

CORONAVIRUS — INTERSTATE BORDER RESTRICTIONS

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

I have a supplementary question. Given that we have some of the highest vaccination rates in the nation and are on track for high levels of third boosters by March, how much notice will the Premier give the people of Western Australia of this yet-to-be-announced date so that they can start to plan and prepare for borders to reopen?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

As I said before, we are currently conducting a review. When we reach an outcome, that will provide us with the opportunity to provide some direction and certainty for Western Australia. I do not think that is unreasonable to do that. Currently, our community spread of the virus in Western Australia, by national standards, is quite low because of the measures that we have put in place. When we conclude the review, which will take into account all those factors I outlined before, we will be able to provide some advice and certainty to people. I note that in Parliament the Leader of the Opposition and the shadow Minister for Health, the member for Vasse, both said that they would not be critical if we changed the date. They both said on a number of occasions that they would not be critical if we changed the date based upon circumstances. I note now that they have changed their position on that.

Obviously, the thing about COVID is that it is not a certain environment. Had we followed everything the Liberals and Nationals and other elements of the community called for over the course of the last two years, lots of Western Australians would now be dead. The opposition called for all sorts of things. The Liberal Party joined Clive Palmer in his actions in the High Court. The former Liberal leader, the former member for Scarborough, who is no longer here, was out there on the front steps of Parliament House backing him.

We have had to do what was required. A government, particularly in a pandemic, requires people who are prepared to do difficult things. I know. I get criticised every day at length. A group of people out the front of Parliament House—or out the back of Parliament House, I think, today—are criticising what we have done. But I tell you what, I would not undo saving Western Australian lives no matter what they say. Saving Western Australian lives and saving Western Australian jobs is my job, and I am going to continue to do that.