

PERTH PARKING MANAGEMENT ACT — REFORM

38. Ms L. METTAM to the Minister for Transport:

I refer to the Auditor General's report on the McGowan government's management of the Perth parking levy, which was tabled today. Was the Minister for Transport's hastily prepared announcement on Tuesday, approving changes to the Perth Parking Management Act 1999, simply made to alleviate a confronting report that found the government had approved funding that did not comply with the act or, in scope, with the policy?

Ms R. SAFFIOTI replied:

I thank the member for that question, and of course the answer is no. In relation to this issue, I am very happy to get the question. I am very happy, because we have an opportunity to go forward and improve the amenity and many of the assets in the City of Perth. We know that we need more people living in the city. The more people living in the city, the more financially sustainable is the city, the more secure and safe is the community and the more businesses are supported. We believe we need a strategy to support more people living in the city. We have been trying to advocate for that. That is why, together with the federal government, nearly \$1.5 billion between Edith Cowan University, the state and the federal government has been injected into the Perth City Deal. That includes a number of projects, like the relocation of ECU into the site, transport initiatives across the entire area and more university representation. A significant amount is going into that project. I look forward to working with the city to keep going.

We believe that we should enter into a discussion about the Perth parking levy and using it to support the commercial sector and the residential sector to make it easier for people to live in the city. We know that only by having thousands more people in that city are we going to change the way the city is viewed and how we can get more activity every day of the year.

I went through the four issues yesterday in relation to the current act, including the scope. We want to make sure that we can expand the use of those funds. On the boundary issue, I want to make another key point. We do not want to expand the boundary to collect more revenue outside the existing boundary; we want to be able to spend for interconnecting services and infrastructure. The example is the Perth CAT. We had to change the boundary of the Perth parking levy to go down little roads all the way through Nedlands to ensure that we could fund the new CAT bus. We do not want to keep changing the boundary to facilitate new services and infrastructure. Everyone supports that idea. Of course another key point, as I said, is to continue to support investing more money. I think any mayor would support having more money spent in their area to bring more people to live in their area. That is what we are trying to do.

In relation to the particular of the member's question, we have been working on this issue for months and many years because of all the issues raised. As I said, the development industry comes in and believes there should be differential rates. It does not believe there should be a standard rate across the entire area. That is something I am very keen to discuss. During the COVID pandemic, we were asked to waive the levy. The legislation does not allow us to do that, so we had to do it through administration purposes. We welcome the recommendations in the report today and we continue to work to reform that levy to bring more benefit to the Perth CBD, the ratepayers and the entire community.