

ROYALTIES FOR REGIONS — EXPENDITURE

8. Ms M.J. DAVIES to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Thank you for the lecture, Premier.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: I do not think I will be taking any advice from the Labor Party on party stability.

The SPEAKER: Wait until you have been introduced before you unleash your tirade.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: Thank you, Mr Speaker. Were all the Premier's regional members of cabinet and Parliament supportive of the cabinet-approved decision that meant \$635.9 million of royalties for regions in the 2018–19 financial year was returned to the consolidated account, away from regional projects and services?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

I think the member is not reflecting the reality. There were significant underspends every year when the other side was in government. In 2008–09 —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members of the National Party! You have asked a question.

Mr M. McGOWAN: I just want to explain how it works. There were significant underspends every year. In 2008–09, it was \$138 million. In 2009–10, \$388 —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: That was the first year.

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The member asked the question; she should let me answer it. What is the context?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Premier. Members, you have asked a question. I am sure you want to hear the answer, but all five of you are having a go at the same time. Draw straws and just do one at a time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: The underspend of 2008–09 was \$138 million. In 2009–10, it was \$388 million, 60 per cent of the then budget. In 2010–11, it was —

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members!

Mr M. McGOWAN: In 2010–11, it was \$390 million, 43 per cent of the budget. In 2011–12 —

Ms M.J. Davies interjected.

The SPEAKER: Leader of the National Party, I call you to order for the second time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: They hate it, Mr Speaker!

In 2011–12, it was \$678 million—45 per cent of the total! In each year after that there were above \$100 million in underspends. Members opposite introduced the underspend provision. We have kept the exact arrangements in place that we inherited. We have \$1 billion in the budget that is supporting important programs and capital works all over Western Australia. One thing members know about this government, as opposed to the National Party, is that we fund regional roads to a far greater degree than it did. We fund regional roads to a far greater degree than the last government did because we know it is important, despite what the Nationals' former leader Mr Grylls had to say. He said that it was not important. Do members remember that? He said that people do not leave regional communities because of road safety. My view is that road safety is incredibly important. That is why we have funded roads such as the Karratha–Tom Price road, the Albany ring road, the Bunbury Outer Ring Road, and the South Western Highway.

Mr V.A. Catania interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for North West Central, I call you to order for the first time.

Mr M. McGOWAN: We have got money out of the commonwealth government and we wear that as a badge of pride. I am proud that my government has been more successful at getting money out of the commonwealth

government than any government in memory. Former Premier Barnett said that he did not talk to the commonwealth government. He asked why the state would go to it for money. I go to it for money and, what is more, we are successful in getting it. We see great projects all over regional Western Australia under this Labor government because we come up with the projects, put our share in, and get money out of the commonwealth government. I am very proud of that.