



PARLIAMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

INAUGURAL SPEECH



Mrs Alyssa Hayden, MLA

(Member for Darling Range)

Legislative Assembly

Premier's Statement

Tuesday, 14 August 2018

Reprinted from Hansard

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PREMIER'S STATEMENT

Consideration

Resumed from 12 April on the following question —

That the Premier's Statement be noted.

MRS A.K. HAYDEN (Darling Range) [5.20 pm]: Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is my absolute honour and privilege to stand here today as the Legislative Assembly member for the seat of Darling Range. I would first like to apologise up-front because, as I have come from the other place, you may get called another name; it is not meant to disrespect you, but hopefully I will stick to “Deputy Speaker” throughout the whole of my speech. I would like to thank the enormous number of people who have turned up this evening. I was hoping you would all still be at work so I would have a smaller crowd, but that is what happens when you put on free drinks!

INTRODUCTION

I am extremely excited and honoured to have been elected to the seat of Darling Range and to represent a seat that is as diverse as our state. It is an electorate that offers unique lifestyle choices, from the hills along the Darling Ranges through to the urban foothills. The electorate is rich with food producers, from orchards and vineyards to cattle and sheep farms. The tourism potential is enormous, with talented artists, businesses and attractions.

I had the privilege of growing up in the hills and this community environment provided a safe, loving and adventurous childhood—a memory and foundation I will cherish forever and will protect for the generations to come. The people of Darling Range are hardworking, honest individuals, who share a passion to protect the lifestyle that they enjoy. The opportunity to represent our community at a state level is one that is shared by only a few and it is an opportunity that I will never take for granted.

It is well known in this place that I have enjoyed eight years representing the East Metropolitan Region in the Legislative Council. In preparation for today's speech, I reflected on my time as a Legislative Council member through both my inaugural and valedictory speeches. I started, of course, with my credentials of being a small business operator, a staffer to a Western Australian federal member and a senator, my joy of growing up as a hills girl raised in Mt Helena, and going to Mt Helena Primary School and Eastern Hills Senior High School. The rest of my education has come from the school of hard knocks and the lessons learnt from dusting myself off and starting again. In business, you rely on being surrounded by like-minded people to help you get through the tough times. This is where I learnt the importance of having a strong body representing the small business community. I have enormous respect for the chamber of commerce and business associations around the state.

During my eight years as a member for the East Metropolitan Region, I had the opportunity to work with the dynamic tourism industry as Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Tourism. However, the experience of working within the bureaucratic system has only fuelled my original desire to insert commonsense into the system. My term ended in 2017. At the time I hoped that it was not the end of my political career. Little did I know that it would be only

13 months until I returned. Nor did I know that I would be returning to this place and not the other. I have always been a person who simply gets straight back up, dusts myself off, learns from the lessons along the road and keeps on getting on.

DARLING RANGE

When the by-election for Darling Range was called, it soon became obvious to me that this was my opportunity to continue the work I had already started and to provide the people of Darling Range with a voice that they so rightly deserve—a voice of someone who will not shy away from standing up to the difficult issues, who will stand up for them and deliver their message to this place. It is a voice that has been missing since the change of government.

“How sweet it is” has become the victory cry of the Darling Range by-election and although on the surface the meaning appears obvious, throughout this speech I hope you will go with me and understand the depth of it. “How sweet it is” reflects winning the unwinnable. Everyone on the government side thought they had it in the bag. The polls had it as a Labor win and political commentators said it was a done deal. However, I did not. The opposition team did not. But, most importantly, the people of Darling Range did not. History shows that oppositions do not usually win seats from the government in by-elections. Members might be interested to know that since 1945 there have been 69 by-elections for the Western Australian Legislative Assembly, with the opposition winning only three. I am extremely honoured to now join the only three Liberal opposition members to win seats off the government at a by-election. On 23 June 2018, the Darling Range by-election saw a swing of 9.3 per cent against this first-term Labor government. Premier, you lost this seat by a swing of 9.3 per cent—a swing that would have seen many of your backbench members gone if it had been a statewide election on 23 June. I am sorry to say, but the member for Joondalup would have been gone. The member for Kingsley would have been gone. The member for Jandakot, the member for Murray–Wellington, and the member for Pilbara would also be gone. The member for Kalgoorlie, the member for Burns Beach, the member for Bicton, and the member for Mount Lawley would also be gone.

Several members interjected.

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: I said Mount Lawley! I did not say Kalgoorlie!

The member for Mount Lawley, the member for Albany, the member for Balcatta, the member for Baldivis, the member for Wanneroo and the member for Southern River would also be gone. That would be 15 members gone. The member for Forrestfield would be just hanging in there. My job is to remind each and every one of you of this every single day. The question before us now is: will the Premier and his team, both the frontbenchers and backbenchers, listen to the result of the by-election on 23 June? My guess is that they will not. Will you change your ways? Are you going to ignore the voice of the people of Darling Range—the people who sent you a strong message on behalf of the entire state? It appears that arrogance and a disconnect to the community has already crept into this government. The Premier ran a presidential style campaign after having to replace his second pick for Darling Range. However, the people of Darling Range turned up. They voted and delivered a 9.3 per cent swing against his government. That was a clear message. They are fed up with the lies, broken promises and increases in the cost of living. The Mark McGowan government has already delivered many of these within its first 15 months. The community simply cannot afford this Labor government and it is nervous about what is in store for the next three years. At a time when there has been little or no increase in wages, households in our outer suburbs are hurting. People are struggling to find jobs and are struggling to pay their mortgages.

In 2017, it was a win-at-all-costs campaign by the Labor opposition. It had a plan. Its plan was to win no matter what it took—to promise whatever it would take to win. Sadly, that win-at-all-costs campaign meant that there was no plan—no plan how to govern or to deliver the promises. The people of Darling Range experienced this more than most. The thing is that

members of the Labor government, in their wildest dreams, never anticipated that Western Australian voters would get to voice their opinion and disappointment and vote so early into their term. They did not expect that their campaign lies and broken promises would get to be judged and voted on so quickly. The promise of no new taxes was broken with the introduction of an Uber tax, a gambling tax and an unsuccessful gold tax thanks to a united and strong opposition. The biggest furphy of them all was the propaganda designed to deliberately misinform the WA voters and scare them into believing that their power bills would be safe only under a Labor government. Sadly, households are now paying for that broken promise. The promise of a 1.5 per cent wage increase for our dedicated police officers has been reduced to an insult. Our communities have been slapped across the face with cuts to education funding, the closure of Moora Residential College and funding withdrawal to Landsdale Farm School and the infamous backflips on Perth Modern School and the School of the Air. As if that were not enough, this Labor government then targeted our remote communities, with planned cuts to the community resource centres. These centres are the lifeline for so many in our regional towns who seek to access the simplest of services. Thankfully, this government has added another backflip to its ongoing circus routine by retracting the cuts it had planned for the CRCs. In Darling Range, I can share with you all that they are relieved. They are relieved that the kneejerk decision to cut this funding has been overturned. The local Serpentine–Jarrahdale community resource centre supports and connects our seniors, our business community and the isolated who are in real need.

Sadly, this Labor government is still turning its back on the very people it promised to represent. Every household, every struggling family and every pensioner has been hit where it hurts the most. The simple act of keeping a roof over your family's head has been made near on impossible with massive increases to household bills. While doorknocking my electorate, time and again I heard how the government's increases to power, water and car registration bills are draining the purses and wallets of our community. Under this government, it is death by a thousand cuts, topped with hip-pocket robbery! This by-election enabled every voter to have their say, for every voter to say, "Enough is enough, Premier." I will continue to remind you and the silent majority on the backbench, that if they want to continue to enjoy this amazing opportunity they need to start standing up for their communities. If they do not stand up for their communities, they will not be here for very much longer. At this rate, we will definitely see a Liberal government returned in 2021, simply because the Western Australian public will not be able to trust or afford a Labor government.

TONKIN HIGHWAY EXTENSION

The Tonkin Highway extension from Thomas Road through to South Western Highway was a key Labor election promise in 2017 for the people of Darling Range. Like so many other promises made, the people of Darling Range are still waiting for this commitment to be delivered. Regardless of the federal funding that has been given of \$253 million through Andrew Hastie, the member for Canning, nothing has been done. This project is still not a priority. It has not been made a priority by the minister, the Treasurer or the Premier. The southern extension of Tonkin Highway will provide a safe commute for the local community and truck drivers, redirecting heavy vehicles away from town centres and local roads. It will also open up access to developments already underway in Mundijong and provide jobs and land, the very things this government says it stands up for. The southern extension of Tonkin Highway is a no brainer, and I am at a loss, to understand why this government is simply ignoring the people who voted it in in 2017, by choosing to put this project at the bottom of the pile. However, the more important question is: what has happened to the \$253 million given by the federal government for this project? I have many questions that I will continue to ask on behalf of the people of Darling Range to make sure their issues are heard and their projects are delivered during my time in this place.

TOURISM

Working alongside the shadow Minister for Tourism, Libby Mettam, another line of question will be to hold this government to account on its commitment to invest in tourism. The government took its plan to grow tourism to the 2017 state election. To date its performance in this space has been nothing but disappointing. Determined to pretend tourism is front and centre of the government's agenda, the Premier made an announcement during the by-election for the Perth hills region to develop a proper plan for the precinct. I sincerely hope that this was not at the mercy of an election result. I would like to work with the Premier to make sure that this commitment comes true. As a member of the tourism committee reference group for this region, working with the Cities of Kalamunda and Armadale and the Shires of Mundaring and Serpentine Jarrahdale, we look forward to being involved with the Minister for Tourism and you, Premier, to make sure this commitment is delivered.

SMALL BUSINESS

On another note, I have been raised amongst a family of small business operators and with my husband still in small business, along with my previous experience, it is not surprising that my passion to reduce government interference and taxes will always be on my agenda. Small business is the backbone of our state and it is the real creator of jobs and employment. Home businesses are forever increasing, with women turning to innovative businesses that allow them to work at home while caring for their families. We continue to see new groundbreaking concepts surfacing from our talented younger generation. The thing is that with business you need to be flexible to keep up with the modern demands of technology. To be in business you need to continue to change. The biggest challenge for all governments is to try to keep up. Engagement and continued support for our small business sector is vital and I will continue my advocacy to create an environment to support this sector.

TONY SIMPSON

The previous Liberal member for Darling Range, Tony Simpson, was also a small business operator. He demonstrated that the small business sector is extremely important and he is held in high regard across the electorate. The year 2017 saw the departure of a top grassroots local member in Tony Simpson. I had the honour of calling Tony a colleague for eight years and witnessing firsthand his passion for the people of Darling Range. Tony had been a part of this community as a baker for 14 years prior to representing them for 12 years as their member. I knew from the start that I had big shoes to fill. This was cemented only when I was doorknocking and speaking with the community during the election campaign. Tony is well respected and loved by many in Darling Range and I cannot thank him enough for his support during this time and I wish him all the very best in his retirement out of politics.

[Member's time extended.]

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mrs A.K. HAYDEN: My being here today was not achieved alone and my first acknowledgment is, of course, to the people of Darling Range. I understand the apprehension shared about politics right now. They had been let down on so many fronts. However, certain aspects caused this election. I do not believe reliving it over and over again will benefit anyone, so I will leave it at that. I am one that focuses on the positives and looks to the future, as I believe the people of Darling Range did when casting their vote on 23 June. I thank them for this enormous honour and I will work to repay them for the privilege and will work to be the best possible member I can. To my campaign team members, who all seem to be here today, chaired by my good friend Matt O'Sullivan and supported by Heather Gilmour, Glenda Cooper, Lewis Hutton, Jessica Wright and Chris Garner, we made a great team and I truly appreciate your commitment and generosity of time. To my now colleagues who joined me on the campaign team, my former

East Metropolitan Region colleague Hon Donna Faragher, your support and friendship during this time has been second to none. I have seen a whole new side to you. The member for Dawesville, Zak Kirkup, you were a great sounding board during the whole campaign. I truly value our friendship that we have shared for many years and look forward to many more. Senator Linda Reynolds, your passion and your personal and professional support was greatly appreciated. We are extremely fortunate in the Liberal Party to have some amazing and professional Young Liberals within our party. The tireless work, support and energy they provided me in the campaign surpassed all my expectations. Sam Calabrese, the state director of the WA Liberal Party, whose political prowess guided and directed our campaign to an outstanding result, I cannot thank you enough or speak more highly of you. Thank you, Sam. Of course to my fellow state parliamentary colleagues, thank you for all your support throughout the campaign and the kilometres you travelled. So many of you joined me on the campaign trail and I will be forever grateful. To the Leader of the Opposition, Dr Mike Nahan, you were by my side throughout the entire campaign and checked in with me every morning and night to make sure I was okay. I could not have asked more from you or for more support. Thank you. To the deputy leader, Liza Harvey, and good friend, the member for Vasse, Libby Mettam, I sincerely appreciate the hours, kilometres and personal time you both gave up to be by my side. To my good friends in the other place, Hon Peter Collier and Hon Nick Goiran, I thank you for your unwavering friendship over the years and for your support during the campaign. To Ian Blayney, member for Geraldton, you were the first to lend a hand, and you have always been a true friend. It is an honour to once again call you a colleague.

I thank my federal colleagues for all their assistance: Hon Julie Bishop, Andrew Hastie, Hon Ken Wyatt, Hon Christian Porter, Hon Michael Keenan, Senator Mathias Cormann, Senator Slade Brockman and Senator Michaelia Cash. I say a massive and sincere thankyou to you all.

To my National Party friends, we make a great team. Thank you for your support. I am looking forward to working further with you.

I wish to thank Ray and Lianne Gianoli and Daniel Parasiliti for the support they gave in encouraging me to throw my hat into the ring once again.

I turn to a few former colleagues. There is one man whom I do not need to introduce and who will be remembered for the amazing transformation of our state for years to come—my former leader and our former Premier, Hon Colin Barnett. Also, to my two good mates Paul Miles and Michael Sutherland, you have been available and by my side over the past few months, and I could not have done it without you. I knew you were always available on the other end of the phone.

To all the Leader of the Opposition's staff, I have added a few new skills to my résumé. I will always be grateful for having the opportunity to work alongside you.

To the many Liberal Party volunteers who travelled far and wide, from one end of the electorate to the other and from one state to another to get there and help, I cannot thank you enough; I am still humbled. In particular, I thank the Canning, Brand and Hasluck divisions, and Murray Cowper and Joe Francis for all their help. I make special mention of Jeremy Buxton, life member of the Liberal Party; we are extremely fortunate to have you within our party.

I cannot finish my thankyou without thanking the committed supporters of the Save Moora College campaign. Your passion is second to none, guys. I promise you that I will continue to stand by your side until this government rights this wrong.

I am extremely fortunate to have an amazingly strong family and husband. They did not choose the political life that we in this house decide to run for; however, they do get targeted and dragged into the political unpleasantness. I am grateful for their conduct and their strength. I could never come close to ever thanking my mum and dad, Arthur and Sandra Wallis, for the

wonderful upbringing they provided me. During the campaign, dad was out bright and early positioning the trailers, and then along with mum they would collect their mate, Brian Jarvis, hop into the bus and drive it around the electorate and then finish the day at a pre-polling booth, handing out their daughter's how-to-votes. They know how much they mean to me and how loved they are, but I also need them to know how proud I am of them. To my much loved husband, Terry, you gave me a scare near on three months ago by having a heart attack. I know my decision to run again did not help your recovery process, but I appreciate you hanging in there. Over the past 30 years we have always ridden the highs and lows of life together, and I suppose this has not been any different. I have been extremely lucky to have married the love of my life and my best mate; his humour and honesty will always keep me grounded.

In the past few weeks I have enjoyed setting up my new office. The welcome from the local community has been overwhelming. I am extremely fortunate to have been able to employ two dynamic, amazing ladies—Jess Wright and Amy Calabrese. Together, we will work tirelessly to serve the community of Darling Range; I am proud to have them as part of my team.

MY COMMITMENT TO DARLING RANGE

My commitment to the people of Darling Range will be to continue my grassroots engagement, to always listen and to be the voice required to ensure that the projects needed for our community are delivered. I will work tirelessly to serve and defend the values on which I stood—Liberal values of small government, with less interference and taxes; supporting small business, innovation and communities; and ensuring community safety and family values. I will work to maintain our Australian way of life while welcoming and embracing our different backgrounds, and for the return of a Liberal government—a government with conviction and purpose, with the future of this state and its people front of mind.

Fifteen months ago I made my valedictory speech in the other place. I closed by saying that I had unfinished business and that I would be back. I am back, and how sweet it is!

[Applause.]

Debate adjourned, on motion by **Mr D.R. Michael**.
