commerce. I have met with them and I have listened to their concerns.

Hon Martin Aldridge interjected.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Mr Deputy President?

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon SUE ELLERY: This is a time-limited debate, so if I had unlimited time or 45 minutes or an hour, I might entertain the interjections of members opposite, but I do not. Can they please let me get my bit on the record? They will have ample opportunity, and I am sure that they will use it, to get their bit on the record.

The point is that the former government had the opportunity to address this and it failed. It refurbished a number of residential colleges twice before it would look at Moora. It left the member for Moore hanging out there and provided no support to him. It allocated resources to refurbish other residential colleges before it would look at refurbishing this one.

Several members interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order! Members, this is a time-limited debate. That is why I have caused the minister's time to be paused. She deserves a fair go, as does every member in this place, and I am responsible for making sure that that is provided. Any interjection is unruly, but we do of course, in practice, turn a Nelsonian blind eye to occasional interjection, but I am not going to allow the interjections to become so frequent and so complex that it stifles debate. One of the hard rules of membership of this place is that you may not like what you hear, but you have to sit there while it is said. This is particularly cruel for Hansard and for me on occasion because we do not have the ability to go away! If members cannot restrain themselves, they can go and fume outside the chamber. I am listening to the Minister for Education and Training, as I will listen to other members. Although the Minister for Education and Training is quite capable of dealing with interjections, she has indicated that she will not be receiving them and therefore I urge you to allow her to speak.

Hon SUE ELLERY: Thanks very much, Mr Deputy President. I appreciate that there may be those who need to leave the chamber. Apparently, things are happening in another place in Australia today, so there are other things to look at on the television.

It is also worth remembering the cuts that the previous government made to education when revenue was at its highest. When the budget was at its strongest and revenue was at its highest, \$220 million was cut directly from school budgets across Western Australia. Over 600 teaching positions, 110 Aboriginal and Islander education officers and more than 1 000 education assistants were cut. The previous government's record speaks for itself. It is also important to note the investment that this government is making in regional education in particular, despite the difficulties of our budget, and I want to talk about some of those things.

We are putting education assistants back into the classroom to provide more one-on-one support from kindy to year 2. The majority—I think it is 49 per cent—of the first 100 of those 300 will be rolled out in regional schools. That is where the greatest need is and that is where they are going. There will be 50 more Aboriginal and Islander education officers. More teachers are being placed in schools to support students in years 11 and 12 in particular who are doing courses through the School of Isolated and Distance Education. Country senior high schools have already started to receive specialised support from independent learning coordinators and regional learning specialists. We are allowing schools to go direct to market for minor capital works and repairs at a school to enable schools to have additional autonomy and funding to directly engage their own local contractors. For schools in regional Western Australia, that means that in many cases local contractors will be supported as well. There is also education infrastructure investment across regional Western Australia, but I will not have time to go through the list. A key component is that the total estimated investment in regional education infrastructure across Western Australia is around \$226 million.

I want to talk about some of the other things that have been raised, in particular community kindergartens. This is an important point to make. Hon Donna Faragher said words to the effect that there are 17 community kindergartens but that does not mean that they are not important. Of course it does not, but her commentary failed to acknowledge the reason that there are now only 17 and the reason that over 1 200 students attended community kindergartens in 2010 but now only 461 attend. It is because of a policy decision about where the right placement for early intervention should happen. It is about a policy decision made not by this government but by a previous government that the best place for kindy to occur is in the school setting to reduce the transition between entering formal schooling —

Hon Donna Faragher interjected.

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon SUE ELLERY: Honourable member, I listened in silence. I have less than seven minutes.

The point I was making is that a policy setting led to a decision that the best place for kindy students is in a school setting. Nevertheless, the two systems have remained in place. Under the previous government, and it is the case now and it will remain the case, community kindergartens that did not meet the minimum of 10 enrolments were given an extension until the end of term 3 to meet that threshold. If the kindy did not get 10 enrolments by the end

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

of term 3, the parent management committee had the choice of closing the kindy or putting the kindy into abeyance for a period in the hope that it would get the 10 enrolments it needed the following year. In most cases, kindies that did not meet the threshold were closed by the parent management committee. Chidlow Community Kindergarten was in abeyance for two years under the previous government before the parent management committee made the decision to fold in 2016. Similarly, Mount Helena Community Kindergarten had as many as 36 enrolments in 2010, but was unable to secure 10 enrolments in 2016 and went into abeyance until the end of 2017. This is not new policy. This is not a new way of managing the fact that the department recognises that enrolments go up and down. Under the previous government, those kindies went into abeyance until they could get the enrolments they needed to continue. There is nothing new about this policy. What has changed is the number —

Hon Donna Faragher: Yes, a 60 per cent increase.

Hon SUE ELLERY: — the threshold. That has certainly changed, but there is nothing new in what I have been saying about case-by-case decisions. They need to go into abeyance until they lift their numbers up again. That can happen; that is consistent.

I want to talk a little about Landsdale, the camp schools and the Gould League if I have time to do it. The camp schools—that is somewhat of a misnomer; they never enrolled students—and Landsdale have been subject to a tender process. The government policy on the tender process has been that for the camp school, prices should remain affordable for parents and public schools that want to use camp schools, and that public schools should get priority in bookings. That tender process is well underway, and I will be making an announcement about that in coming weeks. I think people will be pleasantly surprised about the outcome there. But it is also worth making the point that camp schools have not been the only choice that public and private schools have made about where to go camping. Hundreds of public and private schools every year use other than camp schools as the sites for their annual school camps. They use places like Fairbridge Village camp and a whole range of local government sport and recreation facilities. That has long been the case; there is nothing new about that. Nevertheless, I will have something more to say about that in the not-too-distant future.

Landsdale Farm School was also part of that tender process. The community clearly values the service and facility; there is no question about that. But in times of economic restraint, is it the business of the Department of Education to run a facility that is open to parents and families on the weekends, which is when most visitors go there —

Hon Tjorn Sibma: It has been encouraged to do so by your department.

Hon SUE ELLERY: But in times of economic restraint, is it the core business of the Department of Education to be running that weekend facility for families? I do not dispute that it is a great facility—there is no question about that—and it is highly valued by the community. The question is whether it should be coming out of the Department of Education's budget at a time when there is serious economic clean-up to be done as a consequence of what we inherited.

I want to touch briefly on the Gould League. It is disappointing to me that despite our efforts to encourage the Gould League to at least meet with Conservation Volunteers Australia, that has not happened.

Hon Donna Faragher: They have been in contact with them, minister.

Hon SUE ELLERY: It is good if that has happened since the last correspondence from my office.

I met with CVA, but in May the department met with Mr Duke of CVA, who had indicated that he was willing to meet with the WA Gould League to explore possible support for the Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre. The department has been in regular contact with him, but Mr Duke from CVA advised the department at the beginning of July that despite many attempts to schedule a meeting, the WA Gould League had not responded with a suitable date. Mr Duke indicated he was still willing at that point to meet with it —

Hon Donna Faragher: And he can only offer in-kind support.

Hon SUE ELLERY: — but he had not heard back from it. I am not sure we can determine what could have been offered if the meeting actually never happened.

In any event, my office took the extra step of contacting the Conservation Council of Western Australia to ask whether it would be able to facilitate a meeting between the Gould League and the CVA to at least have the discussion; I understand that was also unsuccessful.

These are difficult financial times. We have had to make some tough decisions; indeed we have. But we have tried to do it in a way that has caused the best spread of the resources we have. That includes in respect of Moora Residential College and a range of other matters. It is right that communities feel passionately about the facilities in their community; I respect that and the values they hold dear. I wish the financial circumstances were different.

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [11.34 am]: I will most definitely be supporting this motion. I thank Hon Donna Faragher for bringing it to the chamber.

It feels like groundhog day here. Day in, day out we come in here and hear the same old nonsense. I am sure the Leader of the House got out of bed this morning, said her affirmations—“Blame the Libs, blame the Libs, blame the Libs”—and forgot about the human element. That is exactly what this motion is all about—the human element; the kids and rural communities. It is not about this constant garbage that she carries on about with regard to financial mess et cetera. Minister for Education and Training, to say that \$220 million was taken out of Western Australia’s schools when we were in government is abject nonsense—it is garbage! Our schools were funded at a higher rate than they ever had been as a result of our government. We increased funding by 70.3 per cent. We put more teachers in our classrooms than there ever had been, and we did something you guys could not do—we put a teacher in front of every classroom every single year. We had massive teacher shortages under the former Labor administration.

Let us have a look at the human element here, guys. I stand proud on our record in education. What about the \$45 million additional money we put in in 2015 for students with a disability? What about the \$45 million additional money we put in in 2015 for primary schools? What about the \$11 million for the chaplaincy program, and so on? There was \$85 million for maintenance. So let us have some truth in this story.

Also, let us look at the human element. Once again, we are dealing here with finance. It is all about finance. Apparently, these decisions were made on a financial basis. I am afraid that does not hold up. Remember that mob over there—the Bolsheviks? They said that they won government on the back of the disastrous financial record of the previous government. They said that they were going to pay down debt like paying off a mortgage. There would be no new taxes. Remember that. Remember that the only real thing they said about education was that they were going to take Perth Modern School out of its magnificent building in West Perth and chuck it in the middle of Northbridge with all the nightclubs. That was a good idea! That lasted less than a month! Anyone worth anything in Western Australia, including thousands of former students, the parents, plus a former and the current Governor, plus a former Prime Minister, wrought havoc on members opposite, who went weak at the knees and said that it was not a good idea. A month later what did they do? Did they do any consulting? Not on your life!

Remember, no new taxes? There were no mentions of any cuts in education. Did they mention to the people of Moora that they were going to close Moora Residential College? Not on your life! Did they mention to any of the gifted and talented education schools that they were going to cut the GATE program? Not on your life! Did they mention any of that? No, they did not. Not one mention. The government should hang its head in shame because it took a lie to the election. It did not promise anything like those cuts; it promised only that there would be no new taxes.

After Perth Modern School, we thought that would be it, but no. Six months later, on 16 December 2017, the government came out with a whole range of new cuts. It was going to close the Schools of the Air. I have said before that that would be like shooting Bambi. Why on earth would it ever, ever think about closing the Schools of the Air? Of course, there was an eruption against that. Additionally, it was going to close Tuart College and cease the funding for Landsdale Farm School and Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre, put on hold level 3 classroom teachers until 2020, cut 25 per cent of the GATE program funding, increase VacSwim fees, and close Northam and Moora Residential Colleges. Did the government tell anyone that? No, but it did it right on the cusp of Christmas. It did it on the Friday before Christmas, when it thought no-one would care.

Hon Martin Aldridge: Egregious!

Hon PETER COLLIER: Egregious—that is exactly right!

The government is forgetting, of course, that it is poking the bear that is regional Western Australia. If it pokes the bear that is regional Western Australia, it will feel the repercussions. That is exactly what has happened. Why was I not surprised about that? It was because every one of those cuts came across my desk when I was education minister—every single one. The department put them in front of me, including the proposal to cut 4 000 teachers. What did I say? Did I say, “Okay; fair cop”? Not on your life! Ministers stare them down; they stare down Treasury and say, “No, it’s not going to happen.” I challenge the Minister for Education and Training to come in and contradict that. It is fact. The department put those cuts in front of me and I said, “Absolutely not!” When that announcement was made, the Minister for Education and Training said in her media release —

Consultation with students, parents, staff and the community will occur over the course of the next year, in advance of the changes coming into effect in 2019.

The government did a lot of consultation, because within a month it had changed its mind on most of those cuts! That had nothing to do with consultation; the government read the political tea leaves and realised it was in a bit of trouble and had better stop that. It did a bit of cherrypicking on the ones it would stop. It reversed the decision

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

on the School of Isolated and Distance Education. It saved Bambi, because there was an enormous backlash about the Schools of the Air. The gifted and talented education program funding was reinstated. I am sure that United Voice had a say about the level 3 classroom teachers: “No way, Sue; you’re not going to do that! You are not going to get rid of our level 3 teacher status.” We saw what happened with the education assistants; that was an entirely political decision. Northam Residential College will not close, but why? That retreat was based purely on politics. There is no human element behind these decisions; it is all about politics. What happened next is that the government announced changes to the cuts on 11 January. In the release to announce those changes, the Minister for Education and Training said —

“We’ve listened to the concerns raised and took time to further analyse the impact of the savings measures announced both from a financial and education perspective.

“These changes announced today strike the right balance and ensure that every child receives a high-quality education, no matter where they live.

The government should have put on there, “unless, of course, you live in Moora”. What a patronising comment that was. How patronising is that? The minister said, “no matter where they live”. The Premier went out there and said that they have only 30 students. I do not care if there is only one student. The minister said it herself; no matter where they live, every child in this state is significant. Whether someone lives in Moora, Geraldton, Meekatharra, Karratha, Wembley or wherever it is, they are significant. To come along and make a value judgement on a child’s education based on a political premise is absolutely insulting to that community.

We have a solution. The government does not mind increasing its pork-barrelling through the Local Projects, Local Jobs program from \$22.6 million to \$39 million and shunting all that money into marginal Labor seats. It does not mind spending \$1.2 million on the Safe Schools program, which it does not need to do because it is an online program. I do not know where that money is going. I have no problem with the program—it is in the schools and there is the option to do it—but no money is needed because it is an online program. If the government does not have any money, as we keep on hearing, why does the Premier have to move 300 metres from Hale House to Dumas House at a cost of \$700 000? That would keep Moora Residential College open for two years! I will not start with the hypocrisy of that.

I am from Her Majesty’s loyal opposition and I am here to help. I say to you guys that we have a solution. It is called the GST solution from the federal Liberal–National government. It will provide \$4.7 billion to the state government’s coffers that it did not think it would have. We do not want \$4.7 billion; we want \$370 000 for Moora Residential College—that is all we want. Can members opposite just understand that with the choices they make on these big bickies, we are all a product of the decisions we make. The Minister for Education and Training has made decisions on where her priorities lie. She has chosen the people of the western suburbs over Moora and regional Western Australia—she has, through Perth Modern School. We do not need the new school at Kitchener Park; there is already one ready at City Beach. She has made the call. She has made the decision that level 3 classroom teachers are more significant than the 30 students at Moora Residential College. She has made the decision to acquiesce to the demands of the GATE program and Northam Residential College. What I am saying is that she does not need to make those decisions; she has an extra \$4.7 billion. Labor was not expecting that money when it went to the election. We kept on hearing that the GST was not the problem; it was a spending problem, not a revenue problem. The government has an extra \$4.7 billion. If every child is significant, the Minister for Education and Training should think about the people of Moora; otherwise, she will go down as the education minister who destroyed Moora Residential College.

[Interruption from the gallery.]

The DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Order!

HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural) [11.44 am]: I rise to make a contribution on this very important debate, which has been brought to the house by Hon Donna Faragher. I will first take the time to acknowledge those in the gallery who have come to witness this important debate and are no doubt hoping to hear some good news from the other side of the house.

Hon Donna Faragher: They will be sadly disappointed.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Sadly, they will again be disappointed with this government. It is incredibly important that we have this discussion about education cuts, because this is all about community. I note the use of the word “community” in the motion. That is not insignificant, because it is all about community. Schools, hospitals and all those essential community items are necessary to get people to live in these communities. If we start to close them down, the inevitable consequence is a failure of those communities. That is why people, like those in the gallery today who have come from Moora, come so far to be here—because of the devastating effect that these cuts will

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

have on their community. That is why it is so important that we have these debates, which we are continually having in this place and will continue to have until this government reverses its ill-conceived cuts.

I want to reflect on some of the comments made by the Leader of the House yesterday in another debate, when she talked a little about community. I found it quite interesting that the Leader of the House said yesterday that governments stop listening to communities at their peril. She accused the previous government of failing to make contributions to the suburbs and towns across Western Australia. The government is all about community, but only the communities that matter to Labor and not the communities that matter to the rest of us. We have a government that says one thing and does another. We have a minister who continually refers to the past. She cannot talk about the future. I do not think I will be getting into a car with this minister any time soon—she has her hands on the wheel and is roaring down the highway while looking out the back window. The inevitable consequence of that is a big fiery crash, which I think will happen sooner rather than later. It is not only this minister. Yesterday, the Premier of this state said that the employees of community resource centres are hacks. Such is the lack of respect of this government for people in our communities that the Premier refers to these hard-working community advocates as hacks! It is an absolute disgrace that our Premier has such a lack of respect for those people. He should immediately apologise for that.

I want to discuss the rallies. We have obviously seen a number of rallies occur around the state, including at the front of Parliament House, by organisations like the CWA. If a government can get the CWA to protest against something it is doing, it probably suggests that the government has got it fundamentally wrong. I congratulate those organisations for standing up and being counted on this issue. It is incredibly important that they do that. We continually see from this government a propensity to pit community against community. We saw that with the proposal to cut funding from the CRCs—it would take some from this CRC but would give some to that CRC. These tireless community advocates were forced to work against each other. How is that listening to the community? How is that a government that respects the opinions of the community? It is not at all about community respect. We on this side of the house do have an understanding of community. We live and work in our community and are well connected with our communities, which, again, was discussed yesterday. In fact, my Nationals colleagues and other members of Parliament will be in Moora on Monday to meet with the Moora community to look at its facilities and discuss the solution that we have offered to Moora and to which Hon Martin Aldridge alluded earlier. I will refer to that later. These are important discussions to have. The Minister for Regional Development said in a debate in this house earlier in the year —

... in this current financial situation, it is not sustainable for us to have the various residential colleges in that region ... operating at only 53 per cent occupancy.

Rather than coming up with a policy platform that might encourage people to move to and live in the regions, the government decided to shut down a community and close the things that it needs. When this happens, it is inevitable that people will move away from that community. That is not regional development—that is regional destruction. The minister for regional development is well known for her lack of understanding of regional issues and regional communities. I referred to the Premier's comments and the minister's comments from yesterday. I now refer to an editorial by my colleague the member for Moore, Shane Love, who has worked tirelessly with the community of Moora to try to find a solution to its problems. In this editorial of 13 March this year, he said —

Numerous times, Premier Mark McGowan and Treasurer Ben Wyatt have made reference to \$8.7 million being needed to make the college fire-safe—a figure that doesn't stack up.

Moora Shire puts the real figure at closer to \$500,000.

This figure has been talked about today, yet the government will not accept it. It is a little bit like a person taking their car to a mechanic who, when they pick up the car, says, "Look. Your air filter was blocked and it's going to cost you \$47 500 because we had to replace the whole car." Instead of focusing on what is needed to keep Moora Residential College open, the government is focused on replacing the whole thing. It is possible to keep Moora college open for a period to build up the funds that are necessary to do a full replacement. That is a good solution—keep it open; do not shut it. That would not be that difficult to do. To achieve that, my colleagues in the National Party have spent considerable time thinking about how we may be able to help the government in this respect. We are a party that likes to offer solutions to problems; rather than being stuck in the past and looking at yesterday, we want to offer solutions going forward. This morning, Hon Martin Aldridge gave notice of a motion about the Duties Amendment (Additional Duty for Foreign Persons) Bill 2018. There is an opportunity for members on this side of the house particularly to provide a solution to the conundrum facing the government. Originally when the government took this bill to the people before the election, it set the foreign duty at four per cent to cover a freeze in TAFE fees, which is not referenced in the bill. However, the government has now decided to raise that duty to seven per cent. Here is an opportunity, because that extra three per cent will raise a significant sum of money—something in the order of \$50 million—and that could be used to keep Moora college

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

open and, more significantly, to reverse all the cuts, not just the one, and fix all the problems in one fell swoop. I suggest that members on this side of the house consider that motion. It is a very significant opportunity for us to provide a solution that will allow the college to remain open and the farm and camp schools to remain viable, while at the same time giving the government its four per cent to offset against TAFE fees, which is what the bill was originally intended to do. That is a very good option for the government and I encourage everyone to support it. As I said, we will be in Moora on Monday to discuss this option. I urge members on this side of the house to chat with Hon Martin Aldridge or other Nationals members about this proposal. That extra three per cent is a significant figure because as members would know, a three per cent swing at the next election would deliver eight seats to this side of the house.

HON ALISON XAMON (North Metropolitan) [11.55 am]: I rise on behalf of the Greens to indicate our support for the motion in front of us. Previously in this place, I have spoken about the Greens' concern about the decision to close Moora Residential College. I hope that at some point, whether it is because additional moneys become available or simply because the government has a change of heart and reassesses its expenditure priorities, it reverses its decision to close Moora college. It is a highly problematic decision and it is really important that it becomes one of those decisions that the government recognises is, perhaps, not the way forward and shows the gumption to reverse it.

When the announcement to close Moora college was made in December 2017, the government proposed to close two residential colleges—Moora and Northam. It made the right decision to not go ahead with the closure of Northam Residential College, and we need a reversal of the decision to close Moora Residential College as well because it provided enormous relief to the Northam community. The decision to continue with the closure of Moora college is having a detrimental impact on the Moora community and is creating a great deal of distress. I am really concerned that the Minister for Education and Training seems to be digging in despite so much opposition from a such a diverse range of stakeholders, including families and local businesses. I have been getting a lot of correspondence from local businesses within the Moora community as well as past and current students and members of the Country Women's Association. I acknowledge the passion, commitment and dedication of the Save Moora College group. I am really sorry that it is going through this; it is incredibly distressing. Moora Residential College provides accommodation for students who go to Central Midlands Senior High School and who simply live too far away to commute to school by bus each day. Members must remember that there is no appropriate senior high school close to where they live. As has been said, all children should have the opportunity to live with their parents or as close as possible to their parents for as long as possible before being forced to move to other locations simply to access education. The reality is that Central Midlands is the only public senior high school between the Perth metropolitan area and Geraldton. If the government compromises the capacity of that school to remain open and provide a full suite of services, it will have a hugely detrimental impact. The options advocated by the government as alternatives are, frankly, pretty unrealistic. For example, Yanchep is too far away for many students and it does not have boarding facilities. Moreover, it has no bus route and one has not been costed nor offered by the government. Forcing students to travel more than 1.5 hours one way twice a day on what has been cited as one of the most dangerous roads in Australia is absolutely unacceptable. People are really distressed about this situation and concerned about the impact on current boarders and the school going into the future.

One of the things I particularly want to speak about is the mental health impact of this decision on young people. In an email that was sent to me, it was pointed out that we cannot underestimate the importance of providing facilities that support our young rural students through to adulthood. It also stated that the small number of students at the college allows staff to develop a deep understanding of these kids, with a sense of family being crucial.

This particular bit of correspondence went on to describe the mental health impacts that are likely to arise for future students due to the closure of this college. These are really legitimate community concerns. I am very concerned that this government seems to have taken the position that the concerns about the closure of Moora Residential College are somehow part of a Nationals campaign and are therefore able to be ignored. This is a community concern that has been echoed by multiple parties within this chamber. We have already heard from the Liberal Party. Members are now hearing from the Greens and they are going to hear from One Nation in a moment. A number of parties are very concerned about this and I do not think it is acceptable to somehow ignore this because it is considered to be a political campaign and therefore easily dismissed.

The motion in front of us today also refers to a range of other cuts that have occurred within education circles. No-one else has mentioned it at this point but I particularly want to focus on the appalling decision to close Canning College and Tuart College. For years these colleges have been playing a really essential and important role within the education landscape, particularly providing options for young people who, for a range of reasons, sometimes mental health concerns, sometimes because of trauma that has happened within their families and sometimes just because they are going through difficult times, have not been able to complete their year 11 and 12 studies to the standard that they wanted to in order to open up future options for them. The minister has said, "We don't need

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

to have these colleges anymore because there are alternative options for people to access university.” That is completely unacceptable. Pathways to university are not the only reason that young people seek to complete their secondary education. This is about allowing pathways for a range of reasons. I could have understood it—I still would have objected—if one of those colleges had been suspended temporarily, but to close both and to remove that entire option for students is a disgraceful decision and one that this government should be looking to urgently reverse. It shows a real lack of understanding of vulnerable young people and of ensuring that our public education system is able to provide as broad a range of options as it possibly can.

Members have already spoken about the unpalatable decisions made on a range of other cuts, including community kindergartens, which were also meant to be about providing a range of opportunities for people. The government is shutting Landsdale Farm School, which is a really important program. People with disabilities have been particularly concerned about this and have expressed distress to me about this closure. The decision to close Herdsman Lake Wildlife Centre was, frankly, short-sighted. As has already been said, we are talking about a long-running, reputable program that has been running on the smell of an oily rag. If we take away the tiny amount of funding that it has been provided, suddenly we have lost so much more. These sorts of decisions are really short-sighted. Once the decision has been made to get rid of these services, it is really hard to build them back up if this or a future government decides to reverse that decision. I am very concerned that these sorts of things are happening. The Australian Labor Party has fundamentally misunderstood why people are so angry about what is happening with the education cuts. I note that the ALP likes to put itself out there as the party for public education. I can tell members now that the feedback coming from the electorate and from talking to people on the ground is that if the ALP makes these sorts of cuts, frankly, it cannot be trusted not to cut other things. This is meant to be core business, yet, clearly, it is not! It is not okay to talk about simply shifting and re-investing additional services into education if the government is getting rid of a range of other really important public educational services that people have a right to expect will continue and into which their taxpayer dollars will go. I really hope that the government starts to listen to this. I hope that the government shows the courage to reverse this decision. In particular, we know there is an immediacy around the closure of Moora Residential College. I think that the government got that decision completely wrong.

[Interruption from the gallery.]

The ACTING PRESIDENT (Hon Robin Chapple): The gallery is welcome here. It is the people’s Parliament, but interjections, clapping and cheering from the gallery is not acceptable.

HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West) [12.05 pm]: This goes back to one thing: it is a very important issue for the government. This debate that Hon Donna Faragher has brought to the house is a very important one and it goes right to the core of a lot of things in this house and in politics right across Australia, especially in Western Australia. We have a new government that is not listening. Yes, it has a mandate to govern for all people in Western Australia, including regional people, but at this stage its eyes and ears are closed. As Hon Alison Xamon mentioned, six other parties in this chamber are all singing from the same hymnbook on this motion about Moora Residential College, Landsdale Farm School and the camp schools. As I have said, part of the reason One Nation and the crossbench actually exist in this chamber is because past governments have not listened. The public is asking to be represented by people who are going to listen to them and take their concerns to Parliament.

It is very clear that education in regional areas is a difficult matter altogether. I want to talk about a couple of the issues faced in regional areas and some of the solutions. We have access issues. In WA there are 305 regional schools. When we think of the size of Western Australia, that is not a lot of schools. We have travel difficulties in regional areas due to the long travel distances to regional schools. This adversely impacts on regional students. A previous member talked about the mental impacts that it can have and is having on students. We have issues with access to boarding facilities. If no schools are located within a region, students need to access boarding school facilities, which are usually in the metropolitan area. We also have relocation issues. When schools like Moora Residential College close, access to alternative schooling could mean that students are sent to another school far away from home or that the family relocates to be closer to the school—the impact is immense. We have resourcing issues and a shortage of experienced teachers and staff willing to work in remote areas. We need to look at that. I do not think enough work has been done in that area. In 2016 in regional WA, there was a shortage of special-needs teachers, with no vacancies being filled, according to the federal government’s market figures. Low student numbers also mean less funding under the current funding model. Maybe we need to look at that funding model because the one-size-fits-all approach does not work for regional areas, especially in a state that is vast and will automatically have low numbers in many of the schools that need to stay open for the community. The number of subjects on offer will be affected due to the low number of students, and the worst part about it is that science, technology, engineering and mathematics subjects will be ignored or excluded, yet future jobs in this state will require students to have studied in these areas. That is just another issue we face.

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

I want to look at the impact of access and resourcing issues. There are 72 456 regional students and 20 per cent of those students are Indigenous. They will be impacted if we do not get it right in regional education. The high cost of transport and the lack of basic resourcing is having an effect. These issues lead to a gap in achievement between regional and metro students and fewer career opportunities down the track. Students fail to achieve long-term education goals. For example, a report by the University of Western Australia found that only nine per cent of regional students went on to further study at UWA. That is disappointing. However, there are some solutions.

The federal government did a report titled “Independent Review into Regional, Rural and Remote Education: Australian Government Response” in May 2018. At this stage, it appears to me from the attitude and the lack of listening from this government that it has ignored this report. It has not taken any notice of it. We have seen the change in GST and other areas within which funding is now available and will become available, so we cannot use a lack of funding as an excuse. The money will be available and education in regional areas is important. Looking at solutions, how do we have adequate resourcing? This report found that monetary incentives are needed to attract experienced teachers, especially to special education in regional areas. It found a need for increased funding to the 305 regional schools in WA to enable them to provide adequate resources to students. It also found access issues in that there is a need for location loading and a transport allowance to allow subsidies to cover the high cost of travelling to and from remote schools. I will not go through the other findings because I want to give another honourable member the chance to speak on this issue.

When it comes to Landsdale Farm School, education is not a five-days-a-week job; it is a 365-days-a-year job. The majority of people who visit Landsdale visit on the weekend, but they are one and the same people. The same kids who go with the schools during the week go on the weekend. The beautiful thing is that they can go with their brothers and sisters and the education continues on the weekend. Landsdale is a special school. It needs to stay open and be funded by the government; it is only a small cost. I do not think that privatisation is the answer for that school. The camp schools have been very successful. I was fortunate in my time to visit those camp schools when I was a kid. I was brought up in the metro area and the extra education I got by visiting and being part of those camp schools was valuable. They serve the same purpose today. I say to this government, please listen. Please do not be arrogant. We see what happens to governments around Australia and in this state when the government stops listening to the people and the elected members of this chamber. The answer to all that will be very brutal for the government come the next election.

HON JIM CHOWN (Agricultural) [12.13 pm]: I commend this motion from Hon Donna Faragher on this matter of great importance in regional Western Australia, a matter that this government has not yet addressed. I give my encouragement and congratulations to the Minister for Regional Development for seeing the issues out there in Western Australia and making a decision on community resource centres; she has found the \$6 million or \$7 million to allow them to operate and serve their communities as they have done before. I hope that the Minister for Education and Training takes note, because the Minister for Regional Development has tested the wind. She has seen that Labor in regional Western Australia, politically, is as dead as a duck on a road. It is done and dusted unless this policy is reversed. The Minister for Education and Training had the audacity to stand in this house today and said that she made these decisions to rectify budget issues.

We have all heard time and again how the government has splashed \$39 million across Labor electorates to benefit itself at the expense of regional education. There is no other argument. If the minister really believed that our children are worthy of the best thing we could give them—that is, the best possible education this state can provide at a place of their choosing—why would she be stopping schoolchildren going to Moora Residential College in regional Western Australia? Why would the government be privatising camp schools up and down the coast, except for Broome? Why would the government be closing Landsdale Farm School? Why would the government be doing these things? I just cannot see the reason other than the fact that the minister sat there and was directed by her cabinet to find some cuts, and along trotted the director general of Education and she said, “There are the cuts, minister; do it. We have it all planned for you.” Hon Peter Collier has stated time and again in this house that he received the same papers on the same matter and rejected them. But this minister could not find a solution. The minister thought, “None of them are Labor seats. It’s regional Western Australia. They’ll never vote for us—done.”

What gets my goat is we sit here and not one Labor member representing my electorate, the Agricultural Region—there are two—has stood in this house to speak on this motion today and offered their support for the government decision or spoken against the government decision. Not one —

Several members interjected.

The ACTING PRESIDENT: Members! Order!

Hon JIM CHOWN: This matter is going to put this government out of business when the election comes in 2021. It has engaged not only regional Western Australia but also the metro area. It has gone national and international thanks to the good people of Moora who have launched a proper campaign against these cuts that are stopping

Hon Donna Faragher; Hon Sue Ellery; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Alison Xamon; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon James Chown

regional people from getting a reasonable education. The campaign's traction is growing and, as I said before in May, this will not go away until the minister makes the right decision as per Hon Alannah MacTiernan with the CRCs. If the minister makes that decision at some stage before the axe falls at the end of the educational year, she will receive my accolades and congratulations. She will receive regional Western Australia's congratulations all for the sake of—how much is it?—\$20 million or \$30 million.

Hon Alison Xamon: It's less than that.

Hon JIM CHOWN: It is a lot less than that. It is peanuts—pennies and farthings—in the scheme of the state budget.

Hon Sue Ellery: He has no clue. He tries.

Hon JIM CHOWN: That is the reality. The Minister for Education and Training can mock me. She can smile smugly over there. She can say I try. Damn right I am trying, because that is my electorate!

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.