

SOCIAL HOUSING — REGIONS

708. Ms L. DALTON to the Minister for Housing:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's record investment in social housing.

- (1) Can the minister update the house on this investment and outline how it is delivering more social housing, particularly in our regions?
- (2) Can the minister outline how this investment is also supporting our community housing sector?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

- (1)–(2) I am very pleased to report that our government is continuing to roll out our record investment of \$2.4 billion in housing and homelessness programs over the next four years. That includes, as I have said before in this chamber, 3 300 social homes and critical maintenance and refurbishment.

We have already invested and made announcements regarding community housing, but I am very pleased to say that we have made another announcement for another round of funding for community housing in Western Australia. We are providing nearly \$40 million to community housing organisations as part of the social housing economic recovery package new builds program, and this will deliver around another 150 new social houses. This is concentrated in the regions. We are looking at an investment of community housing in Bunbury, Busselton, Donnybrook, Witchcliffe, Perenjori, Shark Bay and Dalyellup. That is all new community housing as part of 150 new social homes. This builds on the first round so that, in total, we are investing over \$78 million to deliver 320 community houses. Why is the community housing sector important? It is because we want it to grow so that it can leverage funding from federal government and from super funds. We can make our dollar go further.

One would think that our rollout of and investment in social housing in regional Western Australia would be welcomed, but I have to say it is disappointing to see that a local government has expressed concerns about the rollout of social housing. I refer to an article titled “Cherry Gripe: Shire leader riled up as new seniors complex filled with social housing”. The article quotes the former Liberal opposition leader, now Shire of Manjimup president, as saying —

... while he welcomed increased social housing in Manjimup, it was never the Shire's intention for Cherry Glades.

Cherry Glades is a DevelopmentWA estate that is actually being developed for seniors, and our proposal is to put six social houses into this lot as part of our modular program to provide housing for some of our most vulnerable Western Australians. This is the point that I make, but people always say this: “We welcome social housing, but not here. Not there. Not here, not there, not there.” This is a classic response by the Liberal Party. It is! Old habits die hard for Liberals, because they say they support social housing, but just where they want it, and that means not anywhere near them.

I am deeply proud that we are a state Labor government that is committed to integrating social housing across all our communities. We understand that that is the model that works, and we will continue to do that and support the community housing sector.