

CORONAVIRUS — STATE OF EMERGENCY

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

I have a question for the Premier. Who am I to direct that to?

Several members interjected.

Ms M.J. DAVIES: The Leader of the House can take it; thank you.

My question was to the Premier. I refer to the rolling state of emergency, regardless of easing COVID restrictions, an open border, an advertising campaign to attract visitors and workforce and a decrease in the number of COVID infections. When will this government end the state of emergency?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

Madam Speaker, I think it is important to understand the reason why the Premier and the Minister for Energy are not present in the house. As the Leader of the Opposition would know very well, there are various important times and important business for ministers and, indeed, the Premier and the Deputy Premier to be absent from the house. As we know, there was a particularly remarkable and important decision announced today in the south west, particularly around Collie. The Premier and the Minister for Energy thought, as I think is absolutely appropriate, that given the ramifications of the decision and the announcements there, they should be present personally to announce that and speak with the community. That is why the Premier is absent today. I think it is an appropriate absence. He will be absent again on Thursday because he will be attending a national cabinet meeting. These are important meetings and important matters for the Premier.

In regard to the member's question, as the member will be well aware, this government's response to COVID-19 has been reported by many throughout the world as being one of the most important and significant responses to the COVID-19 challenge. As we know, our economy is the strongest in the nation, and, indeed, one of the strongest economies of the world because of decisions made by this government. Those decisions have not only kept Western Australians safe, but also ensured that important businesses in Western Australia that employ people and support small and large enterprises, and, of course, support the livelihoods of many, many Western Australians and, indeed, the nation, have continued under this government. The government, under this Premier and under our stewardship, will work hard to continue to keep the people of Western Australia safe and the economy strong. That is the achievement of this government, despite attempts by the opposition over an extended period of time to undermine the actions of a government that is focused on the protection of its citizens and an economy that keeps employing people and supporting strong and vibrant business.