



Adrian Pederick MP

Member for Hammond

**House of Assembly
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ADDRESS IN REPLY

Mr PEDERICK (Hammond) (11:45): Thank you, Mr Speaker. In my opening remarks, I would like to congratulate you on retaking the very significant post of Speaker. I certainly noted your reluctance on taking that position two days previously in this parliament. I would also like to acknowledge Madam Deputy Speaker and Chairman of Committees, the member for Florey, for her rise to that position.

Ms Bedford: Meteoric.

Mr PEDERICK: Meteoric, I am reminded, by the member for Florey. Well done to you both. In addressing the Governor's speech, I will acknowledge it is a speech written by the government for the Governor. I think it is important for everyone to acknowledge that, not just in this place but in the wider community.

I would certainly like to acknowledge the great way in which the Governor delivered the speech, and acknowledge his service and his wife Liz's service to this state for so many years. Kevin and Liz, if they do not mind me calling them that, are great people who have been very welcoming to me as a member of parliament, as they have been, I am sure, to every member in this place.

I know that, in the brief times Kevin has been able to get some leave during his term as Governor, he has taken some of that in my electorate at Goolwa, where I know he enjoys golf as well as relaxation down there. I wish them all the best after his role as Governor finishes up later on this year, and I would really like to again acknowledge his great service to this state and that of his wife Liz.

I would like to acknowledge the new members of this place and every other member of parliament who has been re-elected. At the risk of being cut short, I would like to acknowledge the member for Schubert, Stephan Knoll; the member for Bright, David Speirs; the member for Hartley, Vincent Tarzia; the member for Mitchell, Corey Wingard; and the member for Mount Gambier, Troy Bell, for all being new members on this side of the house. I congratulate them on their successful candidacies and also congratulate the new members on the other side of the house who have been elected. I congratulate everyone for their maiden speeches. I think there have been some great words spoken already in this house and there will be many more to come.

I would also like to acknowledge the election of the Hon. Andrew McLachlan MLC on our side of the house and, obviously, the election of the Hon. Tung Ngo MLC on the Labor side. He certainly has an interesting story of how he came to Australia, and I wish him all the best in his future role in the parliament.

In addressing the content of the speech, very early in the speech, it talks about the Hon. Dale Baker's passing. Dale was one of those—I do not think he would mind me saying—irreverent characters of the parliament. I have mentioned in this house before that I actually shored a few sheep for Dale back in the eighties. I did a lot more time working for his brother Dean. He was quite a character. If you can ever have a little bit of humour at funerals, there was a little bit at Dale's send-off as we celebrated his life and some of the things that Dale had done. I thought some of the eulogies that were presented that day were some of the best I have ever heard and I salute his service to this state. It was a pleasure, in the time before I was elected, working with Dale Baker as a Liberal.

I would also like to acknowledge Mr Ivon Wardell who passed away in November last year. Ivon's first wife, Dorothy, taught me music many years ago, and I do not remember much of it but he was a great

man. I had not contacted Ivon for decades and yet when I got elected he came on board and came to my Christmas functions and I really appreciated that. I was saddened to hear of his passing and I certainly made sure that I attended his farewell. I really appreciated his support in my career.

I will just address other parts of the Governor's speech. A couple of aims of the government are realising the benefits of the mining boom for all and premium food and wine from our clean environment. I think this will be a challenge for the government. Certainly, I have been involved in the select committee into farming practices in this state and I have had a couple of mines previously in my electorate—I still deal with them, even though with redistributions you lose or gain some land; in my case, I have lost some country—and it is difficult to get that interface to work. I am certainly of a mind that both industries need to operate. We do need to realise the mining potential but we cannot do it at the risk of our primary production either.

It is hard work but I think a lot of it can be done a lot better by early consultation by miners, by mining companies working with their exploration companies and, I guess, their subcontractors to a degree to make sure that access arrangements are worked out long prior to any problems emerging with property owners. Also, people need assurance that there will not be any harm done certainly in the longer term, and even in the short to mid term, for their properties. It is a difficult path to tread but I certainly think, for a state that has really succeeded with agriculture and mining over many years—over the life of the state, in fact—we need to get both industries to work, but it is challenging.

We also note from the speech that in August 2012, BHP Billiton announced that it would delay plans for its expansion of Olympic Dam. I can understand why BHP made that decision but it saddened me to think that the biggest uranium and copper project was going to be delayed. BHP were going to have to spend \$30 billion before they got a cent back and it was a huge operation. It would probably have involved taking off the overburden for about four years and creating essentially a mound of overburden of over 6,000 hectares that would have to be scraped off before getting to the ore body. I know they are looking for other ways to mine it but one of the main reasons was just the sheer cost of getting to the ore body before realising benefits not only to the state but to shareholders. The ore body has not gone anywhere. It is still here and I wish BHP Billiton all the best in its endeavours in how it is going to mine that ore body.

I also want to glance over and have a look at the comments about Holden closing its Elizabeth plant in 2017. Yes, it will be a sad day, as we just heard from the member for Napier, if what Holden's have said they will do comes through. We have many Holden cars in my family. We have had an HQ V8 wagon, 308 automatic, and it must have been one of those cars built mid week because there is nothing wrong with that car, and it went fairly quickly if you needed it to. We have an HZ Statesman, which my brother has control of. He is going to rebuild it, he tells me, but it is parked in pieces in one of the sheds on my farm. I am sure it will get rebuilt one day. I am the proud owner of a 1989 model VG Holden ute that I need to spend a bit of money on to get it in better order.

They are great vehicles, and it will be sad for the whole community. With the right outlook, if Holden's do go through—and it sounds like they will, because the decision was finally made in Detroit, regardless of what government money from governments of either side was put up, that they will be leaving the state—I think there is great potential for other opportunities out in the north for industry and IT services.

I note that in the Governor's speech there is commentary about the \$3.4 billion of infrastructure projects. The problem for me is, as the speech says, this includes 19 privately funded projects in and around the city that are in the approval pipeline or in case management. I would like to see more of these projects benefiting the regions. We are told we are going to get that focus in the regions, and we will make sure that we put plenty of pressure in place from this side of the house and that we do get that focus to get that infrastructure, whether it is built infrastructure or road infrastructure, into the regions.

I also go to another part of the Governor's speech, where he mentioned that, 'Our economy depends heavily on our capacity to retain our brightest minds and attract talented professionals from interstate and overseas. But they need more than a great place to live—they need a great job.' They need, he stated, 'A strong growing economy as the foundation from which South Australians can build full rich lives and protect the things that we love most about our state.' I could not think of better words.

The issue we have is, apart from attracting talented professionals from interstate and overseas, we must find a way to retain our young professionals here. We have heard in the leader's contribution to the Address in Reply debate that over 30,000 young people recently have left this state because they do not have the opportunity. We need to retain people in this state as well as attract bright minds and individuals here to make this economy grow.

I note that the government is going through a process of developing the new Department of State Development and it will become the agency that is the principal driver of economic development in South Australia. From what the Governor's speech says, it will bring together a range of development activities, such as employment and training programs and industry and business development for both small and large businesses, as well as supporting the energy and resource sectors, science and innovation, and trade.

I tell you what, I wish this department all the best, because there is a lot of work to do. There is a lot of work to do in this state. There is so much opportunity that just has not been realised by this government of over 12 years. There is a huge opportunity in this state and we need to embrace those opportunities. The government needs to get on the ball and get those opportunities realised.

The speech mentions that the government will also give the Economic Development Board carriage of the Jobs Acceleration Fund. The Jobs Acceleration Fund has been created to hasten the availability of job and training opportunities to those with the highest need, in particular South Australians adversely affected by sectoral change or experiencing intergenerational unemployment. I applaud that; that has to happen.

I note the \$10 million that has been put forward for the Jobs Acceleration Fund for the member for Frome's (the Minister for Regional Development) agreement with the government. It could not happen sooner. We need that funding, especially in regional areas, where there are high rates of unemployment. I note the unemployment levels in Murray Bridge of 10.3 per cent. I know they are not as bad as in some areas of the state, but it saddens me when I see that level of unemployment in the area that I love.

With regard to another part of the speech, the Governor reflected on the South Australian public sector and talked about its renewal and how it must demonstrate its commitment to bold innovative approaches and encourage other sectors to follow. What I would encourage people to do is have a look at what the new member for Bright's contribution was about the public sector in this place only yesterday. I think for a bloke who worked in the office of premier and cabinet he certainly had an inside view, so it is not someone outside making a comment about the public sector.

I have never worked for the public sector apart from, I guess, you could say in public life as a member of parliament, but this was a view from the inside about the disenchantment, the morale that has just dropped to zero, and the nepotism. I would commend people, certainly in the government, to read the member for Bright's contribution and seek change so that people will endeavour to work for our Public Service and not just work for the Public Service, but work for the people of South Australia and put the state first. That is what we need in all levels of employment, especially in relation to the Public Service when one in eight voters in this state are members of the Public Service.

I also want to reflect on parts of the speech about the South Australia-India Engagement Strategy and the South Australia-China Engagement Strategy and the talk about expanded exports. I think there are huge opportunities in both areas; billions of people who we can form trade with. I know Prime Minister Abbott is working towards a free trade agreement with China and I think it will bring great things to this state and this country if that can be developed. I note the free trade agreements that have been negotiated throughout Asia in the last couple of months by Prime Minister Abbott and his government and this can only bring more rewards to our producers in this state and our suppliers of goods to increase the wealth of this state, so I applaud those strategies. I just hope the government can make sure that we get the best results that we can. I also note in the speech the comments:

We also benefit from significant inbound investment in mining and resources sourced from China, as well as in local construction...

I acknowledge in relation to Murray Zircon up at Mindarie—I do not have any of that patch now in my electorate after the redistribution—the Chinese investment of \$40 million to get that mine back on its feet and fix the rehabilitation. I think there is room in this state for coinvestment. If we do not have that coinvestment then sometimes things do not happen, so I applaud that investment. I think people need to look outside the square more, to look at opportunities to make businesses and mining ventures grow in this state.

I now want to address the Premier's agreement with the member for Frome and this is commenting straight from the speech:

...to support stable and effective government includes an undertaking to develop charters for stronger regional policy and for small business. These charters outline a series of commitments and initiatives that will ensure that my government will be more responsive to the needs of South Australia's regional communities and business community.

Well, on this side we wait with baited breath. The regions have been neglected for the last 12 years and we want to see some action. We want to see some action in the regions. I know the government has set up its committee with the five ministers on it to look at the regions. We have set up an internal working committee, the Regional Affairs Committee, which I am chair of and it is working across the breadth of the Liberal Party.

All of our shadow ministers and all of our people over here are on board because we represent the regions from the far West Coast down to the lower South-East. I am so proud to say that we represent right down to the bottom of the lower South-East now with the member for Mount Gambier finally getting that seat of Mount Gambier into Liberal hands. So, we have that broad representation and we aim to probe the government to make sure that we do get those commitments for the regions.

I note the member for Frome's agreement to get \$39 million in the regions. That is commendable, but he could have probably asked for the close to \$120 million of commitments that we put up and I think Premier Weatherill would have agreed to it. However, we will keep working on it. We have got many projects and issues that we can chase.

The government says it is committed to improving the operating environment for small business and reducing red tape. Well, I am not going to hold my breath. I hope it happens, but it needs to happen sooner rather than later. People are burdened by the cost of running businesses in this state, and I get tired of hearing about people who have had enough who decide they are going elsewhere to run their businesses.

The government says it will work with primary industries in the regions and take responsibility in food manufacturing. I hope they do put some more money into primary industry in the regions, because there has been close to \$100 million pulled out of the primary industry budget since this government was elected. There is a whole lot of money there that could be reinstated to primary industries to make our primary industries work a lot better.

They get taken too much for granted, especially our broadacre farmers and livestock producers. It is great to have the premium foods and wines, fantastic, but where our main income comes from—the land—it is from the bulk commodities, and that is a fact. It is bulk commodities, and they need to be recognised in the same way as some of the more high-priced items that we produce on our great land.

I note that the government has an aim to work closely with the Local Government Association, regional local government bodies and individual councils. Perhaps it will pick up our policy of \$50 million in funding to assist loans for infrastructure builds, which would put \$500 million of funding proposals into the regions.

I see the government talking about the Education Act, talking about the better needs of our children, and I will address that further later on in my speech. However, one thing I will talk about here, in the Governor's speech, is that the rate of suicide in South Australia is unacceptable, and in rural areas the rate is significantly worse than in metropolitan areas. This is an issue I spoke of only yesterday in this place, in a grievance. It is distressing, the contacts you have with people, especially the constituent I

mentioned yesterday and the fact that, to keep her son alive, she had to have him detained under the Mental Health Act because he had threatened to kill himself three times. It is very, very distressing. With regard to the election, I acknowledge the re-election of the member for Fisher, the Hon. Dr Bob Such. As the Governor did in his speech, and as many people in this house already have, I wish Dr Such all the best in his recovery. It was great to see him the other day. I hope that, for his sake, he makes his health the number one priority.

In my closing minutes I would like to comment on issues closer to home in the seat of Hammond. First, I would like to thank all the people of Hammond who voted for me in my re-election for my third term. I promise to continue working hard on building a positive future for Hammond. Hammond has had its troubles. We have had the drought that started back in 2006, and we have had massive redistributions. In my first redistribution I lost Strathalbyn and picked up Goolwa, and in this redistribution I went from 15,000-odd square kilometres to 6,000-odd square kilometres, because 9,000 square kilometres of farming country went up to the seat of Chaffey. I am not sure if the—

Ms Bedford: You could walk it now.

Mr PEDERICK: Nearly; ride a bike across it almost—but that will not happen either.

An honourable member: A suburban electorate.

Mr PEDERICK: Yes; I do not know if Tim needed the extra margin that that afforded him, the member for Chaffey.

Mr Whetstone: Gratefully accepted.

Mr PEDERICK: Gratefully accepted. I guess the thing that saddens me is that when you look at 9,000 square kilometres, out of that there were only about 2,200 voters, and that is a lot of country. You have electorates in Adelaide over which you can put a postage stamp and can walk one from one end to the other without hurting your hip.

Mr Pengilly: Hear, hear!

Mr PEDERICK: Thank you, the member for Finnis—a fellow traveller in hip surgery. It makes you think. I want to repay the faith the voters of Hammond have put in me, and I promise to work diligently in everything they ask of me.

I raise a few issues relating to Murray Bridge, Tailem Bend and throughout the electorate—Langhorne Creek and Goolwa. I refer to the Murray Bridge Racing Club, the Gifford Hill redevelopment. A lot of people say to me, 'This is just a racing club proposal; why do you want to fund them?', because we put up a \$15 million proposal to match the \$5 million from the federal government. I said, 'Because it's not just about racing; it's about housing development, about unlocking land for a sports precinct, and also about the domino effect of getting a bulky goods precinct in Murray Bridge.'

Over decades—and it will be over decades—I believe it will unlock \$1 billion of investment, but the project has stalled. The racing club has invested \$13 million and, like everywhere, the money in regional South Australia is tight, very tight. I am hoping that ministers Bignell and Brock will look carefully at this and take this proposal through to Premier Weatherill, as I have done, to push for funding from the state government in its regional financing package so that we can realise the potential of that project.

I acknowledge the Tailem Bend Motorsport Park and the involvement of the Peregrine Group and the Shahin family here. I welcome the government's commitment of \$7.5 million, I will follow that closely to make sure that commitment happens, and I am sure it will—they have said it will—and who cannot believe a government?

The Hon. A. Piccolo: More sarcasm!

Mr PEDERICK: I said, 'Who cannot believe a government?' I think that this was the ideal choice for a motorsport park in South Australia. We also need to make sure the government is held to account on

its commitment to regional South Australia and the importance of primary industries—areas like the fabulous Langhorne Creek wine region, where Lake Breeze and other wineries won so many more awards at the Langhorne Creek wine luncheon only last Friday.

I refer to the Coorong and Lower Lakes fishery, the Mallee grain producers and the livestock producers, the massive egg and poultry farms in our area, the Myponga horticulture and fruit growing areas further throughout the electorate. We must also make sure that local industries that are doing well in the area, that are underpinning the state's economy with hundreds of millions of dollars investment and are generating billions of dollars of income for this state.

To name just a few of the bigger ones from my area: Thomas Foods International; Australian Portable Camps; Swanport Harvest and Staycrisp Lettuce; Adelaide Mushrooms; Big River Pork; and, numerous chicken farms that I mentioned before. As we all know, there are always regional transport concerns. We always need better transport to our country towns, especially areas like Goolwa, Hindmarsh Island and Murray Bridge. I believe that over time we will get a public-funded metro ticket transport. I know it has to be funded publicly, but it will give so much more opportunity for people to still live in a regional area and be able to access the city in a cost-effective manner.

Health services are something about which I talked in the parliament as recently as yesterday. They all need attention, especially when you have areas like Goolwa and Murray Bridge that do fall not fall under the patient assistance transport scheme because they drop out of the 100-kilometre limit. We need to make sure that with a population growth and an ageing demographic that people can access their health services.

We have education issues, local schools, and job cuts at the local TAFE in Murray Bridge. We have the slow response time, and I know that the Lameroo school has gone out of my electorate, but four of its school buildings burnt down last October, and we are still no closer to knowing whether or not those buildings will be totally replaced.

I have already mentioned the unemployment rates in the area—and I am running out of time, which is a bit of a disaster! With regard to the River Murray, as I mentioned earlier, in the drought of 2006 we not only had the dryland drought, but we had the river and irrigation drought to the lifeblood of Hammond and there are so many industries and towns that rely on the health of the river. We have the Lower Murray flood plains that need work, and I want to acknowledge and make further comment later about Henry Jones and his sad passing—a true champion of the Murray—and if the Murray-Darling Basin Plan should be attributed to one man, it should be him.

In my closing remarks I would like to thank all my family, my supporters and my staff: to my wife Sally, my sons, Mack and Angus; to Greg O'Brien, his wife Teresa; to Karen Parker, Neville and Marie Mueller, Rob and Jan Smyth, Norm and Margaret Patterson, Neville and Judy Woolcock, Liam O'Neil; and the Hammond SEC executive and all of their families. I would like to acknowledge all the membership down at Goolwa—a great team who handed out how-to-vote cards on the day. All the volunteers—everyone who helped with the whole process. My staff members: Kim Duffield, Diane Bolton, Liam O'Neil, and all the trainees I have had over time, especially Emma Kluske, the most recent. I would also like to make special mention of Jan Henderson and her husband, Brian, from the Goolwa branch and I am looking forward to another term as the elected member for Hammond.

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