

GAS — SUPPLY

840. Dr D.J. HONEY to the Premier:

I refer to media reports on comments from Meg O'Neill, CEO of Woodside Energy, and the testimony provided to the Economics and Industry Standing Committee meeting yesterday by Ms Kate Ryan, executive general manager of the Australian Energy Market Operator, that regulatory and other delays in gas projects could threaten gas supplies in Western Australia. Given that gas supply will be critical to energy security for the foreseeable future, especially domestic electricity supplies as coal is withdrawn from our energy mix —

- (1) Is the Premier aware of the risks to our future gas supplies, mentioned by Ms O'Neill and Ms Ryan?
- (2) What action is the Premier taking to ensure that regulatory delays and other development delays do not impact future energy security in our state?

Mr R.H. COOK replied:

- (1)–(2) I thank the member for the question. As the member is aware, we have a very strong conviction in my government that gas will continue to play an important role as part of our transition to renewable energy. It is an affirming role as part of our overall network as we seek to decarbonise. In addition to that, we see domestic gas continuing to play an important role in the diversification of our industry as we look to use it as a feedstock input to industrial manufacturing processes. It will continue to play an important role in our lives. We support companies like Woodside, which are not only looking to bring gas to the market and commit to the domestic market, but also looking to offset the carbon dioxide emissions and other emissions associated with their production through the use of carbon capture and storage and other mitigation methods. Our domestic gas policies are obviously an important part of our overall strategy to make sure that Western Australians ultimately are the beneficiaries of a resource that belongs to them. That is the reason a WA Labor government was initially responsible for the implementation of a domestic gas reservation policy under former Premier Hon Alan Carpenter. There was a further tightening of that policy under former Premier Hon Mark McGowan. It is WA Labor that secures the resources for Western Australians. The impact of that is that Western Australians have a more affordable and a more resilient gas supply. We can continue to look to the opportunities of prosperity that come from using that gas supply not only for power generation for firming our renewable electricity grid, but also around industrial processes.

We will continue to make sure that we continue to support the industry as it looks to future reservations and the opportunities to bring those to production. We work with them very closely and I have a very close working relationship with Meg O'Neill in relation to the conduct of her company. We will continue to support them as part of that process.

At the end of the day, these companies need to be held to stringent environmental regulation at both the state level and the national level. We want to make sure that regulation does not of itself represent a constraint to the Western Australian economy or a risk to Western Australian consumers. We will continue to make sure we work with them in that vein so that does not take place.