

**PARLIAMENT OF VICTORIA**

**PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)**

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

**FIFTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT**

**FIRST SESSION**

**WEDNESDAY, 3 AUGUST 2022**

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**FIFTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT—FIRST SESSION**

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Kilkenny, Ms Sonya	Carrum	ALP	Wynne, Mr Richard William	Richmond	ALP

**PARTY ABBREVIATIONS**

ALP—Labor Party; Greens—The Greens;  
Ind—Independent; LP—Liberal Party; Nats—The Nationals.

## **Legislative Assembly committees**

### **Economy and Infrastructure Standing Committee**

Ms Addison, Mr Blackwood, Ms Couzens, Mr Eren, Ms Ryan, Ms Theophanous and Mr Wakeling.

### **Environment and Planning Standing Committee**

Ms Addison, Mr Fowles, Ms Green, Mr Hamer, Mr McCurdy, Ms McLeish and Mr Morris.

### **Legal and Social Issues Standing Committee**

Mr Angus, Mr Battin, Ms Couzens, Ms Kealy, Ms Settle, Ms Theophanous and Mr Tak.

### **Privileges Committee**

Ms Allan, Mr Carroll, Ms Hennessy, Mr McGuire, Mr Morris, Mr Pakula, Ms Ryan, Ms Staley and Mr Wells.

### **Standing Orders Committee**

The Speaker, Ms Allan, Mr Cheeseman, Ms Edwards, Mr Fregon, Ms McLeish, Ms Sheed, Ms Staley and Mr Walsh.

## **Joint committees**

### **Dispute Resolution Committee**

*Assembly:* Ms Allan, Ms Hennessy, Mr Merlino, Mr Pakula, Mr R Smith, Mr Walsh and Mr Wells.

*Council:* Mr Bourman, Ms Crozier, Mr Davis, Ms Symes and Ms Tierney.

### **Electoral Matters Committee**

*Assembly:* Ms Hall, Dr Read and Mr Rowsell.

*Council:* Mr Erdogan, Mrs McArthur, Mr Meddick, Mr Melhem, Ms Lovell, Mr Quilty and Mr Tarlamis.

### **House Committee**

*Assembly:* The Speaker (*ex officio*), Mr T Bull, Ms Crugnale, Ms Edwards, Mr Fregon, Ms Sandell and Ms Staley.

*Council:* The President (*ex officio*), Mr Bourman, Mr Davis, Mr Leane, Ms Lovell and Ms Stitt.

### **Integrity and Oversight Committee**

*Assembly:* Mr Halse, Mr Maas, Mr Rowsell, Mr Taylor, Ms Ward and Mr Wells.

*Council:* Mr Grimley.

### **Pandemic Declaration Accountability and Oversight Committee**

*Assembly:* Mr J Bull, Mr Eren, Ms Kealy, Mr Sheed, Ms Ward and Mr Wells.

*Council:* Ms Crozier and Mr Erdogan.

### **Public Accounts and Estimates Committee**

*Assembly:* Ms Connolly, Mr Hibbins, Mr Maas, Mr Newbury, Mr D O'Brien, Ms Richards and Mr Richardson.

*Council:* Mrs McArthur and Ms Taylor.

### **Scrutiny of Acts and Regulations Committee**

*Assembly:* Mr Burgess, Ms Connolly and Mr Morris.

*Council:* Ms Patten and Ms Watt.

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**Wednesday, 3 August 2022**

**The SPEAKER (Ms JM Edwards) took the chair at 9.32 am and read the prayer.**

**Announcements**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY**

**The SPEAKER (09:33):** We acknowledge the traditional Aboriginal owners of the land on which we are meeting. We pay our respects to them, their culture, their elders past, present and future, and elders from other communities who may be here today.

**Condolences**

**HON. JANE GARRETT MP**

**Mr ANDREWS (Mulgrave—Premier) (09:33):** I move:

That this house expresses its sincere sorrow at the death of the Honourable Jane Garrett and places on record its acknowledgement of the valuable services rendered by her to the Parliament, the government, the Labor movement and the people of Victoria as member for the Legislative Assembly for the district of Brunswick from 2010 to 2018, member of the Legislative Council for the region of Eastern Victoria from 2018 to 2022 and the Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation from 2014 to 2016.

Jane Garrett leaves behind a remarkable legacy: her values, her hard work, her children, her friends and colleagues and her enormous strength and spirit, which each of us remember so fondly, so clearly, so well. Jane's intellect was obvious. What is more, she was passionate in her pursuits and she hated inequality and disadvantage above all else. Jane was a champion for fairness, with a strength and a confidence that you rarely see in public life. She knew exactly who she was, and she knew exactly where she had come from, faithful forever to her heritage, her community, her upbringing. She also knew above all else that Victoria could only ever be a stronger place if it was first a fairer place.

She was the daughter of a Baptist minister and a public school teacher. The Garrett family have called Brunswick home for over six generations. Her forebears were local builders, tailors, church elders and small business owners, and her values were shaped so clearly, so importantly, in the working communities of her youth. In Jane's first speech in this place she spoke of the social justice meetings her parents would hold in their Brunswick lounge room—a centre of debate, a centre of progressive politics, organised and less so, but a centre of those values, a place so formative for her in all that she did thereafter. She spoke of the anti-uranium stickers that covered the back window of the family car and of the many demonstrations and other actions she attended and participated in as a young kid—progressive, active, engaged, involved, passion and purpose, impact as well as insight.

She was born, raised and inspired to create change in our world, and that is exactly what she did. Jane valued opportunity and equality. She believed so strongly in lifting up those without power and speaking up for those without a voice. She was a mentor to so many in our party and our movement: young women, young trade unionists, young activists, young people who through her example saw the power of politics, the power of public service, the power of not just being a commentator but of getting involved and making real change, living your values. There is perhaps no greater compliment that can be paid to anybody in our profession than that. I know that for all of those people—and there are many among our ranks who were mentored by Jane, who are better for her example, her experience, her friendship—this is a deeply, deeply sad time.

As a passionate and committed minister and parliamentarian as well, Jane leaves a great legacy of hard work and real impact. Jane Garrett was both Labor and labour to her core. She believed so strongly in our mighty trade union movement, in the power of collectivism, in the power of lifting up those with the least through fair pay and conditions, in the power and the obvious imperative to make sure that every workplace is safe, that every worker is valued and justly rewarded for their input, that every

family has a safety net and the security that has only ever been delivered in our economy and our society, and indeed much more broadly, by collective action and the unity and solidarity of working people. It is a partnership of course, but it will never occur, and has never occurred, without that sense of collective purpose and collective action—a trade unionist, a collectivist in every way.

She is gone too soon, and we are all saddened by that, saddened to think of a life cut short, all the advocacy and all the campaigning that will now not happen—all the mentoring, the example, the bringing along, the acts of kindness to teach and educate and train the new generation. That may not happen, but if it does, it will be all the harder because of Jane's absence.

To Jane's family, her husband, James, and her three beautiful children, Molly, Sasha and Max, the contribution that your mum made to this state was big and important. There are workers who will come home safely, there are families whose lives will be so much richer, so much fairer and so much more prosperous and there are people who will have dignity and respect and opportunity and a better future because of the work your mum did and the work that she inspired others to do.

On behalf of the government and the people of Victoria, I extend our deepest condolences to her family, to her friends, to her colleagues in this place and far beyond and to all who knew her, who are touched by this tragic passing but who, with a sense of sadness and affection, celebrate a life so well lived, a life of purpose and passion, a life of real impact. We are richer for Jane Garrett having been here, and we are so much poorer for her passing. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr GUY** (Bulleen—Leader of the Opposition) (09:41): It is always with sadness and sympathy that we rise to speak on a condolence motion in this chamber, but it is with the greatest sadness and sympathy we rise to condole someone so young, with so much intelligence and energy and certainly someone with as much potential as Jane Garrett. I do not think it is a surprise to anyone when I say that Jane Garrett carried the respect of the whole Parliament. She was not just another minister, not just another MP. From this side of the chamber we looked at her as someone who had the ability to go very far in public office. Jane had empathy, compassion, intelligence and political skill, but importantly, she never compromised her values for anyone.

Born in March 1973, Jane went on to study at ANU. She had a career made for not only politics but the law, had she wanted it. An associate to Justice Alan Boulton of the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, an articulated clerk with Holding Redlich and eventually a union officer with the Transport Workers Union, in 2000 she tried her hand more directly in politics, working for Labor Premier Steve Bracks as a political adviser. Jane and I once swapped notes on working for a premier, as both of us had done so before being elected: the thrills and spills, the buzz of the private office, the more relaxed feeling when the boss headed on regional trips—although I suspect that was more with Jeffrey than Steve Bracks. After the premier's office Jane headed to Slater and Gordon for six years, by now amassing what was certainly a CV of epic Labor proportions: Slater and Gordon, Holding Redlich, Steve Bracks, the AIRC and the TWU. In this time Jane was also elected to the City of Yarra, and she became the mayor—a sensible one.

It was not a surprise to many of us who had known the name, seen the person and knew she had aspirations that on Carlo Carli's retirement Jane was selected to stand for the seat of Brunswick. Without going through Jane's CV in this Parliament, let me say some first impressions and recollections from colleagues on this side of the house. Jane in those early years was diligent, spending a lot of time in the chamber, as new members should, learning the feel and the running of the house. She was a good debater, quick on her feet and, more to the point, gave back whenever interjections were given but in a way that was intelligent, not crass. It was not a shock to many of us on this side that when Labor won in 2014 Jane went straight into the ministry. That was unsurprising, obvious and a bright move given the length and breadth of her experience leading up to parliamentary service.

It was obvious that as a minister, I think, more than this chamber, more than her friends, more than her family but indeed the whole state got to appreciate who Jane Garrett was and could be. There is no

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other way but to say this in honesty in a condolence motion that Jane became the hero of so many CFA volunteers. Whatever the circumstances were, whatever the behind-the-scenes discussions were and with intense pressure from some even on her own side, Jane did not flinch, and I think that is more than many of us in this place would ever do. She made it clear in this chamber and out that her passion and loyalty would always be with CFA volunteers, even if it was at the expense of her own career. As such, Jane remains the hero of so many of them—60 000 of them. Whatever the merits of debate may have been at the time, it is always a minister's reaction that remains their legacy, and Jane's legacy will always be this issue. On her passing, the Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria, the VFBV, the group representing our CFA volunteers, stated:

Our respect and admiration for Jane was profound, and Jane left her indelible mark on us during her time as Emergency Services Minister between December 2014–June 2016.

Jane's courage and integrity knew no bounds, and we are heartbroken that her long battle with breast cancer has taken her from us so early.

Tributes from CFAs in Echuca, Gippsland and across the outer areas of Melbourne were posted—thankful messages from the people who our state are thankful for every summer.

In November 2016 Jane announced that she was unwell and was taking leave, and I think it is fair to say that this took many of us by surprise. That a person who was to all of us here a spritely, lively person, still relatively young, was suffering cancer was to so many of us a shocking and numbing experience, given the Jane that Parliament knew and the Jane, the public one, that was known outside here. When Jane was absent from Parliament during periods over the next few years many of us exchanged discussions in here, hoping for the best and wondering how she was. The respect for Jane was cross-party, and the concern for her health seriously was too.

As I have said, sadly, in condolence motions previously, too often in politics those outside of this building think we are somehow bulletproof, emotionless and have no sense of emotional presence, that we do not go home to either family or friends and take woes with us or have them on our minds, distracting us from normal life. I cannot imagine what Jane's family went through over the last few years. I understand it must have been exceptionally difficult. With personal health challenges in her own family, her own fight was something extraordinary to take on top of that burden.

To Jane's family—to her husband, James; to her children, Molly, Sasha and Max; to her parents and family—can I offer you these words, however insignificant they may be in the scheme of what you must have endured over the last few years. Jane was someone whose character does not come past public life very often. She was a special person who many, many people in this building looked up to and admired. She had principles. They were not for sale, they were not for turning. Jane was respected. She was a good minister, who tens of thousands of our state's finest volunteers revere to this day. That is her political legacy. It is a proud one, and no doubt you are proud of her too.

Politics is nothing compared to the importance of family life—being a wife, a mother, a sister, a daughter. Jane was taken too young. I send my heartfelt sympathies to all her family, to all those who knew her the best—beyond the stone of this building and the hype of the media. May Jane Garrett rest in peace.

**Ms ALLAN** (Bendigo East—Minister for Transport Infrastructure, Minister for the Suburban Rail Loop, Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery) (09:47): I rise today to join the condolence for the passing of Jane Garrett, a former member of this place and, at the time of her passing, a member of the Legislative Council. At the outset I wish to convey my deepest sympathy to Jane's family at the loss of a woman at an age far too young. Jane's brave battle with cancer underscored her strength and determination, and she shared that in an incredibly powerful way at the memorial service for the former member for Northcote and former minister, Fiona Richardson. Simply, 49 is far too young, and far too young for an intelligent and passionate woman like Jane.

Now, I did not know Jane as well as some of the others who will speak today. Our paths crossed during her time as an adviser in the early days of the Bracks government and then again as she worked incredibly hard to secure the seat of Brunswick in the 2010 state election. Jane was successful in both, and there was a great collective joy at her election to this place as we celebrated the election of a woman with obvious talent and conviction. She set about making her mark from the beginning. Jane worked hard in the Parliament on behalf of her community. I remember well her pride at being elected to represent Brunswick, a community she had deep personal ties to.

Many of her contributions during those opposition years of 2010 to 2014 were where she pursued the government over issues, big and small, on behalf of her constituency—from the Hope Street bus to the east–west link. Her experience as a lawyer and in local government shaped the areas of focus in those first parliamentary years in areas of social justice, of giving voice to local people and communities who would otherwise have gone without representation if not for Jane’s focus on their concerns and issues. Jane was also a passionate advocate for working people—their right to be treated fairly, to take home a decent wage and to be safe in their workplace. In her political life she embodied so much of what is at the heart of our movement: respect, fairness, the rights of people to make the most of their lives, the right to a good education, the right to work and the right to live free from discrimination and prejudice.

I just want to finish by talking about some of the moments we shared personally. In 2012 we were pregnant at the same time, me with my first child and Jane with her third. Back then, even though it was not that long ago, it was still a rare sight to see a pregnant woman on the floor of the Parliament; to have two at the same time was unheard of. Towards the end of 2011 Jane confided in me that she was pregnant, and she wanted to talk to me about how to share that news with her colleagues. Then in 2012 both of our little babies were at the Royal Children’s Hospital at the same time, again a moment of motherhood that we shared in the maelstrom of parliamentary politics. I remember at the time being deeply appreciative of the way when Jane’s family was going through their challenges, as we were with ours, that she reached out to show care and compassion during that difficult time.

Politics is a tough business at the best of times, and balancing the demands of this place with family life is a challenge that confronts us all. While we have still so much more to do, I think it would be of some comfort to Jane that 10 years later this place is so much more welcoming to new mums, indeed to new parents, as we strive to see the Parliament more reflective of the community we represent. This is a change amongst so many realised by Jane through how she lived and worked true to her values. My deepest sympathy on behalf of myself and also my family to Jane’s family. May she rest in peace.

**Mr WALSH** (Murray Plains) (09:51): It is with a very genuine heavy heart that you rise on a condolence motion for a member that you have actually served with. We quite often make condolence motions about people we have never met, and we read their history, but with Jane it is someone that we all interacted with and all had a lot of respect for. When you read her inaugural speech you look at the family’s history in Brunswick, the fact that the Garrett family has been there for six generations and how entrenched that family was in that community. Jane had the perfect upbringing and the perfect history to become a member for Brunswick and to be a champion for her community. As the Premier said, there was a builder in the family. One of her relations was a tailor, her father was a Baptist minister and her mother was an English teacher in the local school—community activists, but the word I would like to use more is community carers if you look at the history of the family. They were so immersed in that community and in caring for that community. The fact that her great-grandparents opened their home up to homeless people during the Great Depression again speaks volumes to the commitment they had to the people of that particular community. With her father as a Baptist minister, no doubt she would have been exposed to all the struggles of people in that particular community and had that instilled in her.

If you look at her inaugural speech again, she wanted to invoke the biblical term, ‘Do unto others as you would have them do unto you’. Sometimes I think if you look at the recent history of Jane’s career, you probably wish that some others did actually do unto Jane as they would have had done unto them,

because it was very sad to see some of the things that happened near the end of her career. The other one she invoked was the film *Avatar*—that ‘I see you’. Her family very much instilled in her that you need to acknowledge everyone in the community and you need to care for everyone in the community, because there are just so many people who through no fault of their own actually get lost and do not necessarily make the best of their lives. Jane was committed to helping those people. Again, her background was coming through as a Yarra councillor, as a mayor, as an adviser to Steve Bracks, working at Slater and Gordon, as ALP vice-president—someone that went above and beyond in her service to the Labor organisation and to the people that it represents.

Jane’s career is more than defined by the issues around the Country Fire Authority, the CFA, but I would do a disservice not to mention all those CFA volunteers who were so supportive of Jane and so glad that they actually had a true champion when she was the minister. I suppose in some ways it is very easy to be a minister if you just toe the party line and you do what the government of the day has you do as a minister and follow the advice of your department, but Jane was a true champion for the constituency that she represented with the CFA, and they are forever thankful for that and all think very, very highly of her. I can remember one of the drive-by demonstrations, all the fire trucks going past Parliament here, where they all stopped out the front and put flowers on the steps for Jane when she finished being a minister. Graeme Jilbert from Swan Hill, who is a former captain of the Swan Hill fire brigade and a Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria delegate, got out of the ute that he was in and came up with a bunch of flowers and a box of chocolates and left them there for Jane. I know Graeme very well, and I said to him, ‘Do you ever take chocolates home for your wife?’. He said, ‘Not normally, but for Jane I think this is very special, because we are so appreciative of the fact that she was a champion for us’.

If you look at the newspaper headlines at the time, the Victorian Farmers Federation and a whole heap of brigades came out very positively supporting Jane for what she did for them. But as I said, her career was defined by a lot more than just her role as the emergency services minister during that tumultuous time for the Country Fire Authority. She cared for people. She helped people. She genuinely wanted to see a better life for those—the ‘I see you’—people in society who had not been treated as well as they probably would have liked.

During that time, in the winter break, I went to Broome for a holiday. I arrived at the airport and stood in the queue to get on the plane, and who should be in that queue but Jane and her husband, who I had met a number of times at functions at Government House. We exchanged pleasantries and then we worked out we were going to the same destination. We worked out we were staying at the same hotel, so it was an interesting time given what was going on at that time. To Jane’s credit, and I like to think a bit of my own credit, we both enjoyed a very pleasant break of a few days away, but we made sure we did not talk about the CFA issues at all at that time.

To Jane’s family and to all her friends, it is just so sad to see someone that passes away well before their time and with the suffering that she and her family endured over that time. Vale, Jane Garrett, a true champion of the people she represented and I think someone that we could all aspire to follow with the example she set.

**Mr CARROLL** (Niddrie—Minister for Public Transport, Minister for Roads and Road Safety, Minister for Industry Support and Recovery, Minister for Business Precincts) (09:56): I first met Jane Garrett in 1999 in this very place. We both got our start in politics under Rob Hulls: me as an electorate officer after that infamous 1999 election and Jane Garrett as his legal adviser. I can remember the day I met Jane, and it was in this place, downstairs. I was bringing in some paperwork for Rob, a newsletter for him to approve. He was not in the office, so I dropped it off. Before I knew it I could hear, ‘Have you fixed it yet?’. I turned around and there was Rob Hulls. With him was this very, very young girl—I called her a girl because she looked so young. But she was Rob’s new adviser, and she had a presence and a way about her. We did not speak that day, but I always remember that was the first time I met Jane Garrett. I think a lot of people remember the first time they met Jane Garrett, because she did have a way about her.

Fast-forward six months and in the year 2000, as fate would have it, Jane and I would both end up as advisers in Premier Bracks's private office. I was fortunate enough to work in a position in caucus support and advancing to Premier Bracks. My immediate boss at the time was a director by the name of James Higgins, and the legal adviser was Jane Garrett. I want to put on the record to Molly, Sasha and Max that their mum and dad are two of the most generous and gifted people I have ever known.

I also want to pay tribute to the member for Werribee, who was the chief of staff at the time. We had quite a collection of future ministers and MPs in that office at the time. The member for Altona I think was heading up social policy; the member for Sydenham, education policy; and business and economics was the member for Essendon. We were a pretty proud crew. But we were young and we were grateful for the opportunities that the Labor Party had given us, and we were not going to waste a minute.

But it was pretty clear too that love would soon blossom in the Premier's private office. It was very clear for all of us who were young advisers that James in particular was smitten with Jane from the get-go. You could tell it was love at first sight. Not many people would go to this trouble, but to reinforce the message and the privilege of government I remember James one day organising a screening in the Melbourne Room of a documentary, Brumby's *Outnumbered*. It was to make sure we all realised the preciousness of government and to hold it with both hands. James invited all the ministerial staff to come along and watch it, but there was only one ministerial adviser he really wanted there, and that was Jane Garrett.

They would soon get married and Molly would be born, followed by Sasha and Max. They were a dynamic duo, both intelligent and with a zest for life, and they brought out the best in each other. I remember Jane even turned James into a runner, which was quite an achievement. They both could have stayed and had long-term careers in the public sector as ministerial advisers or as chiefs of staff, but they wanted to solve the world's problems and they wanted to do it together. Their commitment to social justice was unparalleled. They soon left and commenced their vocation together at Slater and Gordon lawyers, but more than that they immersed themselves in the deep end, shifting their young family to Queensland to grow the firm there, where they did not have a presence.

Naturally, for these two people, with their personalities, there had to be a big party to send them off. I remember Labor luminaries were invited, and Rob Hulls gave a speech that night. After Rob finished his speech Jane approached him and said, 'Hullsy, can I get your contacts?'. So Rob started writing out his email and his mobile, and she said, 'Not yours, Rob, your contacts in Queensland'. That was Jane, the consummate professional, the networker, always thinking one step ahead. They would accomplish what they set out to do in Queensland, and soon enough a career in public life beckoned for Jane Garrett. She would become a councillor and mayor of the City of Yarra and not long after that the member for Brunswick in opposition in 2010.

As fate would also have it, as James Higgins played an integral role in the election of the Bracks government in 1999, serving under opposition leaders Brumby and Bracks, Jane Garrett would also play an integral role in the election of the Andrews Labor government in 2014 under the new leadership of the member for Mulgrave. A young, determined and experienced new leader, the member for Mulgrave quickly set about making the unthinkable the thinkable: becoming a one-term opposition. The now Premier quickly ensured that Jane Garrett, along with another rising star, Wade Noonan, set about that important process of making sure the four years in opposition were not wasted. Backed up by a strong shadow cabinet and a strong caucus with lots of energy, they went about doing what had been the unthinkable. I am going to quote here an article by Farrah Tomazin from 12 August 2012, 'Big storm brewing?':

Some in the ALP are beginning to think the idea of a one-term Ted may not be so outlandish.

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Within weeks of Labor's election loss, the Opposition Leader asked two rising stars on his backbench—Williamstown MP Wade Noonan and Brunswick MP Jane Garrett—to conduct a post-mortem on what went wrong.

...

The Noonan-Garrett review recommends a year-by-year strategy. This year is about getting the fundamentals right: rebuilding links with business and community, talking to constituents, recruiting 'the next generation of experts' to help with ideas.

It was all about building a policy platform for the next election. As they say in politics, the rest is history.

I want to take this opportunity to quote the comments that Wade Noonan made in his LinkedIn account about Jane Garrett. He said:

... Jane Garrett and I completed—  
a policy review—

in the aftermath of Victorian Labor's 2010 election loss. In my view, the report helped set the foundations for Labor's rebuild and put us back on course to govern in 2014, after just one term in Opposition. Working alongside Jane was an extraordinary privilege. She was one of a kind. Smart, compassionate, funny, authentic, and fiercely determined. Like Fiona Richardson—another Labor warrior—taken far too soon.

I want to put on record my final appreciation of Jane. Like many of us, I ended up in the chook house when I arrived in 2012, and it was a great bonding session. When I was up the back of the chook house and Jane's office was at the front, you could hear her arrive, you could hear her during the day and you could hear her leave. That was the voice of Jane Garrett, which I will never forget.

I want to say to Molly, Sasha and Max, again, your mum was one of a kind. She lit up every room she walked into. I want to just end on these notes from Jane herself when she announced her retirement:

I'm grateful I was able to walk this journey with so many wonderful people. And to those that are coming after I wish you the very best.

Finally, thank you to my three beautiful children who are the greatest joys of my life.

Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Ms KEALY** (Lowan) (10:03): It is with sadness that I speak to this condolence motion to remember and recognise the Honourable Jane Garrett. Jane was an amazing woman, an outstanding parliamentarian who always put respect for others and respect for herself as well as the people of Victoria first. Whip smart, compassionate, funny and with a sharp wit, Jane was a woman that cared for and had no fear of intimidation when standing up for what was right. Jane was always approachable and will be remembered as a minister who was not frightened to stand up for her principles. She rightly earned and deserved the title 'the Honourable Jane Garrett'.

As minister Jane supported our CFA volunteers and the local community during the long-burning Strathdownie peat fires, and this remains deep in the memories of locals. I will always remember, appreciate and respect her cooperation and open communication and support during significant fire events across the region over her time as Minister for Emergency Services. Jane had many, many friends and admirers across Victoria, particularly throughout the CFA. There are many local volunteers who have openly told me of their admiration for Jane and her willingness to fiercely stand up for, support and protect the CFA volunteers during her time as Minister for Emergency Services.

Just this week at Hamilton Sheepvention a local CFA volunteer and Volunteer Fire Brigades Victoria member raised how saddened he was that Jane had passed. To see grown men openly weep in front of you at a public event shows how deep their respect is for this woman. He had great admiration for her putting her job on the line to protect the CFA. It is a message I hear often.

Looking back to Jane's inaugural speech, when referencing the influence of her upbringing and family on shaping her beliefs and values she stated:

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The particular values that become part of the fabric of your being through how you were raised and what you may embrace or reject are many. For my part the most important value I believe I was given, and which forms the basis for all I strive to do, is respect: respect for the dignity and worth of others, respect for rights, respect for the legitimate and universal aspirations of people to reach their full potential and to provide for themselves and their families.

Jane delivered on her aspirations. Jane gave and gained respect from all sides of politics and from Victorians in all corners of the state. Jane stood up for the rights of others. Jane had integrity and fought for what she believed in and never stepped back from that for the sake of political gain.

The Victorian Parliament will be a lesser place without Jane Garrett. We will all miss her. I offer my sincere condolences to Jane's family, particularly her husband, James, and her three children, Molly, Sasha and Max, at this most difficult time. Specifically to Molly, Sasha and Max: be proud of your mum. She was respected and did what we all aspire to do. She made a difference and always led with integrity and respect for herself and others. Vale, the Honourable Jane Garrett.

**Mr PALLAS** (Werribee—Treasurer, Minister for Economic Development, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Trade) (10:07): I rise to pay tribute to my friend and colleague Jane Garrett. As previous speakers have said already, Jane was deeply committed to her progressive ideals, to the labour movement and of course to making Victoria a fairer and more just state. I first met Jane when I worked as Steve Bracks's chief of staff. She was a young, impressive staffer—incredibly enthusiastic. She had a wicked sense of humour, and she also had an infectious way about her that made people want to gravitate towards her. There was no doubt that she was bound for public office, in my mind. Above everything else, Jane was keen. She had a list of policy ambitions that was as long as your arm, and she wanted to get things done.

Jane did a stint at Slater and Gordon and as mayor of the City of Yarra, where she arranged for \$3.7 million to assist in the redevelopment of Victoria Park. Now, it took an incredible level of bipartisanship, in a sense, given that she was a dyed-in-the-wool Blues supporter, to help out the Magpies. But that it now of course is a great community facility is in no small part due to her efforts.

Jane was elected in 2010 as the member for Brunswick and then in 2018 as a member for Eastern Victoria. She represented her state and her community with her trademark passion and decency and a fiery commitment to progressive ideals. She was a true product of the inner north—a funny, bright, deep-thinking leftie who wore her heart on her sleeve at all times. I remember Jane's inaugural speech, when she talked about her commitment to welcoming refugees, to standing against discrimination, to fighting for freedom of speech and to delivering social justice. This was a mantra she took throughout her life—as a member of Parliament, as a minister and earlier as a local mayor and anti-discrimination lawyer. All throughout her life Jane asked what she could do for her state, her city and her community. She was not in politics for any profile or glamour. Limited as it may be, she was in it to make the state a better place.

In her inaugural speech she also included a line from the film *Avatar*. I found it a little discordant that she was going for something so current and commercial. It was a popular film at the time. Simply, she used the language of that film: 'I see you'. What she really wanted to do was invoke the line that the characters use. To quote Jane in explaining the use of the language, it demonstrates how the characters:

... see each other as they really are, beyond the prejudices or constraints that come from social constructs, class or cultural divide.

That was Jane. She did not want anyone to feel unrepresented or to hide who they were.

Jane straddled the demographics of the inner north. Both brave and entirely authentic, progressive, a warrior for the working class and an advocate for new and struggling communities, she was never afraid to fight inequality where she saw it.

Jane delivered for her community. I remember well her advocacy for Brunswick Secondary College, a community school she loved and delivered for. To name just one outcome that Jane secured—



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perhaps a sign of her humanity and using public policy to achieve great outcomes—when a young Italian tourist died tragically in 2015 cycling in a black spot on Sydney Road, Jane convened a summit of local riders, police and councillors and advocated passionately for the state government to fast-track a \$1.5 million investment to make that spot safe from that sort of accident ever happening again. Jane was in fact an irresistible force, and needless to say her advocacy came through.

Jane was very traditional in her view that she was in this place to serve—to serve her community and to prosecute the values her community held. She served wholeheartedly as Minister for Emergency Services and Minister for Consumer Affairs, Gaming and Liquor Regulation for around 18 months and in roles that could not have been easy, but when she embraced them, she gave her all. She also served variously as Parliamentary Secretary to the Shadow Minister for Police and Emergency Services, Shadow Cabinet Secretary and Parliamentary Secretary for Jobs.

One of Jane's greatest achievements was shepherding the parliamentary inquiry into the CFA training college at Fiskville to its completion. It was a landmark inquiry and one close to Jane's heart. She was so proud of what this government, her government, delivered in cleaning up the site and supporting firefighters whose lives were so damaged by the training facility.

Jane was passionate about supporting local communities to recover from fires. She led the government's assistance for bushfire-affected communities. Many are still recovering from recent bushfires, and she took great pride in opening new and upgraded fire stations around the state—from Altona to Stanhope to Panton Hill.

Jane appeared regularly on Jon Faine's program on Friday mornings in a popular segment. She was a values politician and a values person, but she had the charisma, the intellect and the quick thinking to be a radio star.

You could not know Jane and not know what she cared about and would fight for, because she wore her values up front, without fear or embarrassment. She was a true Labor person—a committed advocate for social justice, economic fairness and climate action—yet also maintained friends from across the aisle, a testament to her likability, her charm and the authenticity of her beliefs. Jane had many friends, not least Fiona Richardson, to whom I know Jane was a source of comfort and a close friend. Fighting cancer is a terrible battle and one that Jane fought bravely for many years.

I send my deepest condolences to Jane's family: her husband, James; and her three children, Molly, Sasha and Max. This house, like yours, will be sadder without Jane's presence. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Ms McLEISH** (Eildon) (10:14): It is with sadness that I too join this condolence motion for our colleague Jane Garrett. I recall particularly her maiden speech. It was one that I remember was delivered from the back row of the opposition benches, and the reason I recall it was the way it was delivered and what she said. I was worried; mine was the next day and I thought, 'Gosh, how would I even match that?'. I noticed how different her life was to mine, but what I really recall was seeing the person behind the speech. She was articulate, passionate, determined to make a difference and absolutely ready to take on the world and this place, and she was somebody who was values driven.

Later as we left the chamber I heard a number of colleagues say 'front bench material'—and she was, absolutely. She proved as a minister that she gained so much respect from so many. As has been mentioned by a number of speakers already, a lot of that respect came from the CFA volunteers, because she was not afraid to give them the respect that they deserved and so equally she got that respect back from them. So many volunteers during that time said to me in various forums how grateful they were for somebody who would take up their cause, who believed in them, who listened to them and who understood them. They felt that she had respected them, and I think that is just such a wonderful testament to the person that she was.

Jane's term as a minister was short-lived and really not deserving to be so. Following the changes, she moved from the chook house to the offices above the dome, near my office. I saw the roller-coaster

emotions that Jane was going through, but equally I saw the support that she gained from her colleagues—you, Speaker, and the former member for Ballarat West, Sharon Knight. It was remarkable to see such strength and courage, given what she had been through.

Jane was one of the few people that have been able to serve this Parliament in both houses. She began with her eight years here and then moved to the upper house. And she made an impression, as we have heard, on so many people.

Finally, Jane delivered one of the most remarkable eulogies I have heard, at the Regal Ballroom in Northcote for her very good friend Fiona Richardson. How she delivered that was similar to how she delivered her maiden speech. It made such an impression on people during a particularly traumatic and difficult time for her. Fiona, like Jane, was taken too young.

My sincere sympathies to James, her children, her family and her many colleagues in the Labor Party and on this side of the house, who find this an exceptionally difficult time. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe—Minister for Police, Minister for Crime Prevention, Minister for Racing) (10:17): Before making my remarks on the condolence motion, I advise the house that unfortunately the member for Morwell is unwell this week but was keen to speak to the motion. Accordingly, on behalf of the honourable member for Morwell I seek leave to incorporate the member for Morwell's speech on the condolence motion. I understand the member has sought the usual approvals for this.

**The SPEAKER:** Leave granted. The member for Morwell's speech will be incorporated.

**Incorporated speech as follows:**

**Mr NORTHE** (Morwell)

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the condolence motion and in doing so pay my respects to the Honourable Jane Garrett. I thank the Minister for Police for seeking leave to table my speech. Jane's achievements and positions held have been well documented, so I will not repeat those for the purposes of my contribution but rather provide some personal reflections and insights.

One of the positive aspects of being a member of Parliament is to be able to participate in parliamentary committee inquiries with members of Parliament across the political spectrum. In the 57th Parliament I was a member of the Law Reform Committee, for which Jane was the deputy chair. During that term of Parliament we had the honour of holding inquiries into some very delicate, sensitive but groundbreaking matters. For example, the committee had the duty to conduct the following: an inquiry into access by donor-conceived people to information about donors, an inquiry into access to and interaction with the justice system by people with an intellectual disability and their families and carers, and an inquiry into sexting. Those three inquiries were fascinating in one respect but difficult in another sense, as they drew much passion, emotion and opinion from those tendering testimony. At times there were strong, differing views as to what the committee should recommend or not recommend.

I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to participate in that committee, because not only did I learn so much but I got to know and understand Jane Garrett as a colleague and as a person. It is fair to say that during these inquiries there was much empathy, understanding and tears from both participants and committee members alike, particularly when emotional evidence was provided. I can well recall observing Jane and the compassion she displayed and the pain that she felt for people who shared their journey and experience. Her values and her belief in fairness and justice were obvious to all who knew her. In addition, her extraordinary intellect was something that I admired and respected. I can say that being on that committee with Jane and the now Minister for Police was one of the most challenging but most rewarding and enjoyable times that I have ever experienced.

When I do reflect upon that period of time I cannot help but smile at the discussions, conversations and arguments between Jane and the chair of the Law Reform Committee, the former Liberal member for Prahran, Clem Newton-Brown. It is fair to say that Clem and Jane did not necessarily sit on the same page when it came to their philosophical views of the world, and their conversations were often feisty. But from where I sat they were thoroughly informative, entertaining and enjoyable. Both were very strong in their views and opinions about a whole range of matters, and that only added to the entertainment. This is my observation, but I noted that one fine glass of red wine would be enough for Jane to commence a debate about fairness,

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justice and equity, and Clem would soon be roped in and away they would go. That is not to say that there was not mutual respect, because there absolutely was. If you did not share Jane's opinion on something, she would certainly let you know, but she did not hold it against you. From a committee perspective, there were positive, life-changing initiatives that were recommended and subsequently introduced, and Jane should be credited for her leadership, determination and vision during that time.

There was no doubt Jane was ministerial material, for all her outstanding attributes, and I was so pleased to see her elevated into cabinet. We are all acutely aware of the challenges she ultimately encountered in the role, and obviously 2016 was a horrible year for her, her family, colleagues and friends, given her resignation from cabinet and receiving the breast cancer diagnosis. Jane was a fighter in every sense of the word and stayed positive despite those enormous challenges. She stood up for what she believed in from a work, moral and social perspective and put that before any personal accolades or promotions.

Jane and I shared many a text message and a catch-up on occasion during these times, and they are something I will always hold dear. She was a genuinely caring person who also reached out to me during some challenging times of my own. In 2018 Jane moved to the Legislative Council and represented Eastern Victoria Region, inclusive of the electorate of Morwell. I was hoping that Jane might have relocated her office closer to Morwell and that we could have worked on local projects together and used that as an excuse to catch up more frequently. But whilst that did not happen, I do cherish the opportunities that I had to engage with such an extraordinary and beautiful person.

I know Jane's family were dear to her. She would speak about them all the time and how proud she was of them. Her love of her family was patently obvious. I cannot imagine the pain and grief James, Molly, Sasha and Max are feeling right now, along with that of Jane's staff and colleagues and her incredibly wide network of friends. Please know that she was loved, respected and admired and that her contributions to this place have made a positive difference to the lives of many Victorians. I send my sincere condolences again to James, Molly, Sasha and Max. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr CARBINES** (Ivanhoe—Minister for Police, Minister for Crime Prevention, Minister for Racing) (10:18): Speaker, you and I are among the hardy crew of what were six Labor MPs that made up the class of 2010 in this place. Along with the honourable member for Sydenham and the member for Thomastown, we had the former member for Wendouree, who has since left of her own accord, and our dear colleague the Honourable Jane Garrett, then the member for Brunswick and later a member of the other place for Eastern Victoria Region. She certainly tried hard to stay. Inner city campaigns for Labor MPs are not for the faint-hearted, even former mayors of the City of Yarra, as I am sure the member for Richmond may allude to in his contribution. In the end it was illness, not the people, who called time on our comrade. What a fighter she was.

Sitting on the other side of the chamber when she gave her inaugural speech—which I have not looked back on—what sticks out from nearly 12 years ago, and what I mostly recall, is her acknowledgement of country. In 2010 there was no recognition of First Peoples when we started each sitting day in this place. There was no Aboriginal flag flying over the Parliament. Much has changed, and keeps changing for the better. But as ever, Jane put her flag in the ground for justice and recognition for Aboriginal Victorians on the first occasion she got to her feet to give voice to her values in this place.

I was a member of the Law Reform Committee with Jane; the honourable member for Morwell; a former member of the other place Mrs Petrovich; and the Chair, the former member for Prahran, Mr Clem Newton-Brown. Jane, as Deputy Chair, played key roles in the committee's three reports, which led to fundamental legislative change. It is not a bad effort. Those reports were from the inquiry into access by donor-conceived people to information about donors, the inquiry into sexting and the inquiry into access to and interaction with the justice system by people with an intellectual disability and their families and carers.

I want to read a tribute from the donor-conceived community. They were keen to share their thoughts and give their thanks for a remarkable person. Let us hear from them in their own words:

Jane has impacted the lives of many donor-conceived people and their families in Victoria and across Australia. As Vice-Chair of the Parliamentary Law Reform Committee (2010–2014) she oversaw the recommendations that formed the basis of world-first legislation known as Narelle's Law, eventually passed in 2016. This law enables all Victorian conceived DC people to access information about our biological

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parents, to make contact with them and for them to make contact with us. This has allowed us to put the pieces of the puzzle that is our identity together and begin to heal and feel whole again.

Many donor-conceived people who would not have been told their genetic truth otherwise and are now aware of their donor-conceived status and are now in contact with their genetic family. As a result they now know their correct medical history, which has already provided life saving information.

Members of our community Myf Cumberford, Narelle Grech, Lauren Burns and Kim Springfield first met Jane in 2011, while they were lobbying parliament for amendments to the Assisted Reproductive Treatment Act, following a decade of largely disappointing experiences meeting with other MPs. Jane, along with her colleagues in the Law Reform Committee, restored our faith in our system of government. Jane's kindness and sensitivity to our cause was clear to all that interacted with her and ensured that all members of our community felt respected and heard. We couldn't have asked for a better champion.

We have since gone on to create a national charity led by donor-conceived people to help support, educate and advocate for those conceived through sperm, egg and embryo donations, regardless of where they were conceived, through the founding of Donor Conceived Australia.

Jane, you were loved by our community for your amazing compassion, energy and empathy. You will remain always in our hearts and we promise to keep your legacy alive as we continue to advocate for more world leading legislation around Australia.

Aimee Shackleton, Lauren Burns and Myf Cumberford on behalf of Donor Conceived Australia.

So that pretty much covers it. Suffice to say steps were taken by the honourable member for Box Hill, the then Attorney-General; the former Premier, the member for Hawthorn; Labor's private members bill; the work of the then Minister for Health, the honourable member for Altona, to keep pressing. At Jane's urging, the then Leader of the Opposition, the honourable member for Mulgrave, sat with the donor-conceived community and Labor put these law changes in the Labor platform, took the policy to an election, won, came back in here and changed the law—fundamentally, absolutely, retrospectively. It is a hell of a thing, and we thank Jane.

In the past year or so our contact had been fleeting. She was kind enough to call me in December when I joined the ministry. She said she was returning a call that I was able to make to her some seven years and a week previously when she began her ministerial roles in her office—this very day. It is a funny game, politics. Only someone who had been there could say, 'We'll speak again when the dust settles, when your head's screwed back on'. We all remember our first day.

When Lauren Burns launched her book *Triple Helix: My Donor-Conceived Story* I went along in March with Mr Clem Newton-Brown. People asked after Jane. They wanted to introduce her to their siblings and family members that they had since found and met after the law changed. Here were these people—information out of a locked box, human contact and engagement with their genetic families. Lauren wrote a note in the book, and I contacted her loyal staffer, Danny Michell, 'How do I get this to her?'. The elusive Jane called me about a week before federal Labor's election win, 'I hear you have something for me'. She was keen to hear about Lauren's book, how people were going and stirring Clem. We talked about catching up, news on federal Labor. She was of course a past federal ALP vice-president. Could they finally get it together and win? We had a few laughs, and she cried a lot. It was as though we knew that cuppa was not going to happen. The call lingered, the goodbyes left unsaid. I will be sure to pass the book on with its personal note from the author to her children.

Committee travel can be fraught. In 2012 Hurricane Sandy caused havoc across the US. Our committee was stuck in a basement in Toronto waiting for another windswept storm to pass. There was no power. There was Clem and Jane in the dark pondering how our committee would get to New York if planes were grounded. Clem offered to drive. Jane agreed. Anyone who knows what Jane's driving was like, let alone her penchant for Triple M over Triple J, would balk at this. The storms lifted, the itinerary resumed, and we were fortunate to be in Washington on the night a black president was re-elected to lead his country. With many like-minded souls, it was good to be among winners once you were in the opposition back home in Victoria. Jane of course had invited some of our Liberal colleagues, but they could not come, as much as I think they really wanted to. They had to go to the Republican election event, she said. Some deft taxi work was done as Jane marshalled committee

members to their respective election events. I do not think our colleagues had quite the same fun at their function as we did at the one we attended. She was cheeky about it, but generous as always. She and Clem would blue over who would shout the cost of dinner. Morwell and Ivanhoe were not paying; we were too busy explaining to the waitstaff what a 'shout' was and why two Australians were arguing about their desire to each pay the bill.

I have two final points. At times when Jane had self-doubt—and yes, there were occasions, when much was expected of her, to walk into a room, to give a speech, to get people up and about or to just meet her obligations to the people, to the party, to the Parliament—she would be anxious. She would wonder what and how it could be done. So often she was a tagline in news stories when she had been out of her cabinet roles longer than she had been in them. Reinvention, as the member for Bulleen may know, is hard. She had from time to time reminded me that she was a PK—a preacher's kid—thanks to the good works and vocation of her father. There was a favourite prayer or hymn of mine which struck a chord with her when I was trying to give some advice. That hymn is *Come As You Are*. And with Jane, that Striney voice, that laugh and that engaging smile, to just be herself, that is all people want. To quote from that prayer:

I came to call sinners, not just the virtuous  
I came to bring peace, not to condemn  
Each time you fail to live by my promise  
Why do you think I'd love you the less?  
...  
All will be well, just come as you are.

Finally, to Jane's children—as she affectionately called them, Moz, Sashi and Maxi—Molly, Sasha and Max: she talked about your achievements, your travails and your adventures all the time in this place. She was always excusing herself to take your calls and reply to your texts. You were always her number one priority. No doubt there are many personal memories that will sustain you in the lives you will go on to build. No doubt in all our lives there are times when only our mum can lift us up or give us comfort. Most of us understand that, but know this: in life, when you least expect it, and perhaps when you need it the most, out of nowhere someone will join the dots and make the connection and say, 'Are you Jane's daughter?' or 'Are you Jane's son?' and 'I knew your mum. She changed the law that changed my life', 'She saved the Hope Street bus that made the difference in our neighbourhood', 'She brought comfort to my parents when bushfire destroyed their home', 'She valued and understood the selfless commitment of our first responders'. You will have these interactions, unpredictable as they may be, throughout your lives. Hold on to them. Draw strength from them, and if in doubt, you can always look back online at a time when some old and long-forgotten MPs came together to reflect on a joyous life marked by a heartfelt contribution to our Parliament and all Victorians. My deepest condolences to her family.

Super great Janey. Up the Blues. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr T SMITH** (Kew) (10:28): Jeez, Carbs. You had to speak before me, didn't you, mate? Well said. I do not really know what to say today, and if the house could forgive me for wailing like a wreck. Jane was my best friend, and no-one has had a bigger influence on my life than her. Her bravery, her tenacity, her intelligence, her courage—there is no-one you would want in a trench with you more than Jane Garrett. The best of friends, the worst of enemies. She was my inspiration. I was the mayor of Stonnington when she was the mayor of Yarra, and I met her with the member for Richmond at that rather odd thing that the Victorian Local Governance Association put on, that stupid mayor's retreat. You were the guest speaker, member for Richmond.

**Mr Wynne:** How'd I go?

**Mr T SMITH:** I think I gave you a fair bit of shit, like normal, mate. I had never met this woman, and I was sitting up the back with all these random mayors from God knows where. There was the mayor of Yarra, the mayor of Stonnington and the mayor of Upper Botswana and God knows where

else. You were prattling on about something, and I asked you some stupid question and Jane had a bit of a laugh. There was a fellow by the name of Jack Wegman, who was the mayor of Boroondara at the time. We all got talking. Needless to say, all of us—Jane and I in particular—got completely pissed.

That was the beginning of this bizarre friendship. There was no rhyme or reason to it because there was nothing at all that we ever agreed on—at all, nothing. I am an insufferable Tory, as you all know, and a rabid constitutional monarchist. In Jane's lounge room there was this painting of Melbourne, which was essentially paying tribute to our Indigenous people. It was essentially saying that the land was never ceded, which of course I took great umbrage at, and we had one of our typical lengthy barneys over the history of Australia and the rights and wrongs of various things that have occurred in the past. That is what she taught me—that you can agree to disagree. That is why I loved talking to her, because our discussions and our debates and our various views of various people in this place would go on for hours.

I met her when I was 25 and she was 36. Before I met Jane Garrett my understanding of lunch was a sandwich and a milkshake. After meeting Jane Garrett I understood that lunch could go to dinnertime and you might well be leaving lunch after it was quite dark, and you might not be as steady on your feet as you possibly should have been. Jane Garrett was the best fun, the most hilarious, the brightest, the bravest person I have ever met.

Where is the member for Werribee? Has he left the chamber? Member for Werribee, do you remember that whole clearways thing? It was a joint litigation between the City of Stonnington and the City of Yarra. The problem for Jane was that she was the Labor candidate for Brunswick and the mayor of a crazy council in a litigation with an equally crazy Tory mayor from the other side of the river against a government that she was hoping to join. She was like, 'Mate, you've got to help me out here'. Of course I wanted her to win the seat, not the Greens. Why anyone finds that so funny, but anyway. I said, 'How are we going to do this?'. All the Greens and all the other bongo players on the Greens council had voted to join this litigation with us. So how were we going to do this? I said, 'Well, I'll do all the media'—that does not surprise anyone, I do not think—'and we just won't talk about you. You can just go and do your thing locally and pretend'. Well, not pretend, because she was standing up for the local traders. 'I'll do all the media and I'll make sure that the powers that be don't kill you', and they did not, because I am a man of my word. I made sure there was never a scintilla of daylight between either of us. I had her back and she had mine.

One of the funnier anecdotes was when Jane came to my 30th birthday party. Jane was leaning on the bar as Michael Kroger, Greg Hunt, Josh Frydenberg and a few others gave speeches. Jane was sitting there going, 'I'm on Pluto. No-one better have a camera here, otherwise I'm in deep trouble'. Equally with a number of you I went to Jane's 40th, and that was a night to behold. Marty and I were dancing until God knows what time. That is what Jane did. Jane brought people together, people who otherwise would never have met each other. I came into this place knowing quite a number of you because of my friendship with her. I do not think that endeared me or her to many of you, but it is what it is. And she is dead. She was 49. She is dead.

The night that I disgraced myself was the night that I got told that her cancer had come back. I am not trying to in any way take away from my own responsibilities and my own behaviour, but that is the fact. I knew the prognosis was very bad. I knew deep down that I never would see her again, and I did not. I spoke on the phone to her a lot, but she was a very private person, and her battle was very dignified. Unfortunately, as we knew, her time on this planet was not going to be long. Just how she is not here is still something I cannot come to terms with, but as she would say, 'That's life'.

I want to give thanks for the life of a woman that I am so proud to be able to call one of my closest friends: the unique, the brave, the honest, the irreplaceable Jane Garrett, whose beautiful soul and mind will never be extinguished from our hearts. She was a lioness for your movement—a lioness. She wanted to do so much, and for reasons that I do not want to go into today, because I do not think it is

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appropriate, she could not or did not or others did not want her to. Her children, Moz, Sash and Maxi, as the member for Ivanhoe said, were her absolute love, the love of her life.

Fiona Richardson was her closest friend. The night Fiona died the member for Benambra and I were up in our offices above the dome, and we heard the most God-awful scream—a piercing, guttural scream of agony. We genuinely both thought, ‘Someone has been severely injured downstairs. What’s going on?’, so I went downstairs. Jane had just been told that Fiona had died, and she was distraught. The speech that other members have talked about, that amazing speech at Fiona’s memorial service, was the best speech she ever gave. She gave some good ones, but that was her best, because with Jane always what you saw was what you got. She was passionate in everything she ever said and did. That honesty, that directness and that genuine belief in the righteousness of her cause and the righteousness of her point of view would impress upon the listener the authenticity of the speaker. And Jane was authentic—authentic and brave. As I said at the outset, she is the person you would want in the trench with you. There was not a cowardly bone in her body.

I want to pay tribute to Sharon Knight, who was here previously and who shared an office with Jane for years and was a dear friend; to Graeme Garrett, who was an Anglican minister, her father and a Christian socialist in that fine intellectual tradition; and finally to her sister, Catherine, who was also here today previously. The hell that that family has been through over some years now for a variety of different reasons that I do not wish to air publicly—no-one deserves that, and Jane of all people did not deserve the last two years, never deserved to go at the age of 49.

It puts into perspective the daily travails of some of us who, through their own stupidity, have caused themselves no end of grief. When you see genuine problems, genuine carnage, genuine tragedy like I have seen with Jane and her family over some years, that puts the humdrum of this place into perspective. In this place people will come and people will go, but at the end of the day Jane’s family—the love of families, the love of friends—that is what is truly important, and I have lost my best friend. I thank the house.

**Ms HUTCHINS** (Sydenham—Minister for Education, Minister for Women) (10:41): I wear red today for Jane. I would like to start by expressing my sincere condolences to James, Molly, Sasha, Max, Catherine and Jane’s dad. Losing your wife, your mother, your daughter, your sister is something no-one should have to deal with, not at this age. I had a lot in common with Jane, and so I feel this loss, like many of my colleagues do—deeply. Cancer is an awful disease, and it has taken too many of our young loved ones too young. I will not list them all here, but I know everyone is thinking of someone that they have lost too early in this place.

In terms of what we had in common, we both entered this place as part of the class of 2010. We became ministers at the same time and of course we both worked for Steve Bracks at the same time in the early 2000s. Coming into that office I was absolutely in awe of Jane’s energy, intelligence and passion. I will never forget one day being in the kitchen and making a cuppa when someone came in and said, ‘Oh, have you heard the gossip? James and Jane are getting it on!’, and I was like, ‘I thought they were together already’. To me they were always made for each other. They were so in love; they were so made for each other, hand in hand. I was in awe of their relationship actually, back in those days, I thought how special it would be to find someone the way that they had found each other.

As new members in 2010 we shared lots of smiles, lots of laughs and a few red wines with the member for Bendigo West and the former member for Wendouree out in the chook house. We had lots of talks. We had lots of debates. She told me where to go many times, and I think that was also a great part of Jane—that you could have those arguments and still be friends. I want to say to Molly and Sasha how much she talked about you in the years she was here, how much she loved you both and how proud she was and how we all enjoyed the journey of watching Max grow in her belly here and how happy we were when he was born. I want to say to the kids: I hope that her spirit lives on in all of you. Be proud of your mum. She was the first minister to do a press conference with white runners on, way before it was trendy.

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I know her battle with cancer was a tough one. I know she helped Fiona through hers. I am sorry that we lost contact in the last little while. I know what it is like, though, when you are battling cancer. You just want to spend time with your family; you just want to spend those last precious moments together.

I just want to say that I have great memories of sharing good social justice debates with Jane and of her advocacy. She was a stayer at our ALP conferences. Not all MPs stay for the whole conference, but she would always be one that was there from the start to the end alongside me. She was a vocal supporter of mental health, housing, gender equality, the environment and rebuilding our gutted TAFE.

Jane was at the table for some extraordinary Victorian reforms, advocating, interrogating and pushing this government to be more progressive. She took on the hard jobs. She leaves a legacy that very few people can leave, as an inner-city member for as long as she was, electorally successful as a councillor and mayor and the member for Brunswick, all part of her lasting legacies. I know she took on a lot of common politics with the members for Richmond and Albert Park in fighting for inner-city folk and equality, with an unflinching belief in the role of Labor governments to improve people's lives by fighting for progressive politics, which benefits all working people. I give my respect to you, Jane, and to your family. May they live on in your spirit. Vale, Jane.

**Dr READ** (Brunswick) (10:46): I want to share some memories of Jane from the electorate of Brunswick, which she represented for eight years before moving to the Legislative Council. As I was just starting to get involved in local Brunswick politics, Jane was everywhere. She was clearly well known and well liked in Brunswick and Coburg. I would turn up to a meeting, even a very small meeting about some heritage issue—I remember she was into protecting the bluestone laneways—or whatever and Jane was always there running the show, larger than life in many ways.

When I first heard about her as a minister, the thing that I remember was a story about adding something to unpasteurised milk. I cannot remember the details. It was a dye or something to make it bitter, something to stop people drinking unpasteurised milk, which was sold as bath milk, as if anyone actually every bathed in it. I remember thinking, 'Yeah, that's a good idea', and shortly afterwards, because I had been involved in efforts to unseat Jane Garrett, someone came up to me and said, 'I really want you to take up this cause. We've got to be able to drink unpasteurised milk'. I said, 'I think you're talking to the wrong person here'. I reckon probably every electorate has someone who annoys both the candidate and the incumbent, and this person, who I vaguely knew beforehand, was one of those people who I think probably caused Jane and me equal amounts of grief.

Anyway, it was very clear how well known Jane was. When I was a candidate for the Greens in 2014 Jane and I were standing shoulder to shoulder next to each other at prepoll, as close as possible to the line that you cannot cross without actually crossing it—and she would always beat me to the edge—you would be smiling at voters for two weeks solid, kind of wishing the other person was not there but ending up buying them a coffee. Jane was a genuinely decent person. I remember all these people would come and they would be nice to me but Jane would get the hug and the kiss. She was well known. It was not me that they had come to see. Then this person came by, the unpasteurised milk lover. I had never spoken to Jane about this, and she snarled at both of us and went in and voted, who knows for whom. That was quite early in the piece, and Jane bought me a coffee. This was hours later, and she passed me a latte and just said, 'It's pasteurised'. We had not discussed it at all, so clearly there was a connection there.

The fact that she had been the mayor of Yarra, just talking to locals, meant that she was an asset for groups like the Brunswick Residents Network, because she could tell perhaps when the council might be pulling the wool over their eyes, and she also had a very talented team in her office, some of whom were already well known in the community and others who became well known. She helped the Brunswick Residents Network on a number of issues, such as conducting a large and thorough traffic survey, and this led to a whole lot of local actions on unsafe streets and so on. She had these red traffic posters warning drivers to slow down, and they were a fixture on main road fences for years. In fact



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they gradually went from red to a sort of faded pink. But she did really good community outreach and was genuinely concerned about the future of inner-city Brunswick and how it was changing so rapidly.

She represented Brunswick with passion, particularly speaking up for all the local schools. As I would do the rounds of the schools more recently, principals would often say ‘Jane this’, ‘Jane that’, ‘something Jane used to do’, ‘I expect you will be welcoming our students to Parliament’ and so on, and I am doing my best to live up to the example she set. Brunswick locals really remember Jane as someone who really cared and was dedicated to improving the lives of residents, particularly those with the least power.

Jane died far too young, but I want to reassure James, Molly, Sasha and Max that she will be gratefully remembered by many in the Brunswick community. Farewell, Jane Garrett.

**Mr PEARSON** (Essendon—Assistant Treasurer, Minister for Regulatory Reform, Minister for Government Services, Minister for Housing) (10:51): I rise to join the condolence motion. I remember receiving the first notification that Jane had passed, and I felt just this incredible sadness—this sadness for her and this sadness for her family and her children—and this sense, too, of lost opportunities. You know, all of us come to this place with different lived experiences and we have all come here on different journeys, and invariably the path we take to get here involves time away from home and lengthy meetings. Jane gave her life to public service. You commit yourself to this kind of journey and you kind of think at some point you will get some of that time back to invest in your family, and I felt this incredible sadness that that had been denied to her, deprived from her.

Jane gave her life to service—a life of service to her community—be it through the Nicholls ward in the City of Yarra, as the mayor of the City of Yarra, as a member of this place or as a member of the other place, and she made a contribution beyond that to our great labour movement and our great party. I think that times like these are incredibly difficult, and it is particularly challenging because of the age of her passing, the age of her children and the sense that they may not recall every element of her, because of their youth and their age. I think this motion before the house is really important because Jane touched all of us in different ways, and there have been so many rich and varied contributions. It is my hope that Molly, Sasha and Max will look to these contributions and draw comfort from them, to recognise the contribution that she made to our party, to our movement.

On this side of the house we believe in collectivism, and we believe we are all brought forward to make a contribution as part of a bigger team. It is almost like that notion that you have a moment to play a bar of music in our great Labor concerto, and she did that. But it is really hard on our families, as we all know; it is very hard, and it is very challenging. You know, Jane was a little bit younger than me, but there is just this notion that that time is gone and she will not have that back. As I said, I just felt an incredible sadness, but I think it is important that this place and the other place acknowledge the contribution that Jane made over decades of public service. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr PAKULA** (Keysborough) (10:54): Commemorating the end of life of any colleague is a very sad and confronting thing to do. It is doubly so when that colleague was a friend and when she was so young, but it is immeasurably so when that young friend and colleague was as full of life as anyone you have ever known. Janey was not a person for half measures in anything she did. She did not do nuance; she did not engender indifference in other people. You either adored Jane, you were infuriated by Jane, you screamed with laughter with Jane or you blued like Kilkenny cats with Jane, and sometimes you did all of those things and felt all of those things in one interaction. It was the way we interacted with her.

In my mind it was because she was in some respects this amazing concentration of humanity in one person. She did not have very much of a filter. She did not really have the capacity for artifice. She did not do self-preservation. She did not pull punches, even when pulling punches would result in self-preservation. She loved and she laughed and she fought and she cried and she hated and she drank and she partied and she ran miles and miles and she did deals and she plotted and she was eloquent and

smart and tempestuous. She was an incredible communicator, a wonderful friend and an awful enemy, as others have identified. She was just a complete human being with no missing parts. Sometimes all of those elements smashed into each other and led her into error, but when the tumblers fell into the right slots she was as big a talent as you would ever see in this business. She was sharp and articulate and funny and clear about her position on things and about her values, and she just left everything out there and nothing in the locker room.

Like everyone who is speaking today, I would have loads of Jane Garrett stories. I think the member for Kew mentioned her 40th—the best 40th birthday party I have ever been to. She was the best parliamentary Blue Bagger. She was the most enthusiastic dancer at the parties in our office over the dome. She replaced the member for Altona as the resident tiger on the Public Accounts and Estimates Committee and was just brutal in her assessment of the ministers in the then government. She used to come to my office for advice when we shared the 26th floor in the first term of this government. She was not a fan of my beard. And she never let you pay when you went out for lunch with her. She was incredibly generous like that.

But there is one memory that sticks out amongst all others, and it was shortly after Jane was elected. I was having lunch at Becco with a few friends, and I said to Jane she should come along. I do not know the exact date of it, but she was heavily pregnant with Max so that probably dates it to 2012 or so. I do not remember everyone who was there, but Ken Ryan was definitely there and the architect Robert Peck was there—I think Peckie is known to a few people here. Jane—they had never met before—obviously knocked their socks off with her conversation and her approach at lunch, and it led Robert Peck to say, ‘You should be on the bloody front bench’. Now, most first-term MPs, just arrived at the place, probably here for a year or so, would probably say something like, ‘That’s very kind, but I’ve only been here a year and I’m still learning the ropes’—not Jane. Jane, without skipping a beat, looked Robert in the eye and just said, ‘You’re bloody right, I should be’—and the whole table laughed uproariously. But that was Jane Garrett: a complete human being for better or worse. We got all of it. She knew how to upset people, but I really, really liked Jane and I miss her and I am very sad that she is gone.

The member for Kew was clearly in possession of information that some of us were not. He was aware that she was sick. I, like many people here, had heard rumours but did not know for sure, and so when I found out that she had passed away it was just a complete shock. She played one last trick. I had sent her many messages over the last year and got very few replies because she was very private, but she did send me a message in late April telling me that she felt better. ‘Thanks for the messages, but I’m feeling better now and I’ll see you soon’. We never did, and I did not find out that she was as ill as she was until I found out that she had passed. So it was a great shock and a great sadness to me and many others.

To James, Molly, Sasha and Max: your mum was incredibly important. She did some wonderful things and left an enormous mark, and like many others here I am very sad that she is no longer with us. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr M O’BRIEN** (Malvern) (11:00): Jane Garrett was not bright; she was whip smart. Jane was not funny; she was hilarious. And she was not brave; she was absolutely courageous. I do not pretend to have known Jane as well as some here, but we had connections. We were both lawyers. We were both former political staffers. We were both Carlton supporters. We both shared assessments of certain people in our own parties, and that was a source of great amusement. But what to me stands out about Jane Garrett was her integrity. People often say, ‘Where’s the principle in politics these days?’, and in Jane’s ministerial career we saw integrity writ large.

Jane was not naive. She was a former political staffer and adviser, she was a councillor, she was an MP, she was a minister and she was a factional wheeler and dealer, so she knew what she was doing when she said, ‘Look, I’m going to make a decision here that my personal and political principles and values don’t allow me to continue serving in the ministry’. To me that is extraordinary. I have been here for nearly 16 years, and I do not think I have ever seen a minister make that decision—that they would put their personal and political values ahead of their career advancement, and to me that just

spoke volumes about the guts and integrity that Jane Garrett had. People say in politics, ‘Where are the courageous ones? Where are the ones who stand up for what matters?’. Well, I think Jane Garrett was one of the best of us. To her family, to James and to her kids, Molly, Sasha and Max, we grieve for you, and we grieve with you. We have lost a friend and a colleague. You have lost a wife and a mum, and that is much greater. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr WYNNE** (Richmond) (11:02): Thanks very much for the opportunity to rise to also make a contribution on the life of Jane Garrett. I think there have been an extraordinary number of very beautiful speeches here today that really represent where Jane’s life sat within this Parliament on a bipartisan basis. I thank those who have made contributions from both sides of the house.

I first met Jane Garrett, this young, vibrant woman, when she joined the staff of the then Premier Steve Bracks, under the leadership of my colleague and friend the Treasurer, who was then the chief of staff to Premier Steve Bracks. At the time there was an extraordinary group of people who were joined in that enterprise. Many of them, of course, went on—and are here today—to sit on our front bench. At that time I was in fact the Cabinet Secretary. I want to make it very clear to people that the job of Cabinet Secretary is one of the best jobs in town. You cannot beat that job because you know everything about everything. It was a wonderful opportunity—

**Mr Andrews:** And you don’t have to do any media.

**Mr WYNNE:** Indeed, Premier, you do not have to do any media, and you do not have to be accountable for anything, so it is a beautiful job. I recommend it to anyone on my side of politics. Jane joined the most extraordinary group of people, including the late Andrew Herington, for God’s sake, one of the truly great intellects of the Victorian Labor Party. Andrew was there. Tim Sonnerich, who has gone on to become a chief of staff in the environment area, was there at the same time. Kim McGrath, who of course continues to have a distinguished career in public life and is one of the great advocates for the East Timorese community, was there as well. This was, Premier, as you know, at that time a hotbed of some of the best people in the labour movement, and Jane was there.

Jane was a part of that journey as well, along with her then soon-to-be husband, James. These were two blessed young people. I remember so vividly that one of the things that you always thought about when you thought about Jane was that extraordinary, broad Australian accent. You could not miss it, and you heard it from a long way away. Jane was there and she filled the room. She filled the room with her exuberance and with really her zest for life, which has been so eloquently put forward by so many of my colleagues, again across the chamber today.

Her career in local government was short. It was through 2008 to 2010. I am not sure about her collaborations, but we will let that go, Premier, I think. Member for Kew, you should always stay on the other side of the Yarra. You are never any good coming over our side. You never understood us.

**Mr T Smith:** I’m going all the way to the other side of the Yarra very soon. Don’t worry.

**Mr WYNNE:** No, but it was a collaboration between the two of you, there is no doubt about that, and there were many battles that we fought. You mentioned one of them, of course, which was the clearways matter. There were many battles that were fought by Jane Garrett with me. Perhaps one of the most important was the east–west link. Now, we do not mention that anymore because that matter is closed.

**Mr Andrews:** Apparently.

**Mr WYNNE:** As far as I am aware, Premier, the matter is now closed. We did not fight it twice; we actually fought it on three occasions, and we won on three occasions.

In many respects with Jane’s entry into the Parliament—I have not only knowledge of it, I assisted in mentoring her—it was very obvious that this was the next step for her, along with Andrew Giles and Gavin Jennings and others. This was the next step for a young, talented Jane Garrett. Prior to that she

had left the Bracks government and indeed went off with James on quite an adventure to set up Slater and Gordon in a new beachhead in Queensland, where the firm had not actually had any presence at all. In that respect it was an extraordinarily successful but I think quite challenging time for them as a couple—of course with a young family as well.

She did join in 2010 as the member for Brunswick. I remember, member for Shepparton, we used to sit up the back there. Jane and I would be plotting away there: ‘How are we going to tackle the Greens this time around?’ Well, I simply say to you, member for Brunswick, she tackled them on a number of occasions and I have done it five times. I assure you that we will be doing it again come November this year in the seat of Richmond. It was five, wasn’t it? I think it is five. I am pretty sure it is five.

**Mr Andrews** interjected.

**Mr WYNNE:** It is whatever. It is me: whatever. Greens: zero. We were up there between 2010 and 2014 under the leadership of the then opposition leader, and frankly there was nothing we were not prepared to do.

I am looking at the Deputy Premier here, and I remember very vividly—and the Deputy Premier talked about this—when she was very, very pregnant with I think it was her second child, we were putting on some stunt where it required the then opposition leader of the house to actually stand. If she sat down the whole debate was over. I remember Jane and I were sitting up there—Jane was pregnant as well at the time—and we were thinking, ‘Oh my God. She’s not going to get through this’. Because I think you stood, Deputy Premier, for like 3 or 4 hours just giving it to the Speaker at that time about some outrage that had occurred. Jane and I were up the back there and we were giving it everything we could possibly give it. That was the sort of energy that Jane actually brought to this Parliament. She was quite an extraordinary person who was really in so many respects fuelled by where she came from, her antecedents. Her antecedents of course are deeply steeped in Christian socialism, through her parents, and she lived that life. She lived that life very, very deeply.

Her time in local government, as I say, was short, but it was hallmarked by many great achievements, particularly the work that she did to create a new public library in North Fitzroy, which that community actually never had. They had this tiny little shopfront for years and years and years, and if you go up St Georges Road now and you look to the right, there is this beautiful building that is in fact the new public library—which ought to be the Jane Garrett library, frankly, because she carried that journey for years and years and years, even prior to her time as a representative in local government.

She of course then joined government. We should remember, Premier, that she was in fact the deputy president of our party. This was a woman on a rocket ship, and there is no doubt that her entry into the Parliament was clearly a journey that was inevitable for her.

I think one of the important things that really should be acknowledged is that she had this great zest for life. She had a zest to be a part of the journey of the great labour movement. She not only understood absolutely the principles of social justice, she actually lived them out through her working life. In that respect her engagement with the trade union movement was very profound, and there are a number of trade union colleagues who are also here today to recognise her contribution there as well. And that of course must be cause for us to pause and to celebrate what has been quite an extraordinary life. To think, as we all now know, that at the age of 49 we no longer have Jane with us is truly a tragic thing. It is a tragic thing for this Parliament, and it is a tragic thing for her family as well.

I want to just give a call-out to our colleague in the other house in Mark Gepp. Mark is a thoroughly, thoroughly decent human being, and I know that he provided unstinting loyalty and, can I say, fidelity to Jane during some quite dark times over the last couple of years since she left the seat of Brunswick and moved to another house position. And in some respects we now do understand, I suspect, what some of that thinking was about. I mean, was she up to, yet again, another fight against the Greens and what that all means? I understand that better than anybody understands it because I have done it on so many occasions.

**Mr Carbines** interjected.

**Mr WYNNE:** It was six. That is how well I am going. On six occasions—it will not be seven. That takes it out of you both physically and emotionally. Many of you know the pathway that I have taken with some health issues myself, and I must say my specialists did say to me at the time, ‘Is this really the game you want to be in?’, because it does put an enormous burden on you physically, mentally and emotionally but also on your family as well. So I do understand why Jane decided that there was potentially a different route for her through an upper house seat. But I simply say to the member for Brunswick, and I do not say this in any party-political sense: she would have won the seat of Brunswick, no doubt about it. She would have won that seat—you know that and I know that, and I think you acknowledged it today in your own contribution—simply because of the extraordinary groundswell of support that she had but also the history that she had in Brunswick that went back literally generations. People loved her there. But that is not to be. That is not to be the case.

So I do want to obviously call out our colleague—and I think he has made a very moving contribution in the upper house in the last short while—Mark Gepp, to acknowledge absolutely that he held her counsel. He held very much what she was going through. The member for Kew very eloquently told us how some of that struggle occurred and some of the great issues that the family has had to confront. This is a very sad time. It is a very sad time for this Parliament. For our side of the Parliament, absolutely it is. I acknowledge Jane. I acknowledge that we were comrades, we were friends, we were collaborators. We got up to a bit of mischief together, Premier, but all in the cause of the betterment of our community, because that is what drove her.

Can I say to her husband, James, who has got his own challenges that he is dealing with, and also to the broader family but particularly to the children, Molly, Sasha and Max—I mean, for goodness sake, the oldest child is 17, the second child I think is 15 and the third child is 10. We think about those children today. We think about the broader family. We acknowledge you, Jane Garrett, and your contribution to the state of Victoria. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr RICHARDSON** (Mordialloc) (11:16): It is with a heavy heart and great sadness that we rise and pay tribute to a dear friend of Victoria, a dear friend of this Parliament, Jane Garrett, a very special person to many. It feels unworthy to stand in this place and speak about someone so gifted and so talented who would eloquently be able to tell stories of others and herself so much better, but I thought it was worth jumping up and saying a few things about someone I came to know as a marginal seat campaigner and a little later on when her little ones were already starting to grow up. I first met Jane during the 2013 federal campaign review. As a young adviser and campaigner in the Isaacs campaign I gleefully accepted the opportunity to front up in front of Jane Garrett and Milton Dick at the time and share what wisdom I could, which was very limited. But really I was in awe of seeing a superstar of the labour movement, and it came to be the way I would name-drop, coming into this place, that she might remember who I was, in the early years of 2014 and 2015.

But people remember when they met Jane Garrett. She had this aura and this energy that left such a memory with you. Her warmth, her embrace—there was no hubris with Jane. There was such a kindness and inclusiveness to her, and that was something that I really felt connected to and bonded with over a number of years. You have a special bond coming from marginal seat campaigns as well—that understanding of what you go through, the long hours, the impact on family and how you balance those priorities with the love and support of those closest to you. I would seek out her counsel and support during that time. We did not have too many analogies between electorates. My Greens are Labor Greens out my way; her Greens are something else. Having doorknocked a bit of Brunswick and Northcote before, I dropped her off one night after going out for dinner and had to find my way back to the Eastern Freeway, which was literally just at the end of the street, and felt lost and disorientated, such was her inner-city ability and my suburban charm. But it was that connection around family and support going forward.

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The landscape changed in here, as we know, over time, and this place can be lonely and it can be difficult at times. I would always look forward to seeing Jane and Geppy, who became mentors and supporters for me, particularly leading up to the 2018 campaign but going forward as well. I think everyone who attended Fiona Richardson's memorial will say that is probably the best live speech they have ever seen. The layers to that showed a snapshot of the superstar that people had come to know in Jane Garrett.

In my local community we joined for the 90th year celebration of the Edithvale CFA. They lowered their flag for an extended period of time in acknowledgement of that contribution. Wade Noonan in opposition worked on that project, Jane steered it through to its then completion and it has been four years to the day that we opened that. It was a special time, and to mark that there is a beautiful photo in memory of John Hennessy, who gave up his land next door to Edithvale CFA to have that redeveloped, and there is a lovely photo that we have as we come into our office of Jane connecting with John. You can see just in that moment—pictures tell a thousand words—her kindness, her smile, her eyes. If you were in her presence, you would remember.

I will miss the times that we had a boiled egg and some toast in here, the weak coffees that she used to order, the random runs and chats, the times I accidentally called her during a Carlton game, the hours of D & Ms that we had about life and purpose and meaning. Jane did not have to check the key lines to see what kind of unionist, progressive and labour person she was. It was in her soul, it was in her bones, it was generational and I would seek it out for guidance, like others would.

There are many people today who are better for the mentoring and support of Jane Garrett. That will have generational significance. But we also realise that Jane was a mum. Jane was a dear friend, a wife, and a friend to so many. We pay our deepest sympathies to James and to Molly, Sasha and Max. I cannot imagine what the last month and a day has been like. You sometimes catch yourself in the moment and think you are not worthy of carrying on or not worthy of going on with your day when you stop and pause and reflect on how significant it is losing someone like Jane Garrett. You catch your smile and think you should be thinking about how significant that loss is, and that is felt heavily, and we just send our love and appreciation. There is a huge community of people who loved your mum, and it will be not just in the days now but in the weeks and months ahead that we check in and we support day in, day out. There is a big community out there who have got an obligation to make sure that you are okay, and we front up to that.

We love and respect you, Jane. I am sorry I did not get to say goodbye. You meant so much to so many, and I will cherish those moments that we were in here together and the hours that we spent together. You were one of the best, mate. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Ms GREEN (Yan Yean) (11:22):** Jane Garrett had a musical laugh and a smile that lit up a room, as others have noted. There was that Striney voice that definitely could not sing tunefully, although that did not stop her. Jane was authentic. I recall Jane's self-deprecating humour at her growing girth during her pregnancy with Max. I recall our many conversations during question time under the gaze of the press gallery when we sat together in this very chamber. I recall her compassion for the women of her community following the tragic murder of Jill Meagher.

I offer my sincere condolences to Molly, Sasha and Max and her husband, James Higgins, who grew up in the Yan Yean electorate in Phipps Crescent, Diamond Creek. Her mother-in-law, Toni, still lives there. She was my main conduit as to how Jane was when she moved to the Legislative Council. Bunjil the eagle frequently flies over that ridge in Phipps Crescent, and I hope that Jane, James and the children have gotten peace in their recent difficult years and will still find much-needed peace in that restful place.

I offer my condolences to her staff, especially to Danny Michell, and the now member for Northern Victoria Mark Gepp. I offer my condolences also to parliamentary colleagues, especially that extraordinary class of 2010, who will particularly miss her, including you, Speaker, for whom this

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debate will have been particularly difficult—and I congratulate you immensely; the Minister for Education; the member for Thomastown; Sharon Knight, the former member for Ballarat West and Wendouree; and that token bloke of that class, the Minister for Police.

I had known Jane and her husband, James, for over a decade, but I have reflected very much in recent weeks strongly on a conversation that Jane and I shared in 2010 in Queen's Hall, when she was the Labor candidate for Brunswick. It was about her mother, Pam's, early and recent death. I advised her to really look after herself, as I had experienced the weight of grief following the Black Saturday fires earlier that year. It is important to remember that her mother, Pam Garrett, passed away from ovarian cancer only in September 2009. This is an intergenerational loss for this family. I also remember meeting Jane and James at our mutual breast surgeon, me for my routine check-up, which has never resulted in anything serious but had me feeling really frightened for her.

It is so sad that Jane joins the ranks of Labor women MPs who have succumbed to this dreadful disease, either while serving in this place or shortly thereafter. I think it behoves all of us to think about what we can do to ensure that we do not continue this toll for women in this place. Pauline Toner, Beth Gleeson, Lynne Kosky, Karen Overington, Fiona Richardson and now Jane Garrett—the last four are all women I served with and the earlier two are women I succeeded as a representative for the north in this place. We owe it to Jane and all of those women to really look at why there is this differential impact on women MPs.

Vale, Jane Garrett. Thank you for everything you have done—the joy, the humour. I sincerely offer my condolences to everyone who loved you.

**Ms HALFPENNY** (Thomastown) (11:26): Jane Garrett: energetic, full of life, gregarious, passionate and strong—and also great fun. Jane and I were among six new MPs elected in 2010, the election Labor lost after 11 years in government. It is from that time, I must say, that I most remember Jane Garrett. We were elected into opposition, and it is fair to say that we felt a little unloved and unconnected. However, in hindsight the entire smaller Labor caucus was trying to find its place. It was a disappointing time. Victorian Labor felt it had so much more to do, and we watched what we saw as a Liberal government wasting precious time and chipping away at people's rights.

During the election campaign for Brunswick in 2010, and continuing on until 2014, I remember that Jane fought every single day to win government at the next election. She was formidable and unrelenting, fighting not just for votes but for the disadvantaged, against injustice and for equality—this is what spurred her on. Together with her husband, James, they were an amazing team. Whatever she was championing she gave her all to. A few examples are her work on the inquiry into access by donor-conceived people to information about donors and her support for firefighters and exposing the chemical contamination and cover-up by the CFA of the Fiskville training centre. When Jane fought for things, she fought with all her heart and as much as she could. She succeeded in these things, but it always had to be now.

I remember the first day of Parliament after we won the 2014 election. We opened Parliament, and she was already pushing. Everything had to be now, so we had to set up the inquiry into the contamination at the Fiskville CFA training centre. At that time I was appointed the chair, and alongside me were Labor colleagues Tim Richardson and Vicki Ward. Of course the Department of Parliamentary Services was not really prepared to set up an inquiry on the first day of Parliament, and they had quite a bit of anxiety in trying to gather the resources and get things going. But at every step of that inquiry she was watching. She always wanted to know how it went. She had deep empathy for people such as the farmers whose land was contaminated and the terrible stories of the families and children who had contracted cancer and believed that that cancer was connected to the training college. She had raw emotions and was so deeply moved and deeply concerned for them.

There are a whole lot of other things about Jane, but I do not want to go through those here. I want to keep my speech short, because it is very sad. I just want to give my heartfelt condolences to her

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children, Molly, Sasha and Max—she was very proud of you, and we were very proud of her; to her husband, James; and also to her father and her sister, Catherine. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Ms HALL** (Footscray) (11:29): It has been cathartic and wonderful to hear so many contributions about our friend Jane. People have spoken beautifully about her colour, her fun, her smarts, her sass, her toughness and how genuinely hilarious she could be. When I heard she passed away I sat on the couch at home and had a cry, and I felt guilty that I had not been in touch recently. I had not been in touch for a long time, and I thought about the first and the last interactions I had had with Jane and how they said everything about her and who she was to me.

My first meeting with Jane was at a rather eclectic gathering at a Christmas party in 2016 at Jon Faine's house. Jane and I shared a radio spot where we took turns disagreeing with the member for Kew. Even though we shared this radio spot, I had not actually met Jane but felt like I knew her. I was heavily pregnant at the time with my daughter, Matilda, and in typical gregarious Jane form—and she was in great form that night; she was so funny—she asked if she could have a feel, or something to that effect, of my tummy, because Matilda was kicking. She took such great delight in my joy at being pregnant and told me about her children and her love for her children. Then when I was elected as another progressive inner-city Labor woman, she took the time to share with me some ideas on how I could make the juggle work. She sent me links to babysitting websites. We always just talked about her children. She loved her children so much; they were so ever present. We did not actually really ever talk about politics that much; it was always about the kids.

Then my last interaction with Jane in this place was when I asked her to babysit my children while we were in here voting. I looked at the text messages between Jane and me. That was the last time we spoke. She came down and looked after the kids, and after the division I went out and Matilda was happily tucking into chicken nuggets and chips and being entertained by the wonderfully gregarious Jane Garrett, just as when we had first all met—Matilda, Jane and I—many years ago. As the Deputy Premier noted, Jane made it easier for women in this place with children. She was very practical in offering her support and guidance, and I know that she will be cheering on our inner-city women in this election. She also had some great advice about how challenging it can be to be in a progressive contest in the inner city. She was very generous with that.

I know that the last few years were not easy. I did not know how unwell Jane was. In many ways she was a deeply private person about her illness. But since her passing many of my friends have reached out and have booked their first mammograms. When I speak about Jane and reflect on her, I know she would want us to do something—take some action, something practical. So I am going to continue talking about breast cancer to young women and encourage them to get checked, as I do every year. We did from time to time speak about my experience with Peter Mac and going in for an MRI every year, and Jane gave me great guidance and support.

To James, Molly, Sasha and Max, I am so sorry—I am so sorry—for your loss. Vale, Jane Garrett.

**Mr McGuire** (Broadmeadows) (11:35): Devastating news—Jane Garrett is dead. Vale to an MP and lawyer who fought to improve rights and opportunities. Condolences to Jane's family for all they have done and all that has taken. This was the immediate visceral reaction to this 'stop all the clocks' realisation: the shocking, unexpected news that the cancer Jane Garrett had courageously overcome had fatally returned. What survives the wreck of time is the force of imagination and the power of expression. This insight is fitting. What survives Jane Garrett is the pursuit of fairness. It fired her imagination as a lawyer, member of Parliament and government minister. Values-based, compassionate and driven, Jane Garrett was a conviction politician who never flinched. She was true to herself. The legacy is improved worker safety, greater opportunity and improving that elusive quest—the light on the hill.

Memory seeks comfort in the familiar: the laugh that greeted you—sometimes raucous, always fun—banter, wit and regard nudging each other next. Whether it was Jane at first meeting or shining through



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a muted screen in the time of pandemic, this is the memory I will cherish of Jane's personality, warmth and generosity of spirit. So are her accomplishments and legacy, especially her family.

To Jane's husband, James Higgins, and children, Molly, Sasha and Max, I hope you draw strength from Jane's commitment to the causes she cherished, the force of her imagination and the power of her life's expression. Vale, Jane Garrett. The state of Victoria and all of us are indebted to you for all you and your family have done and all that has taken. Your legacy lives.

**The SPEAKER** (11:37): Members, I would like to say a few words. I have been truly touched by today's heartfelt tributes to our colleague and friend Jane. Thank you. The loss of Jane has had a ripple effect across this Parliament and the broader community. Breast cancer sadly continues to take the lives of too many women too young. Jane and I were first elected to this place in 2010—only six of us. We like to think we were small in number but strong in passion and commitment. My first impression of Jane was that she was just so smart and intelligent. Her many contributions in this place were ones that made people sit up and take notice. She was a great orator. Her grasp of language and her delivery of speeches was brilliant. Her passion for women and for working people, her work on the Fiskville inquiry and for donor-conceived children and her desire to improve the lives of all people are to be celebrated.

Jane was indeed, as has been mentioned, one of a kind: a big personality who loved to socialise. People were drawn in to her hemisphere. She commanded a room. I shared an office with Jane and my good friend the former member for Wendouree, Sharon Knight, for some time up on level 3. You may have heard us. It was a time I will not forget. We laughed a lot, and at times we cried together. We were loud, we played loud music, we drank wine and I think we annoyed the opposition. This workplace can bring people together in unusual but uplifting ways, and we stayed great mates, although on different journeys. Some members may recall that we were at times engaged in singing, writing lyrics to known songs that we then performed for special occasions. For Sharon's 50th birthday I wrote a song and asked Jane and the member for Ivanhoe—now the Minister for Police—to be back-up singers. It was not until we did a quick rehearsal that I realised Jane could not hold a note or a tune, but she loved it nonetheless and we had enormous fun.

Jane's sense of humour was well known and sometimes bordered on the ridiculous. You knew Jane was around because you could hear her coming well before you would see her. Jane was also a very private person, protecting her family but also herself. Sometimes that made it hard for us to reach out to her, because interaction was on Jane's terms. There is much about Jane that I will hold dear, and I have missed her presence. Her laugh, her big smile and her friendship are what I will always remember her for.

Losing a parent is a devastating loss, losing a loved partner is a devastating loss and losing a child or friend are devastating losses. There is a time when grief must be faced and must be endured, but there is also a time to remember, to breathe in the love you had and gave and to embrace the beautiful memories. To James, Molly, Sasha, Max and the extended family I send my sincere and deepest sympathy, and I hope that you shall often breathe in the love. Vale, Jane.

**Motion agreed to in silence, members showing unanimous agreement by standing in their places.**

**Mr ANDREWS** (Mulgrave—Premier) (11:42): I move:

That, as a further mark of respect to the life, memory and contribution of the late Honourable Jane Garrett, the house adjourns until tomorrow.

**Motion agreed to.**

**House adjourned 11.42 am.**