



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Main Committee**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Hindmarsh Electorate:  
Westlake Shopping Centre**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 14 May 2009**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

**Date** Thursday, 14 May 2009  
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**Questioner**  
**Speaker** Georganas, Steve, MP

**Source** House  
**Proof** No  
**Responder**  
**Question No.**

**Mr GEORGANAS** (Hindmarsh) (9.39 am)—I rise to speak today on the proposal by Westfield to introduce boom gates and parking fees at their Westlake shopping centre in the electorate of Hindmarsh. The Charles Sturt Development Assessment Panel recently made the decision not to approve Westfield's proposal for the car park alterations. Despite this, Westfield has now appealed to the Environment, Resources and Development Court against last month's decision by the council and against the will of the people in the area.

The appeal against the council's decision has sparked protests from residents, retailers, staff and shoppers. Many constituents have contacted my office because they are extremely concerned about the proposed introduction of boom gates and parking fees at the West Lakes shopping centre. A group of about 30 people, including me, a number of Charles Sturt City councillors and the local member for the seat of Lee, Michael Wright, held a three-hour protest outside the shopping centre on 18 April and collected signatures. Julie Macdonald, from the group No Parking Fees for Westlake Shopping Centre, has obtained thousands of signatures on a petition from people who are against the proposal.

As well as being a convenient shopping location, the centre is home to the West Lakes Community Centre and a public library. It is a strongly utilised as a community hub. Many of the older residents in the area enjoy just walking through the shopping centre as an outing. Putting boom gates in will prevent them from their normal weekly outing if they cannot afford the parking fees.

It is also terrible timing by Westfield in the economic climate we now face. With the current economic situation, we need to encourage people to support local businesses to retain jobs in the community. Westfield also has a job to support the retailers, large and small, that are operating their businesses in the centre in tough economic times. Many of those retailers have contacted me. They are totally against the boom gates going up in the car park because they say customers will go and shop elsewhere. Boom gates and paid parking can only make things worse. Parking fees will encourage customers to shop elsewhere. I have written to Westfield but I am yet to receive a reply. I call on Westfield to reconsider its proposal to re-introduce boom gates and paid parking. Westfield has a duty not only to make money for its shareholders but also to be a good corporate citizen by ensuring that this shopping centre that it operates, which is the largest shopping centre in the western suburbs, also acts as a community hub for the area. All the little shops around there have shut down. Once upon a time, people would have been able to go for a walk there and do some window shopping. But they cannot do it anymore. So Westfield has a duty to ensure that it is a community centre. *(Time expired)*