

CORONAVIRUS — HARDSHIP UTILITY GRANT SCHEME

260. Hon COLIN TINCKNELL to the minister representing the Treasurer:

Given the government's COVID-19 economic response issued on Monday, and considering the stress many Western Australian households are currently facing, can the government advise whether the current restrictions on accessing the hardship utility grant scheme will now be cancelled or amended?

Hon STEPHEN DAWSON replied:

I thank the honourable member for some notice of the question. The following answer has been provided by the Treasurer.

The economic stimulus package announced by the government on 16 March 2020 includes a one-off doubling of the energy assistance payment in 2020–21, providing additional support of \$305—a total of \$610—for around 300 000 households with means-tested concession cards. This is a very significant and important measure to assist vulnerable households, including low-income earners and pensioners. The government has made it clear that it stands ready to provide further support as required, and further options are currently under consideration. This includes examining options in relation to the hardship utility grant scheme.