

TAXIS — PLATES — BUYBACK SCHEME

**180. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Transport:**

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to backing small business and supporting mums and dads who spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on taxi plates in a regulated market and of the concerns raised by regional taxi operators about the industry buyback scheme. Can the minister outline to the house how she has consulted with regional taxi operators and acted on those concerns?

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:**

I thank the member for Bunbury for that question. I acknowledge the role of the country members of the Labor Party and also the National Party for really working with us to deliver what I think is a good result for the regional WA reform process.

**Ms L. Mettam** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Vasse, I call you to order for the third time.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Reform is never easy and this is a particularly difficult reform process. I know that the member for Bateman said that even he feels sorry for me on this one. I thought he did, but obviously not!

**Mr B.S. Wyatt:** Somebody.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** Someone did—someone said it to me.

This is a very difficult reform. It is my role to work with the community and elected representatives to make sure we get a proposal that can pass through this house and the other house. I thank the regional members of my party and, of course, the National Party for its productive discussions. Ultimately, we want a reform process that will take us forward by deregulating the market and allowing people to participate. Last November we announced our package. Since then we have undertaken a number of negotiations. As a result, a number of modifications have been made. All operators outside the Perth and the Peel–Harvey area will no longer have to pay the levy on their trips. I think that is a good win for regional WA. A cap will also be placed on the levy to reflect the concerns passed on to me by the Motor Trade Association of Western Australia about the wedding and limousine businesses, which did not want to face significant costs. Concerns were raised by the taxi industry about plate numbers and the authorisation fee. We are now in the process of finalising that legislation. Because of those modifications, we are working through that legislation. I thank those members who want to work productively to get this policy through. I know that many people—even some of those across the chamber in the Liberal Party—want to work productively to get reform. I am very confident that as we move forward we will give small business owners in the Perth region the ability to have that buyback —

**Mr Z.R.F. Kirkup** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Dawesville, I call you to order for the first time.

**Ms R. SAFFIOTI:** The member for South Perth has indicated his willingness to support this legislation. I hope others on the other side who want to work to deliver real reform in the state will support us, support small business and get real competition reform happening in the state.