

FEDERAL INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING

883. Mrs R.M.J. CLARKE to the Minister for Transport:

I, too, would like to acknowledge the students of Carcoola Primary School in the public gallery. Hi, kids.

I refer to the Cook Labor government's strong record of sustainable infrastructure delivery.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on the Cook government's response to the federal government's infrastructure pipeline review?
- (2) Can the minister advise the house how this government will continue to support jobs and advocate for investment in Western Australia?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for Murray–Wellington for, in particular, her strong advocacy for the people in her electorate, especially over the Pinjarra heavy haulage deviation. The member has driven that project from day one. She brought it to the attention of the then opposition and we have been working together on navigating the best path to deliver this project. Remember, we initially had stage 1, but we knew that there were too many issues in delivering stage 1 so we jointly funded stage 2 to make it a bigger project that would deliver for the area. We are committed to the projects that we have taken to elections and that we have stood and committed to local communities that we would deliver, none of which are better illustrated than the Pinjarra heavy haulage deviation. That is why we are deeply disappointed with the cuts in funding to these projects by the federal government. Of the five projects that have been mentioned, three are more significant—we will continue to support all five—and require the majority of the funding. The Pinjarra heavy haulage deviation is included among those. Under the leadership of the Premier, we will deliver that project as a state-funded project.

Mr R.S. Love: Why does federal Labor believe that those projects lack merit?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: Go and ask them!

Several members interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order, Leader of the House and Leader of the Opposition! Leader of the Opposition, you did not ask this question. The minister is responding to the member for Murray–Wellington and informing the house. I ask you to stop interjecting. Likewise, I ask the Leader of the House and the Minister for Fisheries to stop interjecting.

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: We support the project 100 per cent.

Mr R.S. Love interjected.

The SPEAKER: Order!

Ms R. SAFFIOTI: The state Labor government will step in and make sure that project is delivered. We will continue to do the planning that is underway and undertake the significant Aboriginal heritage and environmental approvals in that area. The two other major projects are the upgrades to Marble Bar Road to support a major resources project and a project in Yilgarn—Moorine Rock—to support the Covalent Lithium mine. We thought we had created what we thought was a very good partnership between the federal government, the state government and the resources companies to jointly share the delivery of those projects. Both of those projects are necessary for major resources projects. One is under contract already and the other is near to becoming under contract. I have spoken to both companies today. We remain committed to delivering those projects to create local jobs and support the local communities, and that is what we are doing. We will continue to support the two other projects with minor planning money as well as some local roads through the freight network, primarily across the great southern. We are deeply disappointed, but WA Labor will not let the communities down. We will continue to support those projects. We back every project across our infrastructure program and we will continue to deliver, because that is what we have committed to do. We will continue the strong infrastructure pipeline that will reduce congestion and support freight connectivity and better access to Aboriginal communities. Many of our regional projects help support access to Aboriginal communities. We will also reduce road safety issues. We are absolutely 100 per cent committed. This is not what we wanted, but WA Labor will get on with it and deliver these projects and support economic development in this state.