

CORONAVIRUS — HOUSING AND CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

468. Mr D.T. PUNCH to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's efforts to support jobs and businesses in Western Australia's housing and construction sector as it recovers from the severe impacts of COVID-19.

- (1) Can the minister outline to the house how the government's \$319 million social housing economic recovery package will support workers and businesses in Bunbury and the south west?
- (2) Furthermore, can the minister advise the house how the \$125 million building bonus package is driving confidence in the housing sector throughout WA?

Mr P.C. TINLEY replied:

I thank the member for the question.

- (1)–(2) Indeed, member for Bunbury, the tradie bonanza is going to move to the south west, courtesy of the \$444 million job protection plan that the McGowan government has brought in. As I have said in this place before, \$319 million of that will go to social housing, and in the south west the member will enjoy at least 270 dwellings being touched by this program in his district. I look forward to seeing the work that is created by this program. I will also like to see, as time goes by, where the building bonus is situated in relation to its impact in the regions, particularly in the south west, which is one of the more populous regions outside Perth.

This program of grants was designed and constructed by the Treasurer, in concert with the commonwealth government. The plan is inspired—truly inspired—and we have seen the results already. As the Premier said, within a couple of weeks it has already blown the doors off display villages in Perth and, I am advised, in the south west. For the benefit of members, I will highlight where we are at with some of this. Perth property sales soared to over 1 000 last week—almost double the 52-week average of 539. It is the highest level of activity seen in seven years, according to the Real Estate Institute of Western Australia's own data. That is property sales. It is a huge improvement on the low of 264 weekly sales recorded in mid-April, just before the imposition of COVID-19 restrictions and subsequent market uncertainty. But, of course, land sales have led the recovery. Why? It is because the design of the Treasurer's program identified the need to get new construction started.

New construction is absolutely essential for keeping those trades going, and, boy, has it started. Last week's sales comprised 613 dwellings in total, which is 57 per cent more than the 52-week average, with 412 land sales alone making up the vast majority. That is almost five times more than the 52-week average. That all comes from none other than Mr Damian Collins, president of REIWA. As members can see, we are supporting the protection and growth of jobs in Western Australia, through both established properties and new construction, which is so important. We are going to do that right through Western Australia. I was up in the north west of Western Australia recently announcing similar programs up there.

This is a program that has something for everybody—except the Liberal Party! It does not seem to have anything that the Liberal Party wants to enjoy. None other than the shadow Treasurer himself could not help himself. I announced a program this week wherein Keystart customers can get access to a renovation loan. The shadow Treasurer is the man who opposed the building bonus and said it did nothing for the established market. We come along and provide a \$100 000 loan for Keystart clients to renovate their property and assist the established market and assist the tradies and the renovation program, and what does he say? He says it is self-serving.

It is just incredulous. Member, here is a tip: do your research! That renovation product from Keystart has been available for 15 years. If the shadow Treasurer had known that, he would have asked some decent questions and identified where the opportunities really do lie for Western Australians—the fact the McGowan government, through strong leadership and fiscal discipline, has the capacity and bandwidth to lead this nation out of this COVID economic challenge. We will continue to come into this place and highlight the hypocrisy of the Liberal Party and its inability to manage its message and be a contributor to the state of Western Australia.

The SPEAKER: Member, before I get onto the last question, it is now 10 past 3. I know ministers are about to have a six-week break. Can we just make the answers a little quicker because we still have one question to go.