

GREYHOUNDS — MUZZLING

292. MR S.J. PRICE to the Minister for Local Government:

I refer to the McGowan Labor government's commitment to bring an end to the unnecessary muzzling of greyhounds in public. Can the minister update the house on the work underway by the government to deliver on its commitment to end the muzzling of greyhounds, and can he advise how its Dog Amendment (Stop Puppy Farming) Bill, which received overwhelming support at the last two elections, will benefit families who have rescue greyhounds as pets?

Mr J.N. CAREY replied:

I thank the member for his question. I know that he is a passionate dog owner and is the owner of two rescue greyhounds. What are their names?

Mr S.J. Price: Grace and Tyler.

Mr J.N. CAREY: Grace and Tyler—very appropriate greyhound names. It is amazing what people call their dogs these days!

It is very clear. This is my fifth year of being a member, and the passion that Western Australians have for their dogs still surprises me. They are very passionate. Greyhound owners are probably the most passionate bunch. One issue that we all know has held back the greater adoption of greyhounds and the general ownership of greyhounds is the muzzling laws; that is, a muzzle is required in public spaces. We know that, at the moment, if a greyhound owner does not want their dog to have to wear a muzzle, they have to go through the very onerous process of applying for a green collar. We want to make it easier. We want more Western Australians to adopt refuge dogs, particularly greyhounds. I want to say that the level of interest and passion, I think as any member who has posted on social media will have seen, is overwhelming. There is a strong desire to see reform and change to these laws. In fact, when there was a statutory review of the act in regard to this specific change, there were 1 192 responses asking for the removal of muzzles. In addition, there was another petition of 2 700 Western Australians all asking for this.

I am proud that this government will deliver the removal of muzzles for greyhounds, and we will be remembered for that! But we will also be remembered for the stop puppy farming laws. I have to say, the opposition is a bit like Vicky Pollard: "Yeah but no, but yeah, but no but". If we look at the last time this stop puppy farming legislation came through the Parliament, it said, "Yes, we do support the broad part of it, except every part of it that we do not support." That is a classic position by the opposition. But we know that, overwhelmingly, Western Australians want to stop puppy farming. The proposals in our legislation, particularly a central registration system, are actually critical to preventing animal cruelty, and I think everyone in this house does not want to see animal cruelty.