

LIVE EXPORT

256. Mr P.J. RUNDLE to the Premier:

I have a supplementary question. Given that both the Premier and his Minister for Agriculture and Food claimed to be supportive of this industry, when will the Premier stand up and be counted?

Mr M. McGOWAN replied:

We have been away from Parliament now for five weeks and multiple issues have occurred over that period. The member is asking me exactly the same question he asked me on multiple occasions prior to the break—the second question from the state opposition. He is asking me exactly the same questions he asked me before the break. He might also note that, before the break, it took him three weeks to ask a single question on this issue.

Mr P.J. Rundle: Well, what are you doing?

Mr M. McGOWAN: Why will you not? You had three weeks to ask me a question before the break and you could not even think of one. You could not even come up with a question. There are all these issues you could ask me about, and you did not ask me.

Since the member raised the issue of the GST, of course we are going to stand up for Western Australia. That is why we are investing to ensure that we continue to get our fair share. I might also add that our fair share is, at this point, 70¢ in the dollar, rising to 75¢ in the dollar next year. That is significantly less than any other state in Australia is receiving. The member might note that New South Wales is getting a dollar back for every dollar it puts in, Victoria is getting 92¢ back for every dollar it puts in, Queensland is getting at least \$1.10 for every dollar it puts in, and the Northern Territory is getting \$5 for every dollar it puts in. Some of them, and certainly some of the commentators, are saying that Western Australia getting 70¢ for every dollar we put in is somehow us ripping off the rest of Australia. How is that even possible? How is it possible to argue that? It is generally promulgated by people who have never been here and who do not have a clue about Western Australia and its contribution to the nation.

We will continue to contribute, we will continue to help carry the national economy, and we will continue to subsidise the other states, but it would be nice if they had a little gratitude.