

CORONAVIRUS — INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

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

I have a supplementary question. The Premier clearly has a date, so why does he not just share it with the rest of Western Australia so that we can all be on the same page and plan for 2022?

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, please, members!

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

Honestly, the opposition just looks for things to whinge about; that is all it does. It sits there every day and surveys what is out there and what it can complain about rather than doing any serious policy work. In any event, I will take the Leader of the Opposition over it again.

Last week, I announced the WA safe transition plan based upon health advice. The safe transition plan says that it will be safest when we get to a 90 per cent double-dose vaccination rate. The reason it is safer at 90 per cent double-dose vaccination is that 200 Western Australian lives will be saved as opposed to at an 80 per cent double-dose vaccination rate. What am I to do—ignore that? But we do not know exactly when we will get to a 90 per cent double-dose vaccination rate until we get closer to the day. So, based upon health advice as well, we said that when we get to 80 per cent double-dose vaccination, we will be able to get a line of sight on when 90 per cent will be. The Commissioner of Police and the Department of Health are working on that as we speak. But we expect to get to an 80 per cent double-dose vaccination rate in the first half of December and we will be able to set that date. That is still the best part of two months away from the deadline. I think that that makes total sense.

As I told members before, small business people in South Australia are out protesting because they are going to have all sorts of mask wearing and restrictions—people cannot stand up and have a drink and only certain numbers of people can be in restaurants—over the busiest time of the year. That was one of our alternatives. We could have done that, but then the opposition would have been in here whingeing about that. If we had done that, the opposition would have been in here complaining. What we are doing will save Western Australian lives. It will ensure that there are no restrictions over the Christmas period and holidays, it will continue to ensure that we have the greatest economic outcomes in Australia and probably the world, and it is the safest and most cautious approach and will allow us to open up safely when we get to that high level of vaccination.