



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**PROOF**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Swan Electorate: Baseball**

**SPEECH**

**Monday, 2 June 2014**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

<b>Date</b> Monday, 2 June 2014	<b>Source</b> House
<b>Page</b> 114	<b>Proof</b> Yes
<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Irons, Steve, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

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**Mr IRONS** (Swan) (10:39): Mr Deputy Speaker, as a Western Australian you would know there are many exciting developments in the construction of sporting infrastructure in my electorate of Swan. We have a new stadium in Burswood and, potentially, the move of the West Coast Eagles to Lathlain—all but a done deal and one which I have spoken on many times in this place.

Today I am pleased to be able to inform the House of a further potential development in the region: a proposal for a redeveloped, international-standard WA state baseball park in the suburb of Thornlie, on the border between the electorate of Swan and the electorate of Hasluck. The proposal is being put forward by the Australian Baseball League in response to the recent growth in popularity of the sport both in terms of participation and spectatorship. There is certainly support for this sport in the southern part of my electorate, close to Thornlie, and this support is particularly obvious in the suburb of Langford where there are many baseball squares at the huge Langford sporting complex which are well used every week. The latest information, at the time I looked into it, was that there were eight diamonds there and they are well used each week; it is a very popular sport down in Langford. There is clearly also growing support for baseball in other areas of the electorate with areas at Belmont and South Perth dedicated to the sport. Parry Field was also the home of WA Baseball and the Perth Heat in my electorate of Swan for many years.

Part of the growth of the sport is likely due to the creation of the ABL and the recent success of the WA team competing in this competition. Overall participation is up 22 per cent since 2010, to over 2,300 registered members. The Perth Heat have won the title in three of the last four years and the total attendance at Perth Heat games held at WA state baseball park has more than doubled since 2010, now hosting approximately 6,000 fans per weekend. To put this in context, this is an attendance figure comparable to some of the games Perth Glory has played in the A league.

With the growth of baseball in WA into a genuine national sport, there is certainly a need to redevelop the facilities. On 7 February I attended a game between Perth and Canberra at the Barbagello Ballpark in Thornlie and the place was certainly packed to the rafters. Perth Heat won in the 16th innings; it was a close game and went for a long time. The proposal put forward by Baseball WA is a \$20 million redevelopment to increase capacity and quality, address the lighting facilities and improve toilet facilities. Baseball WA is seeking contributions from the federal and state governments. If completed, the stadium would be Australia's premier baseball stadium, capable of hosting international events. This could be particularly lucrative to the local economy as it is an international sport and Australia did win the Asia Series last November, after entering the competition as an underdog.

I look forward to this proposal developing over the coming months and today offer my support for the redevelopment proposed by the Australian Baseball League. I may look to host an event in parliament in my capacity as chairman of the parliamentary friends of sport.