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Address-in-Reply
SPEECH

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BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEECH

<p>Date Wednesday, 20 October 2010 Page 80 Questioner Speaker Rishworth, Amanda, MP</p>	<p>Source House Proof Yes Responder Question No.</p>
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Ms RISHWORTH (Kingston) (5.18 pm)—Mr Deputy Speaker Scott I would first like to congratulate you on your election to the position of Second Deputy Speaker. I am very humbled to be standing here today as the re-elected member for Kingston. I thank the people of Kingston for putting their trust in me and I assure them that I will continue to fight in their best interests, both here in Canberra and back in Adelaide. I also take this opportunity to welcome my Uncle Frank and Aunt Jessie, who are in the gallery with us here today. I hope they have enjoyed their time at Parliament House.

On 21 August the people of Kingston overwhelmingly endorsed Labor's plan for the future. In Kingston we received a 9.5 per cent swing to Labor. When I was talking with residents on the campaign trail, it became clear that they believed that Labor had a positive plan for our country's future while the Liberal Party was fixated on the past. They believed that, while Labor was focused on improving quality of life and delivering in critical areas such as infrastructure, health and education, the Liberal Party was opposed to almost everything.

The southern suburbs of Adelaide is a beautiful place to live and work, with long stretches of coast, rolling hills and beautiful vineyards. There is a deep sense of pride among those living in the southern suburbs. However, our region of Adelaide, under the Howard government, had been forgotten, particularly in the area of infrastructure investment. Take broadband, for example: residents in large sections of my electorate do not have access to ADSL2+. For those who think that access to broadband is an issue only in rural and regional Australia, I can assure them that the problem is far greater. Suburbs only 24 kilometres from the CBD of Adelaide are not able to access ADSL2+. Lack of broadband has been a significant impediment to economic development in our local area, not to mention a frustration for those trying to study or stay in touch.

On 21 August the people of Kingston gave a clear endorsement of Labor's plans to build a national broadband network. I was pleased to accompany the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, Senator Conroy, to roll out some of the first fibre cables into the township of Willunga in my electorate. For those on the other side of the House who say that this is not a popular plan, I am pleased

to inform the House that 84 per cent of the households in Kingston have signed up to have fibre rolled out into their homes. The detractors of the NBN should allow themselves to imagine a little. This is not just about getting fast internet access to many of those who need it now, although that is a huge benefit, but also about equipping our nation for the future, a place where there are still so many possibilities that we are not even aware of yet, in the areas of health, education, social inclusion and economic development. For those who say it is not a role of government to build this critical infrastructure, I would ask: if this is not the role of government, then what is?

The role of government is to act in the national interest and to build our nation, not to think just in the short term. Its role is to be looking not just at how our nation is today and will be tomorrow but at what it will be in 10 years time and in 20 years. Imagine if governments that had gone before us had not built the transcontinental rail, the Sydney Harbour Bridge or the Snowy Mountains Scheme. The National Broadband Network will for the first time provide an open wholesale telecommunications network that will finally provide a level playing field where any internet provider will be able to have access and compete with other internet providers to deliver competitive prices and competitive packages of telecommunications. Residents in my electorate are looking forward to being part of this future as we all look forward to the fibre network being extended next to McLaren Vale, Seaford and beyond.

The election result in Kingston also endorsed the federal Labor government's record investment in transport infrastructure. As I said previously, the south had been overlooked by previous governments. An example of this would be the rail extension from Noarlunga to Seaford. This extension had been promised to the residents of the south for the last 30 years. I lobbied very hard for this extension because it is critical for the growing suburbs of Seaford to have transport options that are economical and to have reduced urban congestion. It was through the establishment of Infrastructure Australia and the Building Australia Fund by the Labor government that this important transport project was delivered. Ensuring that there is infrastructure investment in the southern suburbs of Adelaide and that this infrastructure keeps up with the growth of the suburbs

is essential. I will continue to fight for essential infrastructure investment in the south, including roads and rail.

In addition to infrastructure in the south, our focus needs to be on creating job opportunities in southern Adelaide. Maximising job opportunities close to where people live is both economically and socially important. Many residents in the southern suburbs of Adelaide travel a significant distance to work, and travel does take its toll, not only the household budget but also on family life. Good urban planning is critically important to ensure that there is a balance of housing, commercial and industrial areas. I welcome the purchase of the old Mitsubishi site by the South Australian state government and believe that it has huge potential, if we get it right, to become a key opportunity for smart, clean manufacturing to be developing, creating job opportunities in the south.

Accessing good-quality health when one needs it is also of critical importance to the residents of Kingston and was regularly raised with me as an issue during the election. In the first term of the Labor government, we saw record investment in health services and health infrastructure, including, importantly, in my electorate the construction of the Noarlunga GP superclinic. In addition, we saw a record investment from the government in my electorate in training facilities for doctors and health professionals. There was investment in expanding operating theatre capacity at the local hospital, after-hours GP services, and extra training places at our local university for doctors, nurses and allied health—and this is just a start. Those on the other side opposed many of our initiatives, including GP superclinics, and unfortunately fail to see the practical importance of these clinics to local communities. I will give one example. Due to the investment in the GP superclinic at Noarlunga, we will be able to double the public dental chairs available there, providing improved access to those who need it the most. For too long, dental care has been seen as separate from health services. However, when I talk to those affected by dental problems, it leaves me in no doubt that their dental problems are affecting their health and wellbeing. Enabling greater access to public services, as the Noarlunga GP superclinic will, will help the most disadvantaged in our community and improve the overall health of our community. There is a lot more to be done in health, and this government is committed to repairing the damage done by the previous Howard government.

Improving our health system also includes investing in mental health. In my life before I was in this place, as a practicing psychologist, I saw firsthand just how debilitating mental illness can be to the individual suffering from it and the impact it has on their family

and friends. Serious mental illness affects everything in a person's life, from relationships to employment to physical health. We need to ensure that our health system is equipped to ensure that those suffering with a mental illness get the treatment and support they need and, importantly, that this treatment and support is effective. We need to ensure that healthcare for those with a mental illness is integrated and coordinated and, importantly, part of a continuum of care

Prevention is also critical in the area of mental health. I commend the government's announcement during the election campaign that we would extend the number of Headspace sites around the country, including a commitment to put one in the southern suburbs of Adelaide. With an estimated 147,000-plus people under the age of 25 in my electorate, it is critically important to have services that focus on young people and their mental health but that also treat mental health in a holistic way, providing assistance in employment, physical health and social wellbeing as well as specifically in mental health issues. If we get in early, just as with any other illness, we can prevent suffering and make the road to recovery shorter and easier.

We have heard a lot of debate about this but, as a member from South Australia, water is always of critical concern and never far from my mind, as I know is the case for many of my constituents. The situation in the Murray-Darling Basin is an enormous challenge. For too long the basin has been seen as a segmented system bound by state borders that provides unlimited resources to everyone. As a result of this, the river has been deteriorating for decades. In South Australia, at the end of the river, we are seeing the dire effects. I am pleased to be part of a federal government that is not just putting this problem in the too-hard basket. In its first term, this government invested in water-efficient infrastructure and bought back water entitlements from willing sellers, helping to return water to the system to restore the health of the Murray. This government has continued the implementation of the Water Act introduced by the Howard government and, in doing so, set up the independent Murray-Darling Basin Authority to, without political fear or favour, objectively investigate what we need to do to save this river system. The independent authority has released its draft guide to the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, which maps out a course of action to save the system and prevent the irreversible decline of the basin.

There will be ongoing consultation about this guide. I have no doubt that feedback will be carefully considered, and I look forward to seeing the final plan. While we consider that important consultation, what we must not do is walk away from reform in the basin if we want a sustainable and healthy river system that

in the long term supports both economic production and local communities all along the river. There will be difficult issues that will have to be worked through, but if we do nothing we will leave future generations with a destroyed river system that is no good to anyone.

Water efficiency should be seen as a challenge not just for irrigators but for urban areas as well. Investment in water infrastructure for irrigation is critical but investing in urban water infrastructure is equally important if it is to help reduce our draw on the Murray-Darling system. I was very disappointed to hear the member for Indi scoff at the potential use of recycled water in her local communities. In my local communities, due in part to the investment from the federal government and due to the commitment of those local communities, recycled water is now being used in the vineyards of McLaren Vale and in local parks in southern Adelaide, and it is being plumbed into houses for the watering of gardens.

This federal government has invested jointly with state governments and local councils to fund water infrastructure that enables not only the recycling of household water but also stormwater reuse. I look forward in this next term to working with all levels of government on practical solutions to reduce our reliance on the Murray, and to conserve and reuse water in our local communities.

In the last parliament I raised issues about the sexualisation of girls—matters I know you are also very concerned about, Madam Deputy Speaker Burke. This continues to be a concern of mine. Since raising these issues I have been overwhelmed by support from around the country. Mass media continues to send a message to our children, particularly to our girls, that they need to be sexy and that is the only thing that matters. As I have previously stated, while adults have the capacity to critically evaluate such messages, children do not. This is not about banning or censorship but about asking publishers, broadcasters and advertisers to have set guidelines to limit the negative impact that these messages have on our children and to assist parents to provide age-appropriate content to their children.

The election result in Kingston on 21 August was due to the hard work of many. I would like to thank the many ALP volunteers who helped out over the election campaign and on election day. It was a winter election in Adelaide; however, no matter how cold or rainy the weather was, it did not dissuade the Kingston volunteers accompanying me to train stations and shopping centres, or when I was door knocking, putting up election signs and handing out Labor how-to-vote cards.

I would like to thank all of those Labor party members and other volunteers who helped out on election day and during the campaign. I would especially like to thank my staff: Emmanuel Cusack, Suzanne Kellett, Mary Portsmouth, Ellen Calam and James Wangmann. I also would like to thank my campaign team: Dale Colebeck, Chris Hansford, Matt Marozzi, Aarron Hill, Antony Cole, Sonia Romeo, Sam Nock and Sarah Huy. My thanks also go to Senator Annette Hurley and Senator Don Farrell for their support during the campaign, along with the local state members in my electorate: Chloe Fox, Allan Sibbons, Gay Thompson, Leon Bignell, John Hill and Bernard Finnigan. I would like to also thank Peter Malinauskas and the SDA, John Camillo, John Short and Nigel Alford from the AMWU, Debbie Black from the FSU, and Jamie Newland and the MUA for all their ongoing support during the election campaign. In addition, my thanks go to the local activists: John Gucci—otherwise known as the corflute king—Phil and Jo Giles, Sarah Brawley and Charles Wright. I would like to also thank the staff from both the state and federal ALP offices, particularly the South Australian state secretary, Michael Brown, and Reggie Martin at the South Australian ALP branch.

I would like to thank my family, especially my mum and dad, who are always there to help—they have been there for the last three years and I hope they will continue to be for the next three years. Finally, I take this opportunity to thank my campaign manager, Emily Bourke, for her enthusiasm, commitment and fantastic ability in running Labor's campaign in Kingston. She is the best campaign manager in the state, even in the face of discovering on the first day of the election campaign that she had conceived twins. My final thanks go to the people of Kingston who have placed their confidence in me for a second term.

This election was hard fought but there was only one winner. I would like to take this opportunity to recognise my colleagues who I worked with in the 42nd parliament who did not return to this new parliament. I put on record my appreciation for the hard work they did for their electors, as well as for the friendship that they provided to me personally.

The election on 21 August provided us with a new and diverse but also tightly balanced parliament. I am optimistic, despite what some commentators suggest, that this term of the Gillard Labor government will see us continue to establish a strong Labor agenda that is compassionate, visionary and fair. It will also be part of an agenda that will involve the parliament. To that end, I can assure the residents of Kingston that I will continue, as I have over the last three years, to ensure that the residents in the southern suburbs of Adelaide are heard and not forgotten in this place.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Ms AE Burke)—Before I call the member for Brisbane, technically this is not her first speech, but given the circumstances I think we will extend the normal courtesies that we usually do at this time.