

CRIMINAL RESPONSIBILITY — MINIMUM AGE

**472. Hon SOPHIA MOERMOND to the parliamentary secretary representing the Attorney General:**

I refer the Attorney General to an article titled “The Child Inside: In Australia, We Prosecute 10-Year-Olds, Especially If They’re Black” by Warwick Jones published on New Matilda on 28 June 2020.

- (1) Does the Attorney General support legislation in favour of increasing the minimum age of criminal responsibility?
- (2) Does the state government have any plans to increase this beyond 14 years of age?

**Hon MATTHEW SWINBOURN replied:**

I thank the member for some notice of the question. I provide the following response on behalf of the Attorney General.

- (1) The Attorney General is proud to have placed the question of raising the minimum age of criminal responsibility on the agenda of the former Council of Attorneys General. The honourable member may be aware that due to the Attorney General’s advocacy, Western Australia chaired a cross-jurisdictional working group that examined this issue on behalf of CAG. Any changes would require resources and careful consideration to ensure that the small number of children who exhibit serious offending at a young age can be properly managed outside the criminal justice system. The WA government already diverts young people away from the criminal justice system when reasonable.
- (2) No.