



COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES



**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

**Federation Chamber**

**CONSTITUENCY STATEMENTS**

**Schools: Science**

**SPEECH**

**Thursday, 20 August 2015**

BY AUTHORITY OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

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## SPEECH

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<b>Questioner</b>	<b>Responder</b>
<b>Speaker</b> Marles, Richard, MP	<b>Question No.</b>

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**Mr MARLES** (Corio) (09:54): A week or so ago at the Australian American Leadership Dialogue I was very heartened that a great deal of the focus of that discussion was on science and technology, in terms of students pursuing these studies at school and also the need to focus on science and technology as part of the future of our economy and particularly as something that we can gain in terms of our relationship with the United States.

I was there with Jane den Hollander, the vice-chancellor of Deakin University, and I was gratified that, in the discussion around science, there was a lot of focus on the science which is being pursued at Deakin University in Geelong. The carbon fibre research centre—something that was established under the former Labor government through a \$100 million investment—has the best carbon fibre research furnace in the world and is giving rise to cutting-edge science and technology in this field of endeavour, which will undoubtedly give rise to jobs in the future.

This, I believe, is very much in Geelong's tradition—a tradition that was first established by James Harrison, the great figure of Geelong's history. James Harrison was a newspaper person; he founded the *Geelong Advertiser*. He was a politician, like us. But he noted when he was doing the typesetting for the *Geelong Advertiser* that when evaporating fluid evaporated it would leave the metal type on the printing presses cold to touch. In that moment of insight he understood or he started to pursue the idea of refrigeration. What James Harrison is really remembered for today is for being the father of modern refrigeration. In that, he is Geelong's great scientific export. In the two weeks between now and when we next come here, we will be noting the 122nd anniversary of James Harrison's passing on 3 September.

Science is very much a part of our country's future and is a part of Geelong's future. There are not enough kids studying science today. We have, of course, in Geelong, experienced the decisions by Alcoa and Ford to stop manufacturing in Geelong. Both are very high-tech science based companies. It would be great to encourage more people to study science and if, as their legacy, these companies could sponsor a science prize—indeed, it could be called the James Harrison science prize—for the very best scientists in primary schools in Geelong. So today I want to inform the House that I will be approaching both Alcoa and Ford to establish, as a parting legacy of their contribution to the Geelong community, the James Harrison science prize for excellence in science in primary schools in Geelong.