

REGIONAL CHILD CARE

578. Mr R.S. LOVE to the Minister for Community Services:

I have a supplementary question. I thank the minister for finally getting back to the point about regional child care instead of what happens in Mirrabooka, which I am sure is important, but is not what I was asking about. Can the minister outline who was consulted about this decision, and whether the regional childcare sector has once again fallen victim to having royalties for regions ripped out from the regions and spent on Metronet?

Ms S.F. McGURK replied:

I take issue with the member saying that the model of community-based child care is not relevant, because unless he and his party members understand —

Mr R.S. Love: An answer about what's occurring in Mirrabooka is irrelevant to what I asked you.

Ms S.F. McGURK: The member was in government with the Liberals for eight years. Unless members opposite understand those sorts of community organisations and how they not only might add value for the parents who participate and the people who volunteer, but also can be sustainable in the long run, we will be struggling because for-profit childcare providers will not be viable in all communities. That is the purpose of the regional community childcare development fund.

Mr D.T. Redman: But you're cutting it.

Ms S.F. McGURK: No, we are not cutting it out. We have maintained it in this budget and local consultation is occurring at the moment for trials in the south west and in the wheatbelt. It is not to provide services for those communities but to set up a model under which childcare services will be made available in the future, such as community-based family day care and other models that can be implemented in small and regional communities in the future.