

ROADSIDE LITTER PREVENTION PROJECT

584. Mr F.A. ALBAN to the Minister for Environment:

The minister announced a regional roadside litter prevention project yesterday. Can he please explain how this project will address the issue of littering on our roadsides?

Mr A.P. JACOB replied:

I thank the member for Swan Hills for this question. The Liberal–National government is committed to tackling the problem of litter in our community. We are doing this through a range of initiatives, some of which we have had the opportunity to talk about in this house in recent days. However, the latest round of the National Litter Index has come out. Although it shows that for five of the eight categories, Western Australia is now showing an improvement in litter rates, for the other three categories we are still, unfortunately, tracking downwards. The worst of those is roadside litter, which is why we are targeting it.

Ms R. Saffioti interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for West Swan, I call you to order for the third time!

Mr A.P. JACOB: I had the opportunity yesterday to launch a new program, which fits in very well with the other range of programs we are running at the well-known Gingers Roadhouse and cafe, in the electorate of the member for Swan Hills, and I thank him for being there for yesterday's announcement. The program is a regional roadside litter prevention project centred on the theme of "WA naturally thanks you". It is a branded program that will run across three key arterial roads: the Brand Highway going to the north, the Great Eastern Highway going to the east, and the Forrest Highway going south. It is targeted at those three roads so that we can see whether such a campaign—we have done them in the past—can make a marked difference to littering along those three roads. We will be auditing this program over the coming four months to compare it with similar roads to see whether we make a difference. This program is funded by the state government in partnership with Main Roads Western Australia, the Keep Australia Beautiful council and also the Australian Packaging Covenant. Funding to the amount of \$185 000 will go into this program. It will include informational signage along all those roads branded along the lines of the "WA naturally thanks you" theme. It will also include signage on bins along those highways. Importantly, this program is being done in partnership with private sector stakeholders. Some 20 service stations along those roads will partner with us on this project, 16 of which have already signed up, and more are interested. These service stations will also include signage and branding.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I call you to order for the third time!

Mr A.P. JACOB: If the member was here yesterday, I do not think he would have made that interjection. I would love to take an interjection if he wants to ask a question.

The most important part of this project is a small thing but it harks back to the container deposit scheme legislation. Many members will remember that for many years we used to be able to get a free Keep Australia Beautiful litter bag for the vehicle at service stations. We are bringing that back as well. Not only are we facilitating drivers to collect their litter, it is also a great way to communicate our message. The bags will have QR codes on the back, which will lead people to other initiatives.

Mr D.J. Kelly interjected.

The SPEAKER: Member for Bassendean, I have called you to order three times! If you shout out again, you are going out.

Mr A.P. JACOB: We will use technology on the bags as well. Three individual QR codes will point users to the Keep Australia Beautiful website and other programs such as the Adopt-a-Spot program and the program that enables a person to become a litter reporter. We have nearly 10 000 litter reporters in this state, which makes it a fantastic program. This new roadside litter prevention project fits in very well with the container deposit scheme set up by the Liberal–National government—the first government to bring it into place in this state. It is good to see that members opposite are catching up and I welcome their support. It is a government decision —

Mr R.H. Cook interjected.

Mr A.P. JACOB: The member is not listening. The second way —
Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Members! You have 30 seconds, minister.

Mr A.P. JACOB: I really want to focus on this program, which obviously fits in with the container deposit scheme, our illegal dumping task force that specifically targets higher level dumping with significant penalties under the Environmental Protection Act, and also other initiatives such as a waste levy increase, which drives recycling, and our Better Bins program around our construction and demolition recycling program. It all fits

together like a big puzzle. It is all coming together to drive recycling in Western Australia and to drive down litter rates.