

YOUTH — WORK READINESS PILOT PROGRAM

**228. Mr P. ABETZ to the Minister for Youth:**

I understand that the Liberal–National government announced today that it is funding a work readiness pilot program for students in my electorate. Can the minister outline to the house how this and other initiatives supported by the state government are encouraging participation and engagement by young people in our communities?

**Mr A.J. SIMPSON replied:**

I thank the member for Southern River for his question, especially to do with youth. The Liberal–National government, through the Department for Communities, funds over \$22 million to 145 community groups, and youth make up a very strong part of that community group. I am pleased to advise the house today of \$170 000 in funding to a program run by the Beacon Foundation. The Beacon Foundation is running a program to help school students transition into the workforce. This week, it will work with students from Coodanup Community College, Balga Senior High School and Southern River College. The Beacon Foundation is very well suited for this program. It has a good track record of easing the transition from high school to the workforce. It is also very good at inspiring, motivating and helping students who want to go on to further education and employment. The foundation is very strong at that. It is great to see that this program will run in the member for Southern River's electorate.

I have taken this opportunity to focus on ensuring that local governments in regional Western Australia also develop a community engagement project with their partnerships. Youth collaborative project grants of over \$25 000 have recently been awarded to the City of Kalgoorlie–Boulder; the Shire of Augusta–Margaret River; the West Arthur consortium, which is a shire comprising Dumbleyung, Wagin, West Arthur and Williams; and the Shire of Manjimup. These grants were resourced to local governments to help implement a youth-friendly community plan so that the shires can work with their communities to ensure they provide a youth focus. This program provides one-off funding for local government. On top on that, we will work closely with government and non-profit organisations to deliver youth services in our community. It is important to acknowledge that the government is very supportive of youth. National Youth Week this year will be held between 10–19 April. Over 80 events will be held throughout Western Australia by local governments. That is part of this government's commitment to youth, but also a commitment to making sure youth have the right standing in our community to go on to become our future leaders.