

MEMBER FOR BALLAJURA - RESIGNATION FROM MINISTRY

Personal Explanation

MR J.B. D'ORAZIO (Ballajura) [2.04 pm] - by leave: As honourable members would be aware, I have resigned my position as a minister effective from today. I would like to explain this decision and the circumstances that led to it to the house. I have resigned because the controversy over yesterday's cabinet reshuffle and my continuation in that cabinet is unfairly damaging the government and the Labor Party. Western Australia is experiencing unprecedented economic growth, and the Labor government is doing an excellent job in working to see that the benefits of this growth are being shared throughout the community.

I accept full personal responsibility for incurring two speeding fines and for not ensuring they were paid. I apologise to my colleagues on this side of the house for this serious oversight. However, as any citizen has the right to do, I am continuing to challenge the decision to suspend my driving licence from 22 February, which I believe was the result of a bureaucratic error. The first time I became aware of this problem was on 24 April. The facts are that correspondence warning me of an impending suspension of licence in 2006 was sent to an address at which I had not resided since 2002. This is despite my correct address having been recorded at that time on my motor vehicle licence, the traffic infringement notice and the electoral roll. I believed it had also been changed in regard to my driver's licence. I acknowledge that as the minister with portfolio responsibility for the enforcement of traffic fines, I should have paid more attention to the processes used by the enforcement agency.

I hope that my experience will lead to improvements that will benefit other Western Australians similarly subjected to such unfair processes. I regret not having the opportunity to continue the work I have begun in overseeing a massive reform of Western Australia's corrections system. I also regret the lost opportunity to participate in the continuing enhancement of law enforcement, emergency services and community safety in Western Australia - exciting challenges that I have only recently begun to appreciate.

I pass on my thanks and appreciation to the staff of the agencies within my portfolios and I wish them all the best for the future. I now look forward to continuing my work on behalf of the Ballajura electorate and to making a positive contribution to good government and this Parliament.