

GST DISTRIBUTION

Motion

HON DR STEVE THOMAS (South West) [10.07 am] — without notice: I move —

That this house acknowledges and congratulates the federal Liberal–National government for its —

- (a) determination and success in achieving a better GST distribution for Western Australia, including a guaranteed floor, —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! We have not even heard the motion being read in, and the member is not getting a lot of help from his own side. Hon Dr Steve Thomas, please read the motion.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Shall I start again, Madam President?

The PRESIDENT: Yes, please.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I move —

That this house acknowledges and congratulates the federal Liberal–National government for its —

- (a) determination and success in achieving a better GST distribution for Western Australia, including a guaranteed floor, which has delivered to this state a budget surplus earlier than anticipated; and
- (b) significant funding of and commitment to the delivery of key infrastructure projects throughout Western Australia.

It is with a great deal of enthusiasm that I move the motion before the house today, to have a discussion about the remedy of the GST situation in Western Australia. Of course, as I always have done in this house, I am happy to provide some significant detail and some technical argument to support my case.

Let me begin with some things that have come simply from the government’s budget papers. Western Australia’s GST revenue will increase significantly over the forward estimates as a result of the arrangement put together by the federal coalition government. This is a good outcome. Someone on the other side will probably stand and quote my previous comments, when I said repeatedly that we need to be careful when we claim that we want all of our GST back, because, if we do that, we are saying that we will never again share the benefits of a future boom in this state, and we will never again be the recipient of a future boom in another state. However, looking at that, a massive benefit has been successfully delivered to the state of Western Australia through the agreement reached by the federal government—an agreement that enabled the state Labor government to announce a surplus in the budget that it brought down last week. That is because without a change to the GST distribution, and if we simply removed the GST adjustment, there would have been no budget surplus to put forward. Let us look at that in a little more detail. I would expect to hear some gratitude from the other side of the house for the largesse with which it has been blessed. We may hear a little of that gratitude later.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: You might just direct your comments to me and possibly not encourage people to interject, which would be exceedingly unruly, would it not?

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Thank you, Madam President, I take your guidance as always to heart.

The PRESIDENT: Let us see how long that lasts.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: The best way to examine the process of this benefit to the state of Western Australia is to compare the state government’s 2019–20 budget released last week with its two previous budgets. The two previous budgets, of course, did not have within their figures an agreement struck by Scott Morrison, as Prime Minister of Australia, to deliver a benefit to the people of Western Australia. There was a significant change. We need to remember, for those honourable members who still have an interest in developing what I call “budget literacy”, that the GST component was not static. Before the announcement of the federal government’s compensation package of top-up payments—ultimately, in the fullness of time, a long-term fix—the GST delivery to the state would have declined. This is acknowledged in the statements of the Treasurer. He said that given the total GST pool was declining, the amount available for the state of Western Australia would have declined. I think it behoves us to have a measure of that. As behoves a speech on the budget, I have come prepared to discuss this with a bit of information. Rather than give honourable members the numbers, I would like them to look at this graph—I shall seek in a minute to table these in the interest of the members—and what we currently see as the increase in GST payments to the state of Western Australia. Members will note that from the numbers expected in the 2017–18 budget for the current 2018–19 financial year, the budget year 2019–20 and in the first forward estimate year of 2020–21, we would have got a bit over \$11.5 billion in GST. That rose slightly, optimistically, in the 2018–19 budget to not quite \$12 billion. The expectation has changed, thanks to the largesse of the Morrison

Hon Dr Steve Thomas; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Alannah MacTiernan; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Diane Evers; Hon Tjorn Sibma

coalition government; there is actually a sharp rise in GST to just over \$13 billion. However, we need to look at what would have happened without the intervention, the interference and the boost given by the Morrison coalition government. Madam President, I have a chart.

The PRESIDENT: Of course you do.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: This line represents the original chart I just spoke about, which shows some increase, up to \$13 billion, in the GST revenue to be received by the state. This line —

The PRESIDENT: Member, I will interject. You might want to just talk about the red line or the blue line. That may assist Hansard at a later stage.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Sorry. Thank you, Madam President. I will table the document.

Hon Kyle McGinn interjected.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: This will be very important for the member to learn.

The line rises slightly to 2018. If we were to remove the GST top-up payments from the 2019–20 budget released a week ago, guess what would happen to the GST? It would drop to under \$10 billion, a significant decline, without the work done by the Morrison coalition government to boost the revenue available to the state of Western Australia. I seek leave to table these two charts for the education of members.

Leave granted. [See paper 2709.]

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: I urge honourable members to look at what was going to be and, thanks to the injection of funds and the agreement, what is to be. That is a significant improvement in the GST funding to the state of Western Australia.

We can be thankful to the Morrison government and Prime Minister Scott Morrison personally for some of those things. Why should we be personally grateful? Let us look at that. I will not go through the long history of complaints about the GST distribution process, because as members will probably quite rightly point out, I am something of a sceptic of that process and I am a sceptic in life in general—the king of the cynics, if you will. But let us look at what happened in May 2017. In response to all those complaints, the coalition commonwealth government announced a Productivity Commission review of the GST distribution system. Who put that into place and announced that? The Treasurer at the time, Scott Morrison, no doubt with the support of the Minister for Finance, Senator Mathias Cormann from Western Australia. These two wise gentlemen decided that we needed to have a review based on all the calls from various people. I understand that across the board, federal members of Parliament were lobbying the leadership team to look at this. I would imagine that we should give some credit to every federal MP from the coalition who would have been working hard to have a review done—and it got up. On October 2017, a draft report dropped. I thought there were a few flaws in the draft report, but at least at that point Treasurer Scott Morrison and Minister for Finance Senator Mathias Cormann had a document on which to base a discussion and a debate.

Everybody went back into the process, there were further submissions and everybody was a part of the conversation. What happened next? The final report was released on 5 July 2018. That is an auspicious date because on 5 July 2018, with the release of the final report of the Productivity Commission, which made slightly more toned, muted and some fairly sensible recommendations, the Treasurer of Australia at that point, a man called Scott Morrison, basically announced a new system of GST distribution for Australia in which Western Australia would be the most significant beneficiary. It would be funded—I might say this was quite surprising to me—by the commonwealth government. I thought this was a fairly generous proposition. That was announced on 5 July 2018, when the Productivity Commission report dropped. The coalition government, led by Treasurer Scott Morrison, decided that Western Australia should get a better deal, because, otherwise, as we have seen in the chart, the revenue for Western Australia would drop away. This was a major benefit.

What was happening on the other side of politics? Did the federal Leader of the Opposition, Bill Shorten, decide to immediately jump on board and say, “Yes, we agree this is a great outcome for Western Australia and it’s a good outcome for the country”? Is that what we heard? No, we did not. Bill Shorten did not jump on board; he did not support it. He had to be dragged in kicking and screaming. On 29 August, a good month and a half, almost two months, after the 5 July announcement by then Treasurer Scott Morrison, Bill Shorten announced he was on a unity ticket. After six weeks he was on a unity ticket, which means: “I give up. I cannot argue with what the Treasurer of Australia has presented. I am on a unity ticket.” I felt like we were back to the Kevin Rudd days with John Howard—lite. We are all together—*Kumbaya*! It was great; I thought it was a good outcome. The Labor Party was dragged kicking and screaming to this particular solution, which would, in the not-too-distant future, allow the state government to provide a budget surplus it would not have otherwise had.

But there were concerns. Even though on 29 August, the opposition leader Bill Shorten apparently announced a unity ticket, there were concerns. By 3 October, we were potentially looking, as the Labor Party is a bit wont to do, at another lobster-ish backflip—another ministerial miscalculation. I thought this was an excellent piece of

work by the state Labor Party. Bear in mind that this is over a month after Bill Shorten announced the unity ticket. An article from *The West Australian* of 3 October 2018 states —

Premier Mark McGowan has made an urgent plea for his Federal Labor counterparts to back new GST legislation and “stop the political bickering”.

The Premier’s office was on the phone to Opposition Leader Bill Shorten’s senior staff yesterday after shadow treasurer Chris Bowen reportedly talked down the long-awaited GST fix, which includes legislation to ensure WA’s GST ... does not fall below 75¢ in the dollar.

Now it gets to 75¢ and a bit —

“Look, Bill Shorten, I stood next to him about a month ago and he said he was on a unity ticket and wanted to make the floor the law and I agree with that,” Mr McGowan said. “I just urge Federal Labor to support the arrangements and let’s move on.”

That was not a bad idea. He had to get on the phone and say that these federal members are getting a bit nervous so it may not happen after all. The unity ticket turned out to be a unicycle! There were some concerns that this chance might disappear, but, luckily for us, it was the case that finally, kicking and screaming, the federal Leader of the Opposition, B2, decided to join the hunt, so legislation is now in place. The legislation was passed in November 2018. At that point, Scott Morrison, the deliverer of the largesse and the author, with help, obviously, of the legislation, was no longer the Treasurer. Guess what? He was the Prime Minister! The man, who was the Treasurer, who saw the problem, who sent this issue to the Productivity Commission for recommendations, who delivered the solution to the problem, and who had the legislation drawn up was the Prime Minister late last year who got to announce a major budget fillip for the state of Western Australia. In my view, that is why this chamber, this state and, most importantly, this government, owes a debt of gratitude to Scott Morrison. He fixed a problem about which Labor made an enormous amount of noise and about which its federal leadership had to be dragged kicking and screaming to a solution, with the shadow frontbench tripping over all the way along. That is why this debate is important. A little bit of gratitude would go a long way, because the state will be better off.

If members are interested, on 5 July 2018, then Treasurer Scott Morrison issued a press release titled “All better off from fairer way to share the GST”. I was surprised that the redistribution would mean that no state would be worse off. I always thought that was the biggest risk, and I have said so in this chamber many times. That decision has cost the federal government and will continue to cost the federal government. It was Scott Morrison, as Treasurer and then as Prime Minister, who delivered that largesse to the state of Western Australia.

Of course, everybody has jumped on board and wants to claim credit for the work of Scott Morrison as Treasurer and, there is no doubt in my mind, Senator Mathias Cormann as Minister for Finance, and the entire federal Liberal parliamentary team from Western Australia. I am sure that not one of them did not agitate for a better outcome. The negotiations between then Treasurer Scott Morrison and Senator Mathias Cormann, Minister for Finance, are, in my view, legend. However, everybody jumped on board and wanted to claim credit for the solution. Can members guess who claimed credit? The Western Australian Labor Party claimed credit, despite the fact that B2 was not interested. As far as I can tell, every newspaper, media outlet and business organisation in the state has claimed credit. Apparently, cabals of people made surreptitious deals and they all claimed credit. There were secret meetings and secret handshakes. There must be codes and signals that I am unaware of, because from my occasional conversations with Senator Mathias Cormann, my understanding is that most of these negotiations were conducted aboveboard. That is why in my budget contribution on Tuesday night I asked for a little detail about the correspondence between the federal and state Treasurers to work out some of the finer details. It is important to know where the credit lies for this.

I remember we had a debate—I think it was in my budget contribution last year—about all the people who were jumping up and down. The Legislative Council of Western Australia should be the chamber of review and knowledge. We are on a path, I hope, to economic knowledge and literacy. I remember that we had a debate a year ago when many minor parties were jumping up saying that they were going to save Western Australia’s GST. I saw in a news article that former Labor candidate Charles “Chas” Hopkins was going to set up a new micro-party based exclusively on the GST so he could save the day. At the time, I said that we needed to be above that and needed to ensure that the standard of debate in this chamber is high, so that the white noise from people like “Chas” Hopkins would not be listened to. I am pleased to see that “Chas” Hopkins did not form a minor party with which to go to the election. It is probably because Scott Morrison and the federal coalition government—the Liberal Party and its National Party colleagues—fixed the GST issue. I note that Charles “Chas” Hopkins is a candidate in this election and is running in Perth for Clive Palmer. We have moved on. We have dropped this one away.

What do we know at the end of this debate? I have restricted my contribution —

Several members interjected.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Alannah MacTiernan; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Diane Evers; Hon Tjorn Sibma

The PRESIDENT: Order! There is only a very short time. Please let the member finish in silence.

Hon Dr STEVE THOMAS: Thank you, Madam President. I am very sad I do not have unlimited time.

What do we know about the situation with the GST? We know a few things for sure. We do not know all the wheeling and dealing by everyone who has claimed credit. Nobody has any evidence for that and there is no proof. We know these things as fact: everybody complained that the GST was an issue for Western Australia. In 2017, the now Prime Minister Scott Morrison started the review that fixed it. In 2018, he announced the solution and organised the legislation that fixed it. Where has Bill Shorten been on this? Where is the Labor leader? He has come up shorten!

HON PETER COLLIER (North Metropolitan — Leader of the Opposition) [10.28 am]: I stand to enthusiastically support the motion moved by Hon Dr Steve Thomas. It is an excellent motion. I want to make one thing perfectly clear. If it were not for Scott Morrison, my good mate Mathias Cormann and the Liberal–National government, there is no way the state Labor government would have delivered a surplus budget last week. If it were not for the changes to the floor of the GST, there would not have been a surplus for the state Labor government. Over the last four or five years, the state Labor Party has spent its entire time infatuated by the finances of the —

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order! You do not need to raise your voice, and nobody else needs to interject. That way we will all get to hear what the member has to say and Hansard will be able to do what they need to do.

Hon PETER COLLIER: The state Labor Party has been infatuated by the finances of Western Australia over the last five years. It spent its entire time —

Several members interjected.

Hon PETER COLLIER: Did members opposite listen to the ruling of the President?

The PRESIDENT: Order! If you want to seek the call later in this debate, I suggest you listen quietly now; otherwise, that may not happen.

Hon PETER COLLIER: The Labor Party spent its entire last term in opposition infatuated with the finances. It has spent the first two years in government still infatuated with the finances of the former Liberal–National government. Let me remind members of the last time the Bolsheviks were in power. Let me remind them of what they did to service delivery in Western Australia. We had mass teacher shortages, we had the lowest paid teachers in the nation, we had criminals running out of the Supreme Court, and we ran out of electricity and gas because that mob opposite could not deliver services.

When members opposite came into power, they blamed us. They did not mind going down to Elizabeth Quay arm in arm to open it, or opening the new stadium, Scarborough foreshore or Yagan Square. They did not mind doing that. They just moaned and groaned about the finances of the previous government.

The previous government had a seriously flawed GST problem. Western Australia was getting such a parlous amount of GST revenue from the federal government. The members opposite disagreed. Do members know who was most emphatic in their disagreement? It was the now Premier and the Treasurer. Let me remind the house of that. Before the last state election, this is what the now Premier said about the GST —

The second point is there is no GST shock. That deal is appalling. We understand that, but each and every year the GST receipts of Western Australia are what was predicted by Treasury.

On 15 September 2016, Hon Ben Wyatt said —

What we do know—I pointed this out earlier—is that Treasury always gets pretty much right what GST revenue will be each budget year. There has never been a budget shock from the budget GST of each year. We know what we will get.

Mr Wyatt also said on 5 May 2015 —

There has never been a revenue problem; I have made that point time and again. There has never been a GST shock; we have always known each year what the GST would be.

According to the mob opposite, the GST was not an issue. Things changed of course after the last state election. After the election, they changed their mind. They realised that the GST was an issue.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon PETER COLLIER: Members over there have a problem listening to the rulings of the President.

Hon Dr Steve Thomas; Hon Peter Collier; Hon Alannah MacTiernan; Hon Colin Tincknell; Hon Colin De Grussa; Hon Diane Evers; Hon Tjorn Sibma

The PRESIDENT: That includes you, member, for not yelling.

Hon PETER COLLIER: I have to, to be heard over the interjections.

The PRESIDENT: Sometimes not yelling, and dropping your voice, might be a bit more effective.

Hon PETER COLLIER: After the election, they changed their tune. On 8 August 2017, the Premier said —

That was made worse in the last couple of weeks when it became plain to us, following advice from Michael Barnes, the Under Treasurer, that because of the recent census figures, we would have a reduction of \$1.9 billion in our GST share.

Welcome to the GST world, guys! That is what we had to deal with for the nine years that we were in government. On 18 May 2017, Mr McGowan said —

Since the *Pre-election Financial Projections Statement*, the government's revenue over the forward estimates has declined in the vicinity of \$2 billion. Around a billion dollars of that is GST revenue across the forward estimates.

That shows quite clearly that what they said in opposition is completely different from what they say in government.

Let me remind members that had we had a GST floor—the current situation that has been established by Scott Morrison and the federal Liberal–National government—the state would be \$27 billion better off. The Barnett government would have been \$21.8 billion better off with the GST. Let us not be too precious about this, guys. It was all good and well to moan and groan about the finances and say the GST is not a problem, but they have changed their minds since getting into government. In the lead-up to the last state election, the now Treasurer and the Premier said that they would pay off debt just like they would pay off a mortgage. When they were elected, they froze the wages of members of Parliament. That is not going to pay off debt. They froze public servants' wage increases to \$1 000 a year while at the same time nine ministers double-dipped on their car allowance. That was \$5 300 overnight. They got more overnight than any public servant got in four years. That is what they did. Is that going to pay down debt? No.

They came out last week with their budget. This is extraordinary; I could not believe this. Under “Responsible Financial Management” on page 2 of the Treasurer's speech, it states in part —

The ... Government's breakthrough victory in obtaining a fairer share of the GST for Western Australia ensures that we will never again receive below 70 percent of our population share of the GST pool. As a result, in this Budget we will receive a total of \$5 billion in GST top-up payments out to 2021–22.

Exposed! You guys have got more front than Myer! They have put in their budget papers that they were responsible for the improvement to the GST. They had nothing to do with it. In 2012, Colin Barnett raised what was happening with the GST. If it were not for Scott Morrison and Mathias Cormann, you guys would not have this floor in the GST payments to Western Australia, and they would not have a surplus right now; I can promise them that.

Having said that, let us see what Western Australia will do with its new-found wealth as a result of the government capping public servants' wage increases at \$1 000 a year and freezing the salaries of members of Parliament. That did not do much at all. Let us not forget the massive influx of funds the government received from the increase in the price of iron ore. Those two factors alone are directly responsible: the iron ore price and the GST floor that was established by federal Liberal–National governments. It was reported that the Premier stated quite categorically on 27 October 2018 —

PREMIER Mark McGowan has warned taxpayers and MPs that a \$4.7 billion GST windfall will be used to reduce debt, saying the job of repairing the State's finances is not yet done.

Mind you, it will be a lot more than \$4.7 billion now; it will be billions and billions. Members opposite are going to be flush with funds due to Scott Morrison and Mathias Cormann. I hope they vote for them on the weekend!

A media release dated 14 November 2018, titled “State debt targeted following successful GST campaign”, states —

- WA's GST ‘top-up’ payments will solely be used to reduce WA's debt burden

Let us look at this year's budget papers to see whether it did go to debt burden. It is stated on page 50 of the budget papers —

In line with the Government's election commitment, a Debt Reduction Account was established in 2017–18 to facilitate the reduction of centrally-held State borrowings using windfall funds.

That is what it says. What was said back in 2018 is in these budget papers. All members have to do is turn over the page to see how much sincerity is engaged within that statement. It states —

The 2019–20 Budget includes a total of \$5.1 billion flowing through the Debt Reduction Account over the four years to 2022–23. Of this amount, an estimated:

- \$1.4 billion will be used to repay existing debt ...

So, \$1.4 billion of that debt reduction account is going to repay debt, but \$3.7 billion will be used to reduce new borrowings. That is not reducing debt. That is like forward paying off the cost of an extension to a house. When these guys over here say they are reducing debt, they are not. Why did they not put that entire amount into debt reduction? We cannot believe a word they say. The Premier has said quite categorically that that money is all going to debt reduction—it is not. It says in the budget papers —

- \$3.7 billion will be used to reduce new borrowings ...

That is absolute garbage. If we are reducing debt, why has the amount of interest paid gone up? Look at the total public sector. In 2019–20, it will be \$2.073 billion, and then it goes up in 2022–23 to \$2.295 billion. Quite clearly, what we are hearing from members opposite is not what they are actually doing. Firstly, they rely almost exclusively on the GST and the price of iron ore to get this surplus and, secondly, they are not actually using that surplus or the increased funds from the GST to reduce debt. It is garbage; it is absolute rubbish. Will we have another Local Projects, Local Jobs program? Is that what it is for? Will it be used to pork-barrel prior to the next election? Debt is increasing, guys. It is increasing under this government's watch. If the former government had the same arrangement that this government has, the debt would have been reduced by \$21.8 billion.

Scott Morrison is a genius. He has delivered two surpluses in the last two months: one at the federal level and one in Western Australia. If it were not for Scott Morrison, Mathias Cormann and the federal Liberal–National government, the mob opposite would not have delivered a surplus in the 2019–20 budget. Scott Morrison, quite frankly, should be knighted and we all should vote for him in the federal election on Saturday!

HON ALANNAH MacTIERNAN (North Metropolitan — Minister for Regional Development) [10.39 am]: Normally, I like to wait until all members on the other side have spoken but, honestly, this unbelievable presentation requires my immediate response. I can only presume that members opposite have been down to Nannup feasting on psilocybin because they are absolutely and completely living in pixie land. Their whole presentation says that the creation of this GST fix was solely the work their fabulous good friends, those great heroes for Western Australia, Scott Morrison and Senator Mathias Cormann. I want to point out that in those five years when Colin Barnett was impersonating Don Quixote tilting at the windmill, constantly talking about GST reform, we had Mathias Cormann and Scott Morrison in exactly the same positions. There were four years in which the opposition's good friends, their best friends, their best mate Mathias Cormann, could have helped. Did he do it? The debt mountain was increasing, the deficits were going up—he could have stepped in, because it was all them. If they were the really smart people who solved it, why did they hang out the state to dry? What happened during those four years from 2013 to 2017, when the Liberal Party was in government and it was unable to get a cent? They ignored the WA Liberal–National government. They took no notice of the WA Liberal–National government. Of course, we know that was the case and that the argument being levelled about Western Australia, across the entire nation, was: why should we change the GST when this state has record revenues, like no-one had ever seen before, but it is still in deficit? Indeed, when our Treasurer, Ben Wyatt, went to his very first meeting with state and territory Treasurers, the attitude amongst the other states was: why should we help the WA government when it has done such a terrible job managing the finances?

Part of the way to obtain a solution to this problem was to have the determination that we would manage our budget and were not going to just go out and be profligate; we would contain our expenses. I notice that the Leader of the Opposition criticised the government side of this house for being concerned about budgets and finances. That says it all. It explains why there was a colossal explosion in the growth of expenditure during the former government's term, an average of around 6.5 per cent per annum. We are bringing that down to below two per cent—that is the secret.

The other day the Leader of the Opposition, quite rightly, was lauding Max Evans for his contribution to careful financing when he was in this chamber. But that all left with Max, and what we have seen is this attitude. I am amazed that even the sensible member, Hon Dr Steve Thomas, would put his name to this rubbish. Today, we heard from the Leader of the Opposition an expression of contempt for those people who are concerned about the detail of finances. We saw the manifestation of that in the former government's eight deficit budgets, which it managed to craft whilst, nevertheless, in receipt of record revenue. Let us be very, very clear about this: Scott Morrison and Mathias Cormann were not the architects of the GST fix. As we know, they were the former government's mates and friends but they were simply not interested. They shared the view of the rest of Australia that the former government simply was not managing its finances.

What changed that situation? It was the very, very comprehensive McGowan government victory, where front and centre was our pledge to get our economy back on track and our finances in order. When we won those 41 seats, a record number of seats, they saw that something was deeply wrong. Indeed, the first thing the Premier did when he came to office, rather than running around tilting at windmills and being ignored, was to call for a review by the Productivity Commission. This did not just happen. It could have happened between 2013 and 2017, when the former government's mates Mathias Cormann and Scott Morrison could have helped out the former government, but they did not. It was the Premier who called for the review. He actually went to the extent of drafting the terms of reference and then we constructively participated in that review. We built a consensus amongst industry in Western Australia. We had the major mining companies, major property companies and companies from right across the spectrum of Western Australian business working constructively with Premier McGowan and Treasurer Ben Wyatt. We had a constructive relationship. We do not apologise for the fact that we tried to engage with a federal Liberal government—that is part of our job. Clearly, the former government was not able to engage with the federal government. It had its mates but was unable to engage with them. We unashamedly sought that engagement. In fact, Bill Shorten on 28 August pledged a \$1.6 billion fund to help WA through the GST shortfall. He was actually criticised at the time by Scott Morrison saying that was just a sugar hit. Malcolm Turnbull came over in mid-2016 and promised something, but when he turned up a year later, in August 2017, he still had not managed to produce anything.

Let us get the sequence of events right. After we came to government, we started this process with the Productivity Commission and we fought for it. Mr Shorten was first out of the blocks to start to deal with this issue more comprehensively and then we got into what we might say was a bit of a bidding war and we have ended up with a solution that gives us a GST floor. We are amazed that Hon Dr Steve Thomas has shown rare daring in the motion to raise the issue of the GST floor, but he appears to have forgotten that the current WA Leader of the Opposition opposed the notion of the floor. When we put in our submission, we argued —

... a GST relativity floor ensures a minimum level of GST funding, say 75–80% of a State's population share, would safeguard against extreme outcomes that are unjustified by the approximations that cannot be avoided in any HFE formula.

But the Parliamentary Liberal Party put in its submission —

... many proposals put forward with most revolving around some variation of a floor or at what level a floor should be ... While each may improve the situation they all face the criticism of just being a further tinkering with a broken system.

So the opposition did not even back the floor. Opposition members come in here and congratulate the federal mob for introducing a floor, which was our submission, but they opposed it! I have to say they have more front than Myer; it is absolutely unbelievable.

Several members interjected.

Hon ALANNAH MacTIERNAN: But I love it. Then there was a great idea from the state Leader of the Opposition to crowdfund lodging a High Court legal challenge to sue the commonwealth. That was their mates, Mathias Cormann and Scott Morrison—their best friends! They were actually going to crowdfund it. I do not know how much they raised—presumably it was not very much. We saw that great ability for them to work constructively with their friends in the commonwealth! The then Western Australian Treasurer Mike Nahan blasted the Prime Minister saying that the government was completely hopeless and not helping WA. I just do not get the narrative of members opposite when they so clearly and utterly failed to attract any solution. They were even unable to work with their best friends to achieve a solution. Labor then came into government and did this, and members opposite want to pretend that it was done by all their friends—all their friends who ignored them for four years! We are very pleased that we have been able to work with the federal Liberal government because we wanted to get a fair deal for Western Australia.

One of the things that happened was that the Barnett government systematically failed to engage with the federal regime. When we came into government, we started going to the northern Australia forums and the skills forums and people would say, “Oh my God! Western Australia is here! You haven't been here for the last five years.” That was an absolutely pathetic way of dealing with things. It was so bad that when I was the Deputy Chair of the Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia, chaired by Warren Entsch, a Liberal federal member of Parliament, we sought to come over to Western Australia to get submissions from Western Australians about the needs of northern Australia. Guess what happened? Colin Barnett said that we could not speak with any public servants or go to any state facility. That was the problem. That was an absolutely absurd approach to commonwealth–state relations.

We are very proud that we have been able to go in to bat for projects. We are very proud that we are getting \$2.6 billion to help fund Metronet. We are very proud that we have finally been able to get the commonwealth government to help us build the Karratha–Tom Price road. We think that is a fantastic outcome. During eight and a half years in government, members opposite did not invest one cent in that road—yet we have. Last time we

were in government, we provided the first two rounds of funding, and now we are doing it again. We have been able to get federal government support for the Albany ring-road and the Bunbury bypass, things that the previous government was not able to do.

I can tell members opposite that they are making a laughing-stock of themselves with this argument—there is no doubt. We acknowledge that we got the federal Liberal government to take Western Australia seriously for the first time. We also have the federal opposition in that same place. We have done very well. We achieved an outcome that members opposite were simply unable to achieve during their time in government. They did mad things. Their friend Mathias had a meeting with Jamie Briggs and came back with the idea that the previous government was going to build the Perth Freight Link. It was a completely unprepared and un-thought-through idea that turned out to be a colossal failure. We need a responsible, sensible government that is prepared to work on both sides of the political fence with our friends in Canberra for the betterment of this state. We are very proud of what we as a Western Australian government have achieved in that regard.

HON COLIN TINCKNELL (South West) [10.54 am]: Today I would like to talk about some actual facts. Once again, we heard the minister mention both sides of politics. There are more than two sides of politics. The number of crossbenchers and parties like One Nation are growing in all Australian states. While people acknowledge only the Liberal or the Labor side of politics, those numbers will continue to grow because people are ignoring most of the facts when they do that.

I applaud the federal government for doing something about the GST. That is a very good move. It must have read our submission that also talked about that same GST floor. We sent in two submissions: one from One Nation's Western Australian branch and one from our federal Senator Peter Georgiou. When Senator Georgiou gave his maiden speech on 16 August 2017, he raised GST as the most important thing to Western Australians. When we look at the facts, we see that Senator Georgiou put forward a motion about the GST distribution, calling for the government to table the Productivity Commission's report into the equity of GST. He received no support for this from any of his Western Australian colleagues. Let us call out those colleagues: Dodson, Pratt, Sterle, Siewert, Steele-John, Lines, Brockman, Cash, Cormann and Reynolds. The last name I have left out because this gentleman did make an effort on the GST—Senator Dean Smith. Senators Georgiou and Smith were the only two outspoken senators. Why was that? I do not know why Senator Dean Smith was outspoken, but he was brave and he highlighted the GST issue on a regular basis. The other outspoken senator in the house also bravely highlighted that issue and copped a lot of criticism from other parties. Our federal leader backed him 100 per cent. She was brave enough to say, "Senator Georgiou, you go for it. You are representing your state and regardless of what will happen in Queensland or other states, to me or other members of our party, you go ahead because it is the right thing to do. It is the fair thing to do." Up to that stage, there was an unfair GST distribution. As I mentioned, not one other Western Australian senator backed the motion about the unfairness of the GST. That motion was moved by Senator Georgiou on 26 June 2018. There was some support. That motion was also backed by two senators from Queensland, two from New South Wales and one from South Australia, but it was not backed by any senator from either of the major parties or from WA. That really shows us that they were all under the pump. None of them were prepared to stand up, other than Senator Dean Smith, as I mentioned, and Senator Georgiou, who was the only other senator who had the fortitude and the guts to say what Western Australians were thinking. They are the facts. That list of names is very disappointing. As a matter of fact, the Liberal senators did not even attend the vote. I imagine that Senator Dean Smith asked them not to attend because it was embarrassing. But the Labor guys and the Greens just voted against it—they were not interested. They did not have the guts to stand up and support WA during the time of unfair GST distribution.

I would like to also mention that over that period, the federal government boosted many other states. Not only were other states getting our GST, but also \$90 billion worth of defence contracts went to South Australia. We could not even get our royalties for gas from the North West Shelf. Other states were getting all the revenue from their pokies, which was not subject to GST—I cannot understand why not. Virtually every other state has pokies, but we do not, thank God, and I am sure everyone in this Parliament would agree with me on that. But why was that not subject to GST? It was also getting \$3.3 billion in motoring taxes from Western Australians. WA has the highest road fatality rate. It is 33 per cent higher than other national averages, yet we provided \$3.3 billion in motoring taxes to the other states of which only \$562 million was returned. It can be seen that WA has been getting a very unfair deal not only with GST, but also with motoring taxes in the state. Although all the normal politics was going on with the major parties during this GST debate over the last two or three years, I would say to the federal government that that was a good decision—but, as the minister pointed out, why did it take so long? Why did it hang the WA government out to dry? That is the main reason it ended up with a \$30 billion debt. Why did it take so long? That is the answer that I would like to know. I think it was possibly because not enough members of Parliament from our state were prepared to stand up for their own state. Senator Georgiou was not afraid, but he only came in in 2017, whereas others had been there three years prior to that. It was quite obvious to all Western Australians how unfair it was.

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Hon Dr Steve Thomas mentioned that Mr Chas Hopkins was talking about starting up another party because of the GST issue. Looking at most of the paraphernalia from other parties during this federal election and the last state election, GST just keeps coming up, so it is a big issue. It is the number one reason why this state's government is looking at a surplus. There are other reasons as well. I applaud the government's reduction in spending because, other than the pork-barrelling it has done in other areas, reducing its spending is a good thing. It needs to continue to reduce its spending and prioritise the way it spends money in the future. There are many areas that do not need pork-barrelling money and there are many other areas that do, especially when it comes to frontline police and homeless people. Unemployment has gone from 50 000 or 60 000 to 100 000. Many problems face this current government, and I am hoping that over the next two years it freely addresses these issues. Payroll tax incentives to small businesses would help address this, as would reducing stamp duty for retirees. Many things could happen. Let us not forget that Senator Georgiou in his maiden speech on 17 August 2017 talked about GST as being the most important thing for Western Australia. In June 2018, he moved a motion, and not one single Western Australian senator backed him. I just heard from a Nationals colleague who does not have a senator representing this state; I am sure he would like to have one. He is calling shame because those are the facts.

We hope that Senator Georgiou gets up this weekend. He may not, but the facts are that he stood up for Western Australia. He put a motion up, which no Western Australian senator from any side—of what is called both sides of politics—did. There are three sides of politics: other parties, which make up one-third of Western Australians, and the left and the right sides of politics as well.

HON COLIN de GRUSSA (Agricultural) [11.04 am]: I thank Hon Dr Steve Thomas for bringing this motion to the house for debate. It was always going to be an interesting debate, and I have been listening with interest to the contributions of other members.

It is obvious that this state punches well above its weight in terms of contribution to the Federation. Indeed, buried in the government's latest budget papers—budget paper No 3, page 300—is a nice little table that illustrates quite clearly the net contribution of each state to the Federation. WA is well above any other state with almost \$15.5 billion in terms of its net contribution to the Federation. New South Wales is the next closest to that, but let us have a look at Queensland. Queensland sucks \$14 billion out of the Federation. South Australia sucks \$6 billion out of the Federation. Tasmania sucks \$3.8 billion out of the Federation. Northern Territory sucks \$3.6 billion out of the Federation. These states draw on the strong contribution of Western Australia, yet the paragraph underneath the table says that one of the contributing factors to WA's large contribution to the Federation is driven by —

- the State's low draw on Commonwealth social security and health payments to residents, ...

We are penalised for that and it does not make a lot of sense to me.

I want to focus on one word in the first part of this motion, “determination”, because it has taken determination to actually get a real solution to the GST issue. I want to go back a little bit further in time than other members have been here. I am a big fan of Marty McFly and Doc Brown, so let us jump in to the DeLorean and we will harness some of that 1.21 gigawatts—none of which will have come from wave energy—and jump back in time to have a look at 12 September 2011. I quote from the records of the House of Representatives that say —

Western Australia, like any state or territory in Australia, deserves a fair deal from the Commonwealth. Currently, the situation is far from fair for WA. ... Western Australians are prepared to contribute more than their fair share to the federal economy, —

I have just outlined that —

but there must be some limit to the rip-off; there must be some limit to the punishment WA receives for its economic success; there must be some formal acknowledgement of Western Australia's disproportionate contribution to our national economic prosperity; and there must be some members in this House who are prepared to stand up for their state.

That was back on 12 September 2011. I am quoting, of course, the words of the former member for O'Connor and former Western Australia Nationals' member Tony Crook.

Hon Darren West: How'd that go?

Hon Colin Holt: You guys voted against him so you should know!

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: That is right. I wonder whether the Minister for Regional Development was in the house at that time as a federal member supporting Western Australia when Tony Crook called on the government to amend the act and stipulate a minimum GST revenue sharing relative of 75 per cent. Did anyone from Western Australia support that? Which Western Australian members supported that motion? The answer is no-one. No-one supported it except for the man in the big white hat, Bob Katter, who seconded the motion. We had to find someone because

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no Western Australians would stand up for their state. Who was in government at that time? Who was Prime Minister? Can anyone remember? I cannot remember; it was a revolving door at that time. Was it Rudd, was it Gillard, was it Rudd—or was it the faceless man of the Labor Party? Who was that faceless man? Who was that faceless man at that time?

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Member! Order! I think the member might want to focus his attention to the motion in front of him.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: I will talk about this, because it is pertinent to go back in history and look at the debate around this motion and how long it has taken us to get here. Members of this place may well have been present in the federal Parliament at that time, and members of this place, perhaps even the mover of this motion, may have worked for a federal member at that time. I am not sure about that, but perhaps he can confirm that in his reply later. The point is that on the side of the house, we in the Nationals WA fought for this for a very long time. We have continued to advocate strongly for this. It has been difficult to get support from anyone in the federal Parliament let alone from either side—if you want to call them side—of the Parliament. I would have thought that this motion would have been supported by all who represented Western Australia.

I am going to refer now to an article from the ABC, by Nicolas Perpitch, published on 5 April 2018. There are some quotes in the article from the Treasurer, Ben Wyatt, attacking the GST top-up at that time. He is quoted as saying —

This is now the sixth year in a row that Western Australia has not even received half of its population share of the GST,” he said. “No other state has received less than 67 per cent since 1942–43.

“Western Australia’s continued low GST relativity reinforces that urgent reform is needed.

It would be a good idea to work in a non-partisan way, working together for this state. It would have been thought that this Parliament could work together for this state. With that in mind, our party and the Liberal Party in the other place authored a letter to ensure that, should any legislation come forward, the federal opposition would support it. The letter reads —

As leaders of the three political Parties represented in the Legislative Assembly of Western Australia, we believe it is in the best interests, not only of all West Australians but the nation, that the Federal Government’s proposal to reform GST be supported and progressed prior to the next Federal election.

We seek an assurance from the Federal Opposition that this proposal is supported.

There was room on this letter for three signatures. It has been signed by the Leader of the National Party, Mia Davies, and the leader of the Liberal Party, Mike Nahan, but there is a big blank spot where the Premier failed to sign it. Is he acting in the best interests of the state, when he would not sign something to ask his own federal counterpart to support Western Australia? He did not have the gumption to sign that letter and seek assurances from the federal opposition leader that he would support any motion to benefit Western Australia. I wonder why that is. We have heard from the minister that the government has acted in a bipartisan way, and has tried to act in the best interests of Western Australia, but why would the Premier not support this letter, if he was truly doing that? It is quite disgraceful that the state Premier could not ask the federal opposition to support any legislation brought forward by the Liberal–National government, given the comments from the Treasurer of the state that this issue is incredibly important, and given that, at the time, the federal government was moving to make the necessary changes to at least give us some semblance of a floor to make sure that we had a reasonable return on the GST, for the investment this state effectively makes in other states. That letter should have been signed by everyone, and should have sent a clear message to the federal opposition that this state is keen to work with it to support that legislation.

In the brief time I have left, I want to reiterate that this is not a new issue. Tony Crook and the WA Nationals took this issue up in 2011. It was not supported by the Labor government or the Liberal Party, and that is a sad indictment on those parties, unfortunately.

Hon Colin Holt: It was not supported by the eastern states Nationals either.

Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: The eastern states Nationals were not supportive of this motion, which is why we need a Western Australian National over there, and why the Premier should be getting to know “Big” Nick Fardell a little better. I am sure he will make a good senator, and he will definitely stand up for the interests of Western Australia, as we have a good track record of doing. I am sure that those opposite will be clear in their support for “Big” Nick.

Several members interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

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Hon COLIN de GRUSSA: Thank you, Madam President. I note with interest that on the front page of today's *The West Australian* there is somebody promising to return 100 per cent of Western Australia's GST.

HON DIANE EVERS (South West) [11.14 am]: I appreciate being given the time to speak on this issue, and I will just go straight to the motion. One element is the word "congratulate". I do not see how we can congratulate the federal Liberal-National government. We have to acknowledge that there is a federal election on Saturday, and the federal government has realised that Western Australia will matter in this election, so in the past year we have seen a few gifts coming our way, and the GST is one of those. The idea of suggesting that this is due to some negotiations that may have happened long ago is ludicrous. We have had a delay for four years; inertia is what has been happening since this became a strong issue. The federal government well knew for many years that we were in this situation, as my colleague Hon Colin de Grussa has said. This is not a new thing. It is just that when we get into boom times we forget that, because we are making our own money off the resources that we sell.

We are in Western Australia, and I feel like a Western Australian now, but I also feel like an Australian. If the resources are in Western Australia, do they belong to us or do they belong to the country? We are clearly saying that they are ours; we get the royalties from them and all that, but if that is the case I would also like to say that the distance that we cover should be recognised. We have a huge area to cover, and that makes every one of our services more expensive to deliver, and yet in the GST distribution the size of that area is not taken into account. While I am on this subject, as my colleague Hon Colin Tincknell asked, why are gambling revenues still not included in our GST? One can only suggest that maybe those that profit from the gambling business, rather than through gambling itself, are strong enough to stop our governments from even considering that. That is something that we should still be working on, because the GST is not going to be correct and reflective of the variety of states and territories in Australia until that distance is recognised and gambling is included in it. I would like to see that happen. We have had a good outcome now, and I am really pleased that we have that 70¢ minimum, because that will manage the fluctuations that we normally go through. However, I cannot say that this is due to the good graces of the federal government; it is purely the result of a political ploy to try to get more people voting for them in this election, because Western Australia will count on Saturday.

I would like to comment on an issue that Hon Peter Collier has raised many times. I chuckle every time I hear it, because he is absolutely right. It is the idea of the vehicle allowance. If we are to try to balance the budget, and do everything we can to make certain that we address significant debt, why would a minister get a vehicle and an allowance? It just does not make any sense, and it does not look good. Maybe one day that will be addressed. Not too many people remain in that situation, but it is unfortunate that it happened, and it looks bad.

I do not need to take all my time on this motion, so I will leave time for others. The second point refers to the significant funding and commitment to the delivery of key infrastructure projects throughout Western Australia. I appreciate this; it is really great to get those funds in. With Metronet, I am really hoping that we get a lot more people using public transport. But I have to acknowledge—I will be speaking later on this—that we really need a general overall transport strategy for the state, so that we do not just keep going off on ad hoc projects saying, "This is a good project, we'll do this now" or "This one's been in the pipeline for 20 years and we're going to get to that now." Three infrastructure projects happening in the south west are all causing issues. I know that the Bunbury ring road has been on the plans for 30 years, but the choice of route for it is still a challenge. To say just do it, because we drew the lines sometime in the past does not mean that it is the best line now. If we had a real thorough investigation of it, looking at all the important factors involved in it, maybe we could come up with something better. Maybe 30 years ago they did not know all the things that we know now. The next project is the Albany ring road. I talked to somebody who said, "Oh, yeah, that was my idea; I drew that on the back of a serviette back in 1994, or 1993, or something." It is a great idea. We had plans that we would need this for the blue gum industry, but we have pretty well settled that blue gum industry; it is ticking along and still working, and everything seems to be good.

I will acknowledge, knowing this area pretty well, that, yes, the major roundabout in Albany is a problem. We regularly have crashes there, probably daily—just little prangs now and then. It is an issue. Getting a road train through there in the grain season is really difficult. But, as "Albanians", we really do try to avoid the idea of having a traffic light situation. I am not sure how we are going to address that. The Albany ring-road, which will come along Link Road and George Street, will cost a huge amount of money—\$170 million—and the traffic count there is not big. We may push all those trucks to go over that way, but it is an extra number of kilometres that they may want to avoid. It is just one of those things that is causing some issues.

On the southern forests irrigation scheme, which was raised a number of times, \$80 million is going into a project to benefit 70 people. There we go—\$1 million per person for the investment in this dam. This project will take water out of the forest and give it to 70 different people. It just does not make sense from an environmental perspective or from an equity perspective. Why would we spend \$70 million? Yes, I know that \$40 million is

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coming from the federal government. But we are part of Australia, too, so just because it is coming from the federal government does not mean it should be wasted here. Maybe we could find a better use for it. Maybe we could really address the southern forests irrigation scheme at some time.

That is it—back to the whole premise of the GST. We had three years of inertia. To get excited about something that has been done now, when it could have been done long ago, just seems like a big waste of our time. Thank you.

The PRESIDENT: I am going to give the call to Hon Tjorn Sibma, because he has sought the call at every stage of the debate.

HON TJORN SIBMA (North Metropolitan) [11.21 am]: Thank you very much, Madam President. It gives me great pleasure to speak in support of this excellent motion. In the time available, I hope to be able to address two points, but I will focus on the second part of this motion, which is that this house acknowledges and congratulates the federal Liberal–National government for its —

- (b) significant funding of and commitment to the delivery of key infrastructure projects throughout Western Australia.

Before I go into that, very briefly, it pleases me that probably with the exception of our colleague Hon Diane Evers, every speaker has supported this motion.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I am particularly pleased by the full-throated support the Minister for Regional Development gave to this motion as well, because I think she acknowledged the great GST fix.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Unfortunately, she did not get to the federal infrastructure funding, which she probably overlooked in the time available to her.

Hon MICHAEL MISCHIN: Madam President, I am having difficulty hearing.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Yes, I am, too. Thank you. We are in the last stages of this debate, and sometimes Hon Tjorn Sibma is difficult to hear. So, if everyone else is quiet, we will be able to hear him clearly and Hansard will be able to their job.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: For the assistance of Hansard, the last part was that I was warmed by the fact that the Minister for Regional Development appeared to support this motion. I think that was a wise decision to take. I have a lot of respect for the Minister for Regional Development, and I will follow her example here by quoting from a document prepared for me by the government. This is not from the mole—that secret squirrel deep inside the bowels of the state Parliamentary Labor Party that on occasion has fed us information; I do not know where that investigation is going. We do not need to look for a surreptitious agent here, because the author of this document is none other than Hon Mark McGowan, Premier; Minister for Public Sector Management; State Development, Jobs and Trade; Federal–State Relations. This document, which he authored on Sunday, 7 May 2017, seems to speak to the second part of this motion. The Premier congratulates the federal national government for a \$2.3 billion jobs and infrastructure boost for Western Australia. I have the document here, and I will table it afterwards. I want to quote some relevant points from this document.

Hon Nick Goiran: Who wrote that document?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: The Premier of this state. I am glad that the Premier, as well, supports the motion put forward by my excellent and learned friend. The Premier was particularly pleased that —

The significant agreement will provide a major boost to WA’s local economy, with 6,000 jobs expected to be created as a result of the 17 new projects.

This goes back a little while, but it reinforces the deep commitment to this state from the federal Liberal–National government. That is a wonderful thing, and we hope it continues post Saturday.

Several members interjected.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I will pick out some highlights that the Premier himself wanted me to reflect upon. I take it from the way in which this media statement is crafted that the Premier is drawing my attention to the following projects.

The PRESIDENT: Member, I just say that you might want to turn around and face me and talk to me. Thank you.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: Sorry, Madam President. No offence intended. I was just taken by the enthusiasm of the Premier for the federal Liberal–National government’s infrastructure spend in this state. I might just cherry-pick a number of projects that are directly relevant to the second part of the motion. One is Fiona Stanley Hospital and

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Murdoch Activity Centre access road from Kwinana Freeway and Roe Highway, project cost \$100 million. Another is Wanneroo Road–Ocean Reef Road, construction of grade-separated intersection, project cost \$65 million. Another is Kwinana Freeway, Russell Road to Roe Highway, widening of northbound lanes, project cost \$49 million. Another is Mitchell Freeway, Cedric Street to Vincent Street, widening of southbound lanes, project cost \$40 million. Another is the Outback Highway, sealing of priority sections, project cost \$33 million. There is also Metronet. The federal Liberal–National government is a great supporter of Metronet, and I am sure the state Labor government is very pleased about that.

Hon Darren West: Are you in support of that, member?

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I will speak to it. I am just telling members that the Premier supports the motion and giving the reasons that he supports the motion. I do not know why Bill—what is his name?—Bill Shorten, the man whose name dare not be mentioned by any member in this chamber, probably because of his overwhelming popular support and popularity and winning charisma and all the rest, does not seem to be a feature of their rhetoric.

The PRESIDENT: Member, you are getting distracted.

Hon TJORN SIBMA: I am getting very excited, Madam President, in the time available.

Hon Alannah MacTiernan interjected.

The PRESIDENT: Order!

Hon TJORN SIBMA: It is interesting. The document states also —

As part of the overall package, the Australian Government will also provide \$44.2 million towards regional road projects to improve regional road safety across Western Australia.

I think that is an important point to reinforce, particularly on behalf of regional members in this house.

I turn now to the first part of the motion—I thought I would deal with the motion in reverse. It strikes me that not one single member of WA’s federal Labor team has at any stage supported the GST fix for Western Australia. I do not recall Dr Anne Aly supporting the GST fix. I do not recall Josh Wilson supporting the GST fix. I do not recall hearing from Matt Keogh anything resembling support. I do not recall the support that the possum from Perth has provided to the GST fix. Perhaps that is why none of their faces are on the bus—not one single member.

The PRESIDENT: Order! Member, if you are going to refer to a member of Parliament, you refer to them by their correct title. You know that.

Motion lapsed, pursuant to standing orders.