

PUPPY FARMING

268. Ms L.L. BAKER to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to listen to the concerns of Western Australians and ban the practice of intensive farming of puppies in conditions that do not meet welfare standards. Can the minister please advise the house on how Western Australians can have input into bringing this practice to an end?

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN replied:

I thank the member for Maylands, who I must acknowledge has great respect among the community for her ongoing and long-term animal welfare representations. That is one of the reasons I appointed her as the chair of the Stop Puppy Farming Implementation Working Group. I acknowledge her work and the implementation group, which is made up of a range of key stakeholders in animal welfare and is particularly focused on dogs. Many of us in this chamber are dog owners. Many of us love dogs, as do many thousands of Western Australians. In the next few weeks, the Million Paws Walk will be held. I am sure that the member for South Perth will have his basset hound on a leash, taking him down to South Perth.

Mr M. McGowan: They say they look like their owners.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Yes, they do say they look like them. I am sure that the member for Carine will have his bulldog sitting there! I am sure the member for Churchlands will have his Shih tzu on a lead. I will have my labrador. The member for Bateman will have his big Doberman there. I am sure that many members —

Mr A. Krsticevic interjected.

Mr D.A. TEMPLEMAN: Lay down! Down, boy, down!

I am sure many members in this place understand the importance of protecting the welfare of our canine friends. That is why we made that election commitment. It was very strongly supported by the Labor Party when it came to power and the Premier himself supports this policy. Last week at the RSPCA we launched the consultation document, which we want Western Australians to make comment on as we move to deliver on the election commitment to stop puppy farming in Western Australia, ensure that the welfare of dogs is of utmost priority and make sure that we stop an unfortunately large number of dogs ending up in our dog shelters and at the RSPCA because of this practice. In Western Australia it is an unregulated industry, which means that cruelty and inappropriate treatment takes place. We need to protect the dogs.

We are committed to this. The consultation document is now out for consultation and we ask members of the Western Australian community to have input. We want to make sure that we introduce a strong practice that will ensure that our dogs are protected and that puppy farming is no longer an unregulated practice that occurs in Western Australia. I am very confident that we will achieve that. I acknowledge the member for Maylands and the working implementation group for what it has been able to achieve in delivering on this policy.