

ELDER ABUSE — FUNDING

**183. Ms J.M. FREEMAN to the Minister for Seniors and Ageing:**

Can the minister advise the house of this government's response to the elder abuse announcements made by the federal government yesterday and whether there are any concerns that WA's already strained services will not be properly funded by the federal Liberal government?

**Mr M.P. MURRAY replied:**

I thank the member for the question on this very serious issue. Firstly, I thank the Western Australian Attorney General for the work that he has been doing on this issue and for working with all the other states' Attorneys General. It is unfortunate that the announcement that was made by the commonwealth government this week about funding for the elder abuse program falls far short of what it should do. It was an \$18 million announcement, but unfortunately most of the money is on the east coast, and there is nothing to help our elder abuse hotlines that are already out there.

Several members interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Members!

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** The state government contributes \$115 000 to Advocare and \$280 000 to the Older People's Rights Service that allows people to have the confidence to ring these groups to get advice that is very difficult to source for some people—especially when it is a family issue. I have done this several times, but I remind members that elder abuse is not just about physical abuse. It is about all sorts of abuse—mental, financial and other things that go on. Generally, it is by someone who is a very close in the family. I understand that we need anonymity for people to be able to ring in and get that advice and take it back without blowing a whistle or going through the police department. I know one thing—Christian Porter, the Attorney General for the commonwealth, has great foresight, but unfortunately it has failed him at this time. I say he has great foresight because he abandoned ship from that side of the house before it sank. He knew that it was coming. He saw the writing on the wall and jumped on the plane and went over to the commonwealth government. I am a bit nonplussed, to say the least, that he could not see forward enough to understand that we need funding help for Advocare and the Older People's Rights Service. What he did, which was very annoying, is say that there would be an elder abuse hotline, but it will use the states' lines. All he did was change the phone number, which will then be redirected to those overworked people in the state.

**Mrs A.K. Hayden** interjected.

**The SPEAKER:** Member for Darling Range, stop that chatter.

**Mr M.P. MURRAY:** This year alone there will be over 1 000 phone calls about elder abuse. That is 1 000 families that are being affected in one way or another, yet no money is coming from the federal government. Come on! It is shameful that the federal government is doing that. Again, we ask it to reconsider funding those hotlines.